

# School Nutrition Program At-A-Glance

## Topic: Paid Lunch Equity (PLE)

### Overview

School Food Authorities (SFAs) participating in the NSLP must ensure sufficient funds are provided to the nonprofit school food service account for meals served to students not eligible for free or reduced-price meals. This requirement may be met through the prices charged for 'paid' meals or through other non-federal sources provided to the nonprofit school food service account.

### Requirements

- ✓ SFAs must annually review paid lunch prices by completing the USDA Paid Lunch Equity tool.
- ✓ When the average paid lunch price is less than the difference between the free and paid federal reimbursement rate, the SFA must take action by:
  - Increasing the prices charged for paid lunch meals, or;
  - Providing non-federal funding sources to the nonprofit school food service account. Non-federal sources may include:
    - Per-meal non-federal reimbursement for **any paid meal**
    - Any funds provided by organizations for **any paid meal**
    - Any proportion attributable to **paid meals** from direct payments made from school district funds to support lunch service.

### Steps to completing the Paid Lunch Equity tool

1. Locate your last completed PLE tool.
2. Gather the required data:
  - a. The weighted average price requirement from the previous year. Find this in your last years completed PLE tool, in the SYXXX-XX report tab.

Section 1: SY2015-2016 Weighted Average Paid Price Requirements	
<b>A. SY 2015-16 Weighted Average Price Requirement*:</b> <small>*This price will be entered into the SY 2016-2017 tool to determine the SY2016-2017 weighted average price requirements</small>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>B. Optional Price ROUNDED DOWN to nearest 5 cents:</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

  - b. If you plan to increase paid lunch prices you will need:
    - 1) All paid lunch prices for October of the previous school year; and
    - 2) Number of paid lunches served at each paid lunch price in October of the previous school year.
  - c. If you plan to contribute non-federal funds, you will need:
    - 1) The total number of paid lunches served in the previous year; and
    - 2) The total dollar amount of non-federal contributions from all of the previous school years.
3. Access the USDA PLE tool for the current school year
  - a. The first tab of the tool includes detailed instructions on how to use the tool. Print these instructions to reference as you complete the tool.
4. Complete the PLE tool

- a. Enter the information into green cells only, all other cells are protected and auto populate as needed.
- b. Retain a copy of your completed PLE tool for use during subsequent years and review during Administrative Reviews.
5. If a funds transfer is needed, keep documentation of any internal transfer of funds from a general fund account to the Nutrition fund account by specifically identifying transfer of funds per PLE requirements, this document may be requested during on-site review.

**Helpful Resources**

- ✓ [Current year PLE tool and instructions](#)

**Regulatory Reference**

- ✓ [7 CFR 210.14](#)

**Acronym Reference and Definitions**

-CFR	Code of Federal Regulation
-ODE CNP	Oregon Department Education Child Nutrition Program

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The Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction created this document. The Oregon Department of Education modified the document to apply to Oregon.