

HealthierUS School Challenge Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Effective July 1, 2012

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General

1. *Why were the HUSSC criteria updated/changed?*

These new criteria reflect changes to the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) meal pattern requirements as stated in 7 CFR Parts 210 and 220, while continuing to recognize schools that go above and beyond Federal requirements for school meals. Implementation of the new criteria coincides with implementation of the new meal pattern requirements. All new applications submitted to the State agency on or after July 1, 2012, will be considered using the new criteria.

2. *Which HUSSC criteria have changed?*

Major changes to the criteria include:

- **New Breakfast Criteria:** Under the 2012 criteria, schools must participate in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and, for the Silver, Gold, and Gold Award of Distinction award levels meet Average Daily Participation (ADP) criteria for breakfast. Schools must also meet criteria relating to fruits and/or vegetables, and whole grains. The addition of these criteria recognizes the importance of a nutritious breakfast to children’s health and academic performance. Today, almost 90% of schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) also participate in the SBP.
- **New “Other Criteria for Excellence” Category:** Schools may meet criteria in this category by selecting from 20 options relating to program outreach, physical activity, nutrition education, and school and community involvement in wellness efforts. The number of options a school must accomplish varies by award level, ranging from two at the Bronze level to eight at the Gold Award of Distinction level.
- **Updated Lunch Criteria:** The 2012 HUSSC criteria are updated to reflect NSLP meal pattern requirements, while continuing to encourage schools to offer a variety of vegetables, fresh fruit and whole grain-rich options.
- **Average Daily Participation (ADP) Calculation Method Change:** Based upon feedback USDA has received from schools and States, the ADP criteria for the NSLP and SBP is based on attendance rather than enrollment. Calculating ADP in this manner is considered more fair to schools as it does not include children that are absent or do not eat lunch/breakfast (e.g., part-day kindergarteners) in the calculation.

The 2012 HUSSC criteria also include modifications to nutrition education requirements for elementary and middle schools and update Local Wellness Policy criteria to be consistent with the [Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, Public Law 111-296](#). Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has not made changes to the HUSSC criteria for Physical Education, Physical Activity, or Competitive Foods (i.e., foods sold outside of the meal program) at this time.

3. *Where can I find resources that will help my school meet the new HUSSC criteria?*

Resources to help schools meet the new HUSSC criteria are available on [Team Nutrition's HealthierUS School Challenge website](#).

4. *What type of recognition will schools receive if they receive an HUSSC award?*

Schools that apply and successfully meet the HealthierUS School Challenge criteria will receive a recognition plaque and a banner. In addition, the recognized schools will be listed on the [Team Nutrition website](#) and may be chosen to be a part of national Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) media events that recognize schools for their leadership and excellence in their school meals programs. Monetary incentives will also be provided as long as funding continues to be available. Schools are encouraged to market their success to their community via the newspaper, parent newsletters, etc. and are expected to maintain their high level of excellence throughout the four-year certification period.

5. *What do I do if I have further questions not answered by an FAQ?*

Contact your [State Agency](#).

Menus and Production Records

1. *Why does the application require two full weeks of menus?*

School menus and supporting documentation are reviewed to verify that a school meets HealthierUS School Challenge (HUSSC) meal criteria. Schools must submit two full consecutive weeks of National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) menus. A "full week" refers to the regular weekly cycle under which the school operates. A "full week" does not contain missed days due to holidays, teacher workdays, shortened school days, inclement weather closings, or other days missed due to unforeseen circumstances.

2. *Prior to July 1, 2012, four weeks of NSLP menus and supporting documentation were required. Why was the requirement reduced to two-weeks?*

The HUSSC criteria implemented on July 1, 2012, include criteria for breakfast as well as lunch. To offset the burden of providing documentation for both lunch and breakfast, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) reduced the review period to two weeks. A two-week review reflecting the typical menu practices of the entire menu period provides adequate information to assess compliance with HUSSC standards, while minimizing the HUSSC application burden.

