

School Nutrition Program At-A-Glance

Topic: Professional Standards - Hiring Standards

Overview:

Each Local Education Authority (LEA) that operates the NSLP and/or SBP must meet the hiring requirements of the Professional Standards as established in the final rule, *Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Programs Personnel as Required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA) of 2010*. These hiring standards support the successful operation of school nutrition programs by ensuring that School Nutrition Program Directors have the knowledge, experience, and skills needed to plan and administer the school nutrition program.

Minimum Hiring Standards for School Nutrition Program Directors

Hiring standards are based on the number of students enrolled at the Local Education Agency (LEA). See the table below for minimum hiring standards based on LEA enrollment:

2499 or less	2,500-9999	10,000 or more
Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major or concentration in specific areas OR	Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major or concentration in specific area OR	Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major or concentration in specific areas OR
Bachelor's degree in any academic major, and State-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors OR	Bachelor's degree in any academic major, and State-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors OR	Bachelor's degree in any academic major, and State-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors OR
Bachelor's degree in any academic major, , and at least 1 year of relevant experience in food service OR	Bachelor's degree in any academic major, and at least 2 years' relevant experience in school nutrition programs OR	Bachelor's degree in any academic major, and at least 5 years' experience in management of school nutrition programs
Associate's degree or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas, and at least 1 year of relevant experience in food service OR	Associate's degree or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas, and at least 2 years of relevant school nutrition programs experience.	
High school diploma (or GED) and at least 3 years of relevant food service experience		
ALL: At least 8 hours of food safety training is required either not more than 5 years prior to or within 30 calendar days of employee's starting. date.		

State Discretion: Hiring Standards for New School Nutrition Program Directors

7 CFR 210.30 allows state agencies specific flexibilities to approve the hire of an individual who does not meet the minimum hiring standards.

Oregon Department of Education School Nutrition Program allows the specific hiring flexibilities described in the table below based on the LEA enrollment:

2499 or less	2,500-9999	10,000 or more
A bachelor's degree in education with an Oregon Professional Administrator License will be considered "equivalent educational experience"	A bachelor's degree in education with an Oregon Professional Administrator License will be considered "equivalent educational experience"	A bachelor's degree in education with an Oregon Professional Administrator License will be considered "equivalent educational experience"
Volunteer or unpaid food service work is considered relevant experience.	High school diploma or GED and at least 10 years of school nutrition programs experience.	High school diploma or GED and at least 10 years of school nutrition programs experience.
500 or less		
Any of the education requirements with less than the minimum required food service experience		

Additional Information

- ✓ School nutrition program directors appointed prior to July 1, 2015, are exempted from meeting the hiring standards and are “grandfathered” into the school nutrition program director position or the position in an LEA in the same enrollment category size or smaller.
- ✓ Definition of “Director” is not based on the position title, but rather the role and responsibilities. The director is the individual who plans, administers, implements, monitors, and evaluates all district-wide aspects of the school nutrition program. This person is designated in CNPweb as the CNP Program Manager.
- ✓ The school nutrition program director must be an employee of the LEA.
- ✓ The specific academic major or concentration includes the following: Food and Nutrition, Food Service Management, Dietetics, Family and Consumer Sciences, Nutrition Education, Culinary Arts, Business, or a related field

Helpful Resources:

- ✓ [USDA Professional Standards Webpage](#)
- ✓ [Professional Standards Summary of Updates](#)
- ✓ [Institute of Child Nutrition: Food Safety in Schools Training \(8 hours\)](#)

Regulatory Reference:

- ✓ [7 CFR 210.30](#)
- ✓ [Final Rule: Hiring Flexibility Under Professional Standards](#)
- ✓ [USDA Memo SP5-2020: Professional Standards Questions and Answers](#)

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Acronym Reference and Definitions

- CFR Code of Federal Regulation
- NSLP National School Lunch Program
- SBP School Breakfast Program
- LEA Local Education Agency
- SFA School Food Authority
- USDA United States Department of Agriculture

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