ARKANSAS

FISCAL YEAR 2026

NSLP EQUIPMENT ASSISTANCE GRANT

Authorized by the
Full Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025

Continuing Appropriations, Agriculture, Legislative Branch, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Extensions Act, 2026

Funded through the
United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
For Any Local Education Agency (LEA) Participating in the
National School Lunch Program (NSLP)

Original application and all required attachments must be received at

agri.equipmentgrant@arkansas.gov

BY DEADLINE:

4:30 P.M., Friday, November 20, 2026

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

INSTRUCTIONS

GRANT DESCRIPTION
The Full- Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025, and the Continuing Appropriations, Agriculture, Legislative Branch, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Extensions Act, 2026 authorized $20 million for the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to provide grants to State Agencies (SA) for providing equipment assistance to School Food Authorities (SFAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). These funds will assist SFAs in purchasing equipment that is needed to serve healthier meals, improve food safety, and to help support the establishment, maintenance, or expansion of the School Breakfast Program. Funding is to be awarded based on a competitive grant process that is fair and equitable. Priority will be given to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) who meet the application requirements, that have at least 50 percent of the students eligible for free or reduced price meals or Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) claiming percentage, however LEAs with less than 50 percent can receive the grant based on other criteria.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS
To be eligible to receive the 2026 NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant the following must be met:

- Application must be for a school site that has a cafeteria.
- The total request of the equipment expenditure must be $1,000 or greater.
- Submitted applications must include all required attachments.
- Not have received the NSLP Assistance grant in the last three years.

EQUIPMENT DEFINITION
Equipment for the purpose of the NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant per Regulation 2 CFR Part 200.33 is "tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level as established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or $5,000."

However, for the FY 2026 Equipment Assistance Grants, Congress has specified that the threshold for the purchase of equipment cannot be lower than $1,000.

ALLOWABLE EXPENSES
As with all Federal funds, the equipment purchased must be allowable. Allowable expenses are determined in accordance with cost principles of Federal Regulation 2 CFR 200. All expenditures should be adequately documented and should be determined in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. The State Agency will also check for allowable equipment purchase requests by requiring equipment documents to be submitted along with the Grant Application.

- Equipment that is new, renovated, or a replacement, appropriate utilities, (e.g. gas, water, electricity) within three feet of equipment, installation costs within three feet, and shipping costs are reimbursable as part of grant award, with documentation.

NON-ALLOWABLE EXPENSES
Reimbursement will not be provided for purchases of deep fat fryers, transport vehicles, and cafeteria tables and chairs. A few examples of costs that are not allowable in the NSLP, SBP, and Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) are:

- Equipment depreciation costs for non-expendable equipment items which become fully depreciated or non-expendable equipment in storage for future use.
- Capital expenditures for land or construction, facilities, other capital asset purchases (including passenger automobiles and other equipment).
- Any capital expenditure, which materially increases the value of capital assets, must be approved by CNU.
- Renovation of the school nutrition area would fall under the category of construction costs that must be charged to the LEA's general fund.
- Facility or land occupancy by contractual agreements (which are classified as rental/purchase or leased with an option to purchase).
- Cost associated with sales or service to adults, contract meals, other a la carte sales, and summer food service programs funded through the Arkansas Department of Human Services.

PROCUREMENT
As with all Federal grant funds, procurement regulations 7 CFR Part 210.21 and 2 CFR Part 200.317-326 applies and equipment competitively procured using these grant funds must be necessary, reasonable, and allocable.

All federal, state and local procurement regulations MUST BE FOLLOWED with regard to open and free competitive procurements for the expenditure of federal grant funds.

BID PRODUCT OR CONTRACT SPECIFICATION DEVELOPMENT
Vendor, broker, manufacturer, contractor, distributor, etc. of a product **cannot have input** into the development of product specifications or procurement specifications and/or advance review of the completed procurement documents. Such activities would compromise open and free competition [2 CFR 200.319(a)].

Equipment for which funds have already been obligated are not eligible for this grant. For example, bond money or equipment bid out and/or purchased prior to the grant award.

REIMBURSEMENT
After the LEA applies for and receives a grant award for the quoted cost of the piece of equipment, the LEA will need to pay the full cost of the equipment and installation, if applicable. After installation, training, and equipment is deemed operational, the LEA must submit the Request for Reimbursement along with all required documentation before reimbursement from the State Agency will occur. If the invoice total is more than the original bid quote and/or grant award for that piece of equipment (and installation if applicable), the LEA will be required to pay the difference.

Only actual costs of approved equipment will be reimbursed, not to exceed the original bid amount/grant award.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

FOCUS AREAS OF THE 2026 NSLP EQUIPMENT GRANT

In order to make the most effective use of the grant funds, the grant application must address at least one or more of the following:

- *Food Safety*: Equipment that improves the safety of food served in the school nutrition programs.
- *Expand Participation*: Equipment that supports improved and/or expanded participation in a school nutrition program, including the School Breakfast Program.
- Opportunities to realize a meaningful impact on *nutrition and quality* of meals (e.g., replacing fryers with combination steamer-ovens). Equipment that improves the quality of school nutrition meals in ways that support the nutritional standards.
- Strategies for adopting cafeteria changes that provide more convenience and appeal to the student.
- *The availability of existing State and local funding for equipment purchases*. Districts that have a three-month operating balance are encouraged to use Child Nutrition funds to purchase needed equipment.
- *Age* of food service equipment or lack of appropriate equipment.