3. *What is the minimum number of days per week for the two-week menu cycle submitted?*

Schools must submit two full consecutive weeks of NSLP and SBP menus as part of their HUSSC application. The minimum number of days per week depends on the school's regular operating schedule. For schools that regularly operate five days a week, the two week period must consist of 10 days. For schools that regularly operate four days a week, the two week period must consist of 8 days. For schools that regularly operate three days a week, the two week period must consist of 6 days. For Residential Child Care Institutions (RCCI's) that regularly operate 6 or 7 days a week, the two week period must consist of 12 or 14 days, respectively. Weeks with holidays, teacher workdays, shortened school days, inclement weather closings, or other missing days may not be submitted for review.

Requiring menus for "full weeks" helps ensure that there are an adequate number of days of menus to verify that a school is meeting meal criteria during a typical week (e.g., vegetable subgroups and fresh fruit). Reviewing full school weeks helps FNS verify that schools are providing these foods in the amounts and with the frequency required. RCCI's that do not claim reimbursement for meals served during the weekend do not have to submit documentation for those days.

4. *One day of the two weeks of menus that we planned to submit was cancelled due to inclement weather. May we still submit that week for consideration?*

No, schools should submit two full consecutive weeks with no missing days occurring during either week. In this instance, the school would need to submit menus for another two-week period that has no missing days.

5. *May I submit an application with menus older than 6 months?*

Menus and supporting documentation must have been *served* to students within six months of the date of the application's submission to the State agency. Applications can be accepted provided they are submitted to the State agency within six months of the last day of the month that the menus were served. For example, if the two menu weeks served were from October 15-October 26, 2012, the State agency could accept the HUSSC application as long as it was received by the State agency on or before April 30, 2013.

If the menus submitted were served in the prior school year (e.g., menus from June are submitted with a September HUSSC application), the school may be asked to provide additional documentation verifying that the menus submitted reflect menus being served in the current school year. Since school year 2011-2012 was under a different meal pattern, this does not apply to schools that submitted applications under the old HUSSC criteria before June 30th 2012.

6. *May we provide a week of menus from one month and then a week from the next month?*

Yes, as long as the weeks are consecutive (i.e., one after the other). The weeks do not have to be from the same calendar month.

7. *Why are completed production records required and what information must they contain?*

Section 210.10(a)(3) of the 7 CFR Parts 210 and 220 Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) require that the School Food Authority maintain production records and menu records for NSLP and SBP meals as documentation of how the meals offered contribute to the required food components and food quantities.

For HUSSC, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) requires that schools make a copy of their completed production records for the two weeks of submitted NSLP and SBP menus and submit them with their Silver, Gold, or Gold Award of Distinction applications. Production records are not required for Bronze applications. This information is used to verify that meals served to students meet meal pattern requirements and HUSSC criteria (i.e., that menus planned are consistent with meals served to students). Production records should be complete and legible.

Production records *must* indicate the actual daily meal count (students and adults); menu items used to meet meal pattern requirements, planned portion sizes by age/grade; quantities prepared for each menu item, a la carte items sold on the serving line with the reimbursable meal (if applicable), and leftover servings. Production records that contain missing information for any of these identified items will not be accepted and applications will not be reviewed for the Silver, Gold, and Gold Award of Distinction award level. Schools with incomplete production records will be offered a Bronze level award and/or technical assistance to assist them in gaining a higher level award. Please review production records prior to submitting application to make sure that they are complete and legible.

FNS is no longer reviewing production records for token items (i.e., food prepared in small amounts and taken only by a small percentage of students), because changes to the meal pattern requirements help ensure that a variety of whole grains, fruits, and vegetables are offered on the menu. Schools are encouraged to offer fruits, vegetables, and whole grains in ways students find tasty and appealing while meeting meal pattern standards. Several methods of involving students in menu planning and promoting these options are included in HUSSC's Other Criteria of Excellence.

8. *What is acceptable product information that may be submitted as supporting documentation?*

Supporting documentation for the two-weeks of menus submitted is also required, including:

- [Lunch 6-Cent Certification Worksheets](#)* completed for the two-week menu period (nutrient analyses are not required),

- Production records (for Silver, Gold and Gold of Distinction Awards),
- Product information, such as Nutrition Facts labels, ingredient statements, recipes, and CN labels, and
- Whole grain-rich documentation.

According to what foods are offered on the menu and as competitive foods, schools may also need to submit product formulation statements from the manufacturer, or copies of the actual product label. In some cases, copies of the front and back of the actual product label may be necessary. Information on acceptable product documentation, including those from the Internet or manufacturer product fact sheets, is described in the guidance memo [TA 07-2010](#).

