



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, Aug. 27, 2019

www.sde.idaho.gov

Media Contact:

Kristin Rodine
Public Information Officer
208-332-6807
krodine@sde.idaho.gov

SDE's Child Nutrition Programs land \$2.3 million in USDA grants

(BOISE) – This summer, Child Nutrition Programs at the State Department of Education received two large competitive grants from the USDA, totaling more than \$2.3 million.

“Skilled at identifying needs and crafting applications, our CNP staff are traditionally successful in netting USDA grants for Idaho, but the announcement at this summer’s School Nutrition Association conference marked the first time we’ve won two such major grants at the same time,” Superintendent of Public Instruction Sherri Ybarra said. “That’s a remarkable achievement. Only two other states earned that distinction.”

A Technology Information Grant (TIG) will bring in more than \$1.48 million to Idaho, with \$250,000 of that money flowing through to local sponsors in the form of mini-grants for the computers, software and other technology they need to run USDA programs. Child Nutrition Programs will use the rest of the money to build a detailed Statewide Data Suite, allowing the department to provide needed information as requested for better customer service.

TIG money will help the department improve program accountability, data accuracy, program performance and capacity building across child nutrition programs in every part of Idaho, said Dr. Colleen Fillmore, director of Child Nutrition Programs for the State Department of Education.

“The Data Suite will increase reporting ability, increase efficiencies and help us identify and respond to trends within the programs,” Fillmore said.

Mini-grants to local sponsors will likely average \$5,000, and the total \$250,000 is expected to be spread among 51 sponsors, streamlining communication at all levels and allowing local providers to effectively apply technology to assist in reviews, program operation and outreach.

The main focus of the Idaho grant will be in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), where operational funding is very limited and grants are seldom available. National School Lunch Program (NSLP) sponsors also can apply.

Technology also plays a key role in the department's other big new grant: \$825,241 for Administrative Review and Training (ART). This grant, which focuses on the National School Lunch Program, will help Idaho CNP improve training and oversight processes in this predominately rural state, making the sponsor application process easier for districts, schools and families.

"With the ART grant, we will develop and implement a web-based free and reduced price school meal application for use by local program participants," Fillmore said.

Online and in-person training will be developed to support adoption and implementation of the new web-based application.

Local stakeholder feedback and input from state agencies will be crucial in this process, and data collected over the course of the grant will enable statewide implementation.

Idaho CNP has successfully landed ART grants since 2004, while the TIG award is a first for the department.

Another first for the department, announced earlier this summer, is a \$36,000 No Kid Hungry grant through Share our Strength that will establish Breakfast After the Bell pilot sites in two Idaho elementary schools -- the Emmett School District's Shadow Butte Elementary School and Ustick Elementary in the West Ada School District. This pilot program will help Idaho CNP come up with best practices that can be used by schools across Idaho.

"Between the two big USDA grants and the innovative No Kid Hungry grant, this is a banner year for Idaho Child Nutrition Programs, empowering SDE's efforts to improve the health of Idaho children and promote dietary guidance that links scientific research to the nutritional needs of students in every corner of the state," Superintendent Ybarra said.

###