**One piece of equipment may cover more than one focus area.*

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Quarterly reports are mandatory, if selected to receive a grant State Agency will provide a template. Failure to comply with the reporting requirements of this agreement will be considered noncompliance and a basis for termination of the grant award and recovery of grant funds.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

GRANT SUBMISSION AWARD AND REPORT TIMELINE

(Subject to change based on USDA requirements and data requests)

1. Grant Application Deadline	**Friday, November 20, 2026** 4:30pm
2. Grant Award Notification On or Before	**Friday, December 18, 2026**
3. Deadline for Obligation (commit to purchase) Submission*	**Friday, January 15, 2027**
4. First Quarterly Progress Report*	**Friday, February 19, 2027**
5. Second Quarterly Progress Report*	**Friday, May 21, 2027**
6. Deadline for Request for Reimbursement**	**Friday, June 18, 2027**
7. All Grant Funds Expended	**Friday, July 16, 2027**

**Only reports required for the districts who receive a grant.*

***SFAs may be allowed to extend their grant fund expense through September 30, 2028, with prior written approval of the state agency.*

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

ASSURANCE

The program applicant hereby agrees that it will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq.), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq.), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794), the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 U.S.C. § 6101 et seq.); all provisions required by the implementing regulations of the Department of Agriculture; Department of Justice Enforcement Guidelines, 28 CFR Part SO.3 and 42; and FNS directives and guidelines, to the effect that, no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or otherwise be subject to discrimination under any program or activity for which the program applicant receives Federal financial assistance from FNS; and hereby gives assurance that it will immediately take measures necessary to effectuate this agreement."

"By accepting this assurance, the Program applicant agrees to compile data, maintain records, and submit reports as required, to permit effective enforcement of nondiscrimination laws and permit authorized USDA personnel during hours of program operation to review such records, books, and accounts as needed to ascertain compliance with the nondiscrimination laws. If there are any violations of this assurance, the Department of Agriculture, FNS, shall have the right to seek judicial enforcement of this assurance. This assurance is binding on the Program applicant, its successors, transferees, and assignees as long as it receives assistance or retains possession of any assistance from USDA. The person or persons whose signatures appear below are authorized to sign this assurance on the behalf of the Program applicant."

LEA's awarded grant funds must comply with the following regulations, principals, and assurances.

GOVERNMENT-WIDE REGULATIONS

- 2 CFR Part 25: "Universal Identifier and System for Award Management"
- 2 CFR Part 170: "Reporting Sub-award and Executive Compensation Information"
- 2 CFR Part 175: "Award Term for Trafficking in Persons"
- 2 CFR Part 180: "OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-Procurement)"
- 2 CFR Part 200: "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards"
- 2 CFR Part 400: USDA Implementing regulations" Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards"
- 2 CFR Part 415: USDA "General Program Administrative Regulations"
- 2 CFR Part 416: USDA "General Program Administrative Regulations for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments"
- 2 CFR Part 417: USDA "Non-procurement Debarment and Suspension"
- 2 CFR Part 418 USDA "New Restrictions on Lobbying"

- 2 CFR Part 421: USDA "Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)"
- 41 USC Section 22 "Interest of Member of Congress"
- Privacy Act. The Cooperator/Grantee shall follow the rules and procedures of disclosure set forth in the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 S.S.C 552a, and implementing regulations and policies, with respect to systems of records determined to be subject to the Privacy Act.
- Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Public access to Federal Financial Assistance records shall not be limited, except when such records must be kept confidential and would have been excepted from disclosure pursuant to the "Freedom in Information" regulation (5 U.S.C. 552)
- Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2009, Public Law 110-417
- Sections 738 and 739 of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2012 (Public Law 112-55).
- "The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), dated September 26, 2006"

COST PRINCIPALS

- 2 CFR, Part 200: Subpart E, Cost Principles

USDA REGULATIONS

- 7 CFR Part 15: "Nondiscrimination"
- Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Public access to Federal Financial Assistance records shall not be limited, except when such records must be kept confidential and would have been excepted from disclosure pursuant to the "Freedom of Information" regulation (5 U.S.C. 552).

ASSURANCE OF CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d-et seq.), USDA regulations at 7 CFR Part 15, Nondiscrimination, and Department of Justice regulations at 28 CFR Part 42, Nondiscrimination; Equal Employment Opportunity: Policies and Procedures
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.) and USDA regulations at 7 CFR Part 15a, Education Programs or Activities Receiving or Benefiting from Federal Financial Assistance
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.) and USDA regulations at 7 CFR Part 15a, Education Programs or Activities Receiving or Benefiting from Federal Financial Assistance, and Department of Justice regulations at 28 CFR Part 41, Implementation of Executive Order 12250, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap In Federally Assisted Programs
- Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 U.S.C. 6101 et seq.) The Grantee assures that it will immediately take any measures necessary to effectuate the requirements in these laws, regulations, and directives. The Grantee gives this assurance inconsideration of and for the purpose of obtaining the funds provided under this agreement.
- Title II and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 as amended by the ADA Amendment Act of 2008 (42 U.S.C 12131-12189)

prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment (Title I), state & local government services (Title II), places of public accommodation and commercial facilities (Title III). (42 U.S.C. 12101-12213)