*Breakfast 6-Cent Worksheet is not required.

Application Procedures

1. *Is it possible to apply for the HealthierUS School Challenge (HUSSC) as a district, instead of as an individual school?*

Yes. Multiple schools may apply under the same district application when all of the following apply:

- The same menu and same foods were served throughout the district. The district may submit one set of two-week lunch menus, Lunch Certification Worksheets, and whole grain documentation. If there are multiple age/grade groups, submit Lunch Certification Worksheets for each age/grade group. We recommend applicants submit the one week that they send to the district and then put in an additional week worth of menus into the Certification worksheets and submit that week to make up the “two weeks” required for HUSSC. Nutrient analyses are not needed.
- The same nutrition education, physical education, and physical activities are provided or offered (according to the grade level).
- The same competitive foods and beverages were sold throughout the cafeteria and/or school campus. The district may submit one Competitive Foods Worksheet along with one set of supporting documentation. The district could also submit a comprehensive listing of competitive foods offered throughout the district (where schools have the option of selecting any combination of foods from the list) and supporting documentation.
- Each individual school follows the district’s wellness policy.

In addition, *each school* must be enrolled as a Team Nutrition (TN) school, and must submit an individual Local School Wellness Policy Worksheet (if applicable) and complete the Other Criteria for Excellence Checklist, which are both included in the online application. If a district finds that their schools have the same menu with corresponding foods served, but has different nutrition education, physical education, physical activities, competitive foods, or wellness policies, they may still apply as a district, but must make note of those items that differ among the schools and submit additional documentation, such as individual worksheets, for those schools with the district application.

- 2. If schools apply for the Gold or Gold Award of Distinction level, but are found to only meet the criteria for the Silver or Bronze, will they be given the HUSSC award for the lower level?*

Yes, if they did not meet the Gold or Gold Award of Distinction requirements, their application would be reviewed against the Silver and Bronze criteria.

- 3. Will a school be asked to submit additional documentation after it has submitted its application?*

Possibly. Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) reserves the right to request additional information to verify that the school: (1) serves reimbursable meals, and (2) meets all HUSSC criteria. Production records may also be requested of Bronze applicants if the menus do not match menu worksheets. The menu structure should be fully explained within the HUSSC applications, including the number of serving lines, entrée choices, side dish choices, number of choices for the student, and how Offer vs. Serve (OVS) is implemented, if applicable. The review process can be significantly delayed if additional information is needed.

- 4. Why must the State Agency child nutrition director approve each application?*

The State Agency conducts the first level review of the application. By reviewing and providing contact information on an application, the State director assures Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) that the application has been thoroughly reviewed by the State Agency, the school meets all HUSSC criteria, and is serving reimbursable meals according to 7 CFR 210.10. This also verifies that the school has passed the Administrative Review and is certified as eligible to receive performance-based cash assistance for each reimbursable lunch served (the additional six cents). Please refer to the *Meal Criteria* section of the HUSSC FAQs for more information.

- 5. What is Team Nutrition and how is it related to the HealthierUS School Challenge?*

Team Nutrition (TN) is an initiative of the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to support the Child Nutrition Programs through training and technical assistance for foodservice, nutrition education for children and their caregivers, and school and community support for healthy eating and physical activity. Becoming a Team Nutrition School helps schools focus their attention on the important role nutritious school meals, nutrition education and a health-promoting school environment play in teaching students

to enjoy healthy eating and physical activity. Schools must be enrolled as a TN School *prior* to applying for HealthierUS School Challenge. It is free to enroll.

- 6. How can I find out if my school is already enrolled as a Team Nutrition (TN) School? If my school is not a TN School, how do I apply?*

To see if your school is enrolled in Team Nutrition, go to the [TN School Database](#). Select the search page hyperlink and enter the school's ZIP Code to determine if the school is listed in the TN School Database.

The TN school enrollment form may be completed online and submitted by email. It may also be downloaded and submitted by mail or fax at the number or address provided on the form. The principal and foodservice manager contact information is required in order to process the enrollment form. To enroll, go to the [Team Nutrition website](#), select "[Join the Team](#)," and look for the [Online Enrollment Form](#). Please ensure that all information requested is complete and accurate. Please write the complete name and address of the school including full street names, abbreviations, and initials. For example, if the official school name is Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School and is located on Main Street, please do not write any variation of the name or address, such as "MLK Elementary" or "Main."

Please note that once the enrollment form is submitted, it has to be entered into a database. The database behind the information that is housed on the Website is only updated once a week, so there may be some lag time between the submission of the enrollment form and the visibility of the school's name on the TN Website.

- 7. How were the criteria for Average Daily Participation established for breakfast and lunch?*

The criterion for the percent of student participation in the breakfast and lunch programs are based upon data collected by the School Nutrition Dietary Assessment Study (SNDA) for each of the age/grade groups. For the Bronze level, there is no Average Daily Participation (ADP) required. The Silver level criterion is slightly lower than the national average and the Gold level criterion is slightly above the national average participation reported in the research study.

Because some schools have difficulty reaching the ADP requirement, we encourage them to begin at the Bronze level (no ADP requirement) and apply for higher levels as their ADP increases.

Average Daily Participation (ADP)					
Grades		Bronze	Silver	Gold	Gold Award of Distinction
Elementary and Middle	Breakfast	Not required	20%	35%	35%
	Lunch	Not required	60%	75%	75%
High School	Breakfast	Not required	15%	25%	25%
	Lunch	Not required	45%	65%	65%

8. *How do you calculate ADP based on attendance?*

HUSSC average daily participation criteria are based upon the average daily attendance of students able to participate in the meal rather than total enrollment. This method allows schools to accurately identify the percentage of students participating of those present and accounts for students that only attend school for part of the day that does not include meal times.

To calculate ADP based on attendance:

- First step: Determine the average number of reimbursable meals served per day.

Example: If there were 16,000 meals served over the course of the month and the school operates for 20 days. Divide $16,000/20 = 800$ meals per day (on average)

- Next step: Obtain the average daily attendance number from the school.

Example: There are 1400 children attending the school on average per day. However, 200 children do not have access to the lunch programs because they are half-day Kindergarten students. Average daily attendance for students with access to the program would be $1400-200 = 1200$.

- Final step: Calculate the average daily lunch participation rate.

Example: Average daily lunch participation rate would be calculated by the average number of lunches served per day divided by the average daily attendance adjusted for non-access students times 100. $(800/1200) \times 100 = 66.7\%$

9. *Do schools need to use a specific month for reporting ADP?*

Schools must calculate the ADP based on the month that submitted menus are served or any month within the same school year prior to when the menu submitted is served.

10. In my school, kindergarten students do not stay for lunch. Must I include these students in my enrollment in order to calculate my ADP?

No. If school lunch is not accessible or available for kindergarten students, do not count them in the participation data.

11. Our school has a low percentage of students approved for free and reduced-price meals, thus our participation is low. Will USDA make allowances for lowering the ADP for such schools?

The ADP criteria apply to all schools regardless of percentage of students qualifying for free and reduced-price meals. USDA recognizes that many factors influence ADP rates. In order to address this, there is no ADP criterion for the Bronze level to serve as an incentive for schools to begin serving healthier meals that will ultimately lead to higher ADP and the opportunity to achieve a higher award level in the future. USDA believes that any school recognized as having excellence in nutrition should maintain a high breakfast and lunch participation rate. Meals that are planned and prepared to meet quality standards should be appealing to all children in the school.

12. My school meets the ADP for the Gold Award of Distinction level for lunch, but not for breakfast. May we still apply for Gold Award of Distinction level?

Schools applying for a specific award level must meet both the ADP goals for breakfast and lunch for that award level. For example, in the situation described above, the school would be approved at a lower award level because the breakfast ADP did not meet the Gold Award of Distinction requirements, even though the school meets the lunch requirements.

13. If a school is currently certified as an Alliance for a Healthier Generation Healthy Schools Program (HSP) school, which sections of the HUSSC criteria may be bypassed and what information is needed to verify HSP certification?

Schools with any level of HSP award may bypass the application process for nutrition education, physical education and physical activity sections. In lieu of completing the Nutrition Education, Physical Education, and Physical Activity sections of the HUSSC application, HSP-awarded schools may submit a copy of their award certificate with their HUSSC application submission. We are working to cross-promote both award programs. For additional information, visit the [Alliance for a Healthier Generation Healthy Schools Program](#) website. *Note: HSP award must be dated within a year of the HUSSC application.*

Meal Criteria

1. *What is the basis for the menu criteria for school breakfast and lunches?*

The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) meal pattern requirements as stated in 7 CFR Parts 210 and 220 serve as the basis for the menu criteria for school breakfast and lunches. The menu criteria emphasize the same foods that are encouraged in the 2010 *Dietary Guidelines*. Some of these foods include whole grains, dark-green, red and orange vegetables, dry beans and peas, fruits, and low-fat/fat-free milk.

2. *How do we demonstrate we have healthy menu planning practices?*

Healthy menu planning practices should be implemented throughout the menu. Ideally, foods offered should appeal to students. Menus should incorporate whole grain-rich products and offer a variety of fruits and vegetables on the serving line or salad bar. The HUSSC vision supports a goal that every student should have the opportunity to select a reimbursable breakfast and lunch that meets the HUSSC criteria.

3. *If a school has multiple serving lines with different menu items, must each serving line meet the HUSSC meal criteria?*

All students must have access to all of the menu items meeting HUSSC meal criteria throughout the week regardless of the serving line selected. As required in section 210.10(k)(2) for the meal pattern, each independent line must meet the daily and weekly requirements (including subgroups), in order to ensure that a child is able to take a reimbursable meal every day in any line they may choose. This will assist schools in also meeting HUSSC meal criteria.

For example, a child who picks the pizza line consistently should have access to all vegetable subgroups throughout the week. Another example to ensure that students have access to all meal components would be to set up serving stations, where a student is able to go to several different places to select different components of the meal (e.g., first goes to a salad bar, then goes into a pasta station, etc) before passing the point of service, then all of the stations as a whole must meet the daily component and weekly component requirements. For additional information, refer to the [Meal Pattern Q&A's](#) Question #3 under the topic Multiple Offerings.

Certification of Compliance

1. *Does my School Food Authority need to be certified as eligible to receive performance based cash assistance (i.e., the additional 6 cents) in order for my school to receive a HUSSC award?*

Certification that the School Food Authority is in compliance with meal pattern requirements and is eligible to receive performance-based cash assistance for each reimbursable lunch served (an additional six cents per lunch available beginning October 1, and adjusted annually thereafter) is required for a HUSSC award. The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) reserves the right to withdraw the HUSSC award designation of schools that are found to be serving meals that are not in compliance with meal pattern requirements, nutrition standards, and/or HUSSC criteria.

2. *If my school has any program compliance issues or corrective actions that have not been resolved or corrected, can my school receive a HUSSC award?*

No. All corrective actions from school's most recent State review of school meals program must be completed in order for a school to be eligible for a HUSSC award.

Fruits

1. *What is meant by “different fruits” under the HUSSC meal criteria for fruits?*

For all award levels, schools must meet meal pattern requirements for fruits at lunch and breakfast. In keeping with the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010*, HUSSC requires that schools offer a variety of fruits during the week. The HUSSC criterion for fruit variety at lunch requires at least five different types of fruits during the week, with a different fruit being offered each day. For example, a school may offer bananas, apple slices, orange wedges, grapes, and pineapple during the week. At least ½ cup of each of these “different fruits” must be offered.

Serving different forms of the same fruit, such as apple slices and applesauce, does not count separately toward the variety requirement. The following menu items would not meet HUSSC fruit variety criterion for lunch: bananas, apple slices, apple juice, grapes, and pineapple. In this case, apple slices and apple juice count as the same type of fruit. A “different fruit” may include a previously offered fruit as part of a mixture, such as a fruit salad. The following would count as offering five different fruits during the week: bananas, watermelon, orange wedges, strawberries, melon mix (watermelon, cantaloupe, and honeydew melon).

The HUSSC Gold/Gold Award of Distinction criterion for fruit variety at breakfast requires schools to offer a different fruit each day. The HUSSC Bronze/Silver criterion for fruit variety at breakfast requires schools to offer at least three different fruits each week, with the three different fruits being offered on three different days during the week. As with lunch, at least ½ cup of each of these “different fruits” must be offered.

Schools with “full weeks” shorter than five days should refer to the [HUSSC Criteria Chart](#) on meeting the fruit variety requirement.

2. *What is the fresh fruit requirement and how can it be implemented?*

For all award levels, schools must meet meal pattern requirements for fruits. For Bronze and Silver level awards, schools must offer one fresh fruit per week at breakfast. For Gold or Gold Award of Distinction, schools must offer two fresh fruits per week at breakfast. At lunch, Bronze must offer one fresh fruit per week, Silver must offer two fresh fruits per week, Gold must offer three fresh fruits per week, and Gold Award of Distinction must offer four fresh fruits per week. Schools with “full weeks” that is shorter than five days should refer to the chart on meeting the fresh fruit requirement.

For schools that regularly operate a 3- or 4-day cycle week, the fresh fruit requirement is adjusted for the Gold Award of Distinction level. See chart for additional information.

HUSSC Fresh Fruit Requirement for Lunch: Short Week Calculations

(Applies to schools that regularly operate a shorter weekly cycle)

3 day week	All Grades - Serving per week
Bronze	1 fresh fruit
Silver	1 fresh fruit
Gold	2 fresh fruit
Gold Award of Distinction	2 fresh fruit

4 day week	All Grades - Serving per week
Bronze	1 fresh fruit
Silver	2 fresh fruit
Gold	3 fresh fruit
Gold Award of Distinction	3 fresh fruit

3. *May I combine amounts of fruit in order to reach the minimum ½ cup required each day?*

Yes, different amounts of fruits may be combined to reach the minimum ½ cup fruit requirement for HUSSC. For example, if you have ¼ cup blueberries and ¼ cup of grapes served on the same day and students are able to choose both items, you may count those two items for the ½ cup serving for that day. The minimum creditable amount for fruit is ⅛ cup.

4. *Does 100% fruit or vegetable juice count as a serving of fruit or vegetable for HUSSC?*

Yes, while schools may offer 100 percent full-strength fruit juice every day as one of the fruit choices, it may only count once per week at breakfast and once per week at lunch to count toward the HUSSC criteria for fruit. In the same way, 100 percent full-strength vegetable juice may count once per week at breakfast and once per week at lunch as a vegetable serving.

Vegetables

1. *With regards to the HUSSC criterion about having a variety of fruit at breakfast or fresh fruit at breakfast: may it be met, in part, by vegetable offerings?*

Yes. Schools may count vegetables toward the HUSSC fruit criteria for breakfast in a manner consistent with [7 CFR 210.10\(c\) \(2\)\(iii\)](#).

2. *Are there any school recipes for dark-green, red and orange vegetables or beans and peas?*

The Recipes for Healthy Kids cookbook provides kid-tested recipes that incorporate dark-green, red and orange vegetables, beans and peas, as well as whole grains. These recipes are standardized and presented for use in institutional settings. The [Recipe for Healthy Kids cookbook](#) is available on Team Nutrition's website.

3. *What vegetables are counted as “dark-green, red and orange” vegetables? May we use dark-green, or red and orange vegetables that are not on the list?*

Refer to policy memo [SP 37-2012](#) and the accompanying [chart](#) for additional information on the vegetable subgroups.

4. *What are the new HUSSC vegetable criteria for lunch and how can it be implemented?*

For all award levels, schools must meet meal pattern requirements for the Dark Green, Red/ Orange, and Dry Beans and Peas subgroups. For Bronze and Silver level awards, schools must offer *one*

additional serving (at least ½ cup) each week from any of three vegetable sub-groups: Dark Green, Red/ Orange, and Dry Beans and Peas. For Gold or Gold Award of Distinction, schools must offer *two* additional servings each week (at least ½ cup each) from any of three vegetable sub-groups: dark green, red and orange, and/or dry beans and peas. This equates to an additional 1 cup per week.

Schools may offer these additional amounts as ½ cup and 1 cup servings, respectively, or they may spread the amount out over the course of the week; offering at least ⅓ of a cup of the vegetable at a time to credit (schools must meet meal pattern requirements for daily vegetable amounts). *Schools may meet the HUSSC criteria within the current meal pattern requirements* by offering additional Dark Green, Red/ Orange, and Dry Beans and Peas subgroup offerings as some of the “additional vegetables” needed to meet weekly total meal pattern requirements. They may also offer/serve Dark Green, Red/ Orange, and Dry Beans and Peas subgroup vegetables in place of vegetables from the “Other vegetables” subgroup.

Charts to assist in meeting the [HUSSC Vegetable Subgroup Requirements](#) for various award levels and for school with full weeks less than 5 days are available online.

5. *May I combine groups of vegetables in order to meet the additional ½-cup or 1-cup amount over the course of the week?*

Yes, schools may combine groups of vegetables from the dark-green, red and orange, and dry beans/peas (legumes) vegetable subgroups to meet the ½-cup amount over the course of the week. The minimum credible amount is ⅓-cup. For example, an elementary school applying at the Bronze or Silver award levels could serve ¼-cup sweet potatoes and ¼-cup black beans to meet the “additional vegetable” serving for HUSSC vegetable criteria.

6. *What are dry beans or peas (legumes)?*

Examples of dry beans and peas contributing to HUSSC criteria are those listed in the Meat/Meat Alternates section of the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs are considered mature, dry beans and peas that qualify for the HUSSC criteria. Refer to policy memo [SP 37-2012](#) for additional information regarding beans and peas.

For additional information regarding vegetables, salad bars, and vegetable mixtures, please refer to policy memo [SP 10-2012: Questions & Answers on the Final Rule, “Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs”](#) the accompanying [Q&As](#), and the short and long week [calculations](#).

Grains

1. *How do I determine if a whole grain-rich product credits as a serving of grains/breads?*

Schools should compare the weight of one serving of the grains/breads in ounces or grams with the weights listed in the updated Exhibit A charts in policy memo [SP 30-2012](#). Please check the [HUSSC website](#) often for availability of the Whole Grains Resource for School Meal Programs, which will serve as the authority for whole grain criteria for HUSSC. For School Year 2012-2013 only, schools were allowed to use the [previous Exhibit A chart](#).

2. *How do foods qualify as whole grain-rich? How do you determine if a product meets the whole grain-rich definition?*

Foods must meet both elements as described in policy memo [SP 30-2012](#).

Foods that qualify as whole grain-rich grains for the school meal programs are foods that contain 100-percent whole grain or a blend of whole-grain meal and/or flour and enriched meal and/or flour of which at least 50-percent is whole grain. The remaining 50% or less of *grains*, if any, must be enriched.

Schools may use the following elements to evaluate if a grain product meets the whole grain-rich criteria:

Element 1: The food item must meet the ounce equivalent (oz eq) requirements for the grains component as defined in [SP 30-2012](#) and the revised Exhibit A of the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs.

AND

Element 2: The food must meet at least one of the following:

- 1) Whole-grains per oz eq based on the updated Exhibit A weights are at least 8.0 grams or more for Groups A – G. For Groups H and I, the volumes or weights listed must be offered to credit as one oz eq. This information may be determined from information provided on the product packaging or by the manufacturer, if available.
- 2) The product includes the following Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved whole-grain health claim on its packaging: “Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods and low in total fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol, may reduce the risk of heart disease and certain cancers.”
- 3) The product ingredient declaration lists whole grain first, specifically:
 - a. Non-mixed dishes (e.g., breads, cereals): Whole grains are the primary ingredient by weight (a whole grain is first on the ingredient list with an exception for water). Products in which

whole grain content comes from multiple ingredients, qualify as whole grain-rich when all whole grains combined are the primary ingredient by weight. Proper documentation from manufacturer or standardized recipe is required.

- b. Mixed dishes (e.g., pizza, corn dogs): Whole grains are the primary grain ingredient by weight (a whole grain is the first grain ingredient in the list of grains). For recipes, the weights of grain ingredients are used to determine whether the total weight of whole-grains is greater than or equal to the total weight of grains that are not whole grain.

Some products include flour blends listed in the ingredient declaration, for example, Ingredients: Flour blend (whole wheat flour, enriched flour), sugar, cinnamon, etc. When trying to determine if whole grain is the primary ingredient by weight for these products, program operators will need to know either that the whole grain content is at least 8.0 grams per oz eq or that the weight of the whole grain is greater than the first ingredient listed after the flour blend (such as sugar in the example, as well as the enriched flour).

Ready-to-Eat (RTE) breakfast cereals must list a whole grain as the primary ingredient and the cereal must be fortified. If the product includes enriched ingredients, or the product itself is enriched, the ingredients or the product must meet the Food and Drug Administration's standards of identify for enrichment (21 CFR Section 137). Bran and germ are not creditable in school meal programs. Non-creditable grain ingredients in products at levels less than 2% are allowable, but not credited.

Manufacturers producing qualifying products (meat/meat alternate entrées containing grains) may apply for a Child Nutrition (CN) Label to indicate the number of oz eq grains that meet the whole grain-rich criteria. The term, "oz eq grains" on the CN Label indicates the product meets the whole grain-rich criteria, while the terms, "bread" or "bread alternate" on the CN Label indicates the product meets previous program requirements for grains/breads.

Schools can determine if a product meets the whole grain-rich definition by:

- Checking the product label. A whole grain is listed first on the ingredient statement
- Verifying that the product has a valid Child Nutrition (CN) label that credits oz equivalent "Grains,"
- Determining if the package indicates 8 grams or more of whole grain for the appropriate ounce equivalent serving size, or
- Requesting a product formulation statement from product manufacturer showing that at least 50% of grains in the product are whole grains and the other half enriched.

For additional information, please continue to use policy memo [SP 30-2012](#) and check the [HUSSC website](#) often for availability of the Whole Grains Resource for School Meal Programs, which will serve as the authority for whole grain criteria for HUSSC.

3. *How often must I offer whole grain-rich products? Can a school round down when trying to determine if the minimum required grains offered over a week are whole grain-rich has been met?*

For breakfast, schools applying for Bronze or Silver awards 50% of the grains offered weekly must be whole grain-rich. For the Gold award, 70% of grains offered weekly must be whole grain-rich. For the Gold Award of Distinction, 100% of grains offered weekly must be whole grain-rich.

For lunch, schools applying for Bronze or Silver, two-thirds (67%) of the grains offered over a week must be whole grain-rich. For Gold and Gold Awards of Distinction, all grains offered must be whole grain-rich.

In calculating the amount of total grains that must be whole-grain rich to meet the HUSSC criteria, schools may not round down amounts. For example, a K-5 school offering a maximum of 8-ounce equivalents of total grains for lunch during the week would need to offer at least 5.4 oz. equivalents of the total grains as whole grain-rich products to meet HUSSC criteria at the Bronze/Silver level. The school may *not* round down this amount and offer 5 ounce equivalents of whole grains and 3 ounces of refined/enriched grains. See charts for more information.

Breakfast

		If the maximum amount of the total grains offered over the week is			
... offer at least this amount of whole grain-rich products		7 oz eq	8 oz eq	9 oz eq	10 oz eq
Bronze (50%)		3.5 oz eq	4 oz eq	4.5 oz eq	5 oz eq
Silver (50%)		3.5 oz eq	4 oz eq	4.5 oz eq	5 oz eq
Gold (70%)		4.9 oz eq	5.6 oz eq	6.3 oz eq	7 oz eq
Gold Award of Distinction (100%)		7 oz eq	8 oz eq	9 oz eq	10 oz eq

Lunch

		Award Level					If the maximum amount of the total grains offered over the week is				
							8 oz eq	9 oz eq	10 oz eq	11 oz eq	12 oz eq
..offer at least this amount of whole grain-rich products	Bronze (67%)	5.4 oz eq	6 oz eq	6.7 oz eq	7.4 oz eq	8 oz eq					
	Silver (67%)	5.4 oz eq	6 oz eq	6.7 oz eq	7.4 oz eq	8 oz eq					
	Gold (100%)	8 oz eq	9 oz eq	10 oz eq	11 oz eq	12 oz eq					
	Gold Award of Distinction* (100%)	8 oz eq	9 oz eq	10 oz eq	11 oz eq	12 oz eq					

*Gold Award of Distinction applicants: Only 1.0 oz eq whole grain-rich offering per week for lunch may be a grain-based dessert in any line throughout the cafeteria.

4. *May I offer the same whole-grain food item each day?*

No. Bronze, Silver, and Gold applicants must have at least three different whole grain-rich foods offered during the week. The Gold Award of Distinction applicants must do the same, but with the additional requirement that only 1.0 ounce equivalent (oz. eq.) whole grain-rich offering per week may be a grain-based dessert in any line throughout the cafeteria. Schools should offer a variety of whole grains each week and over the course of the 2 weeks of submitted menus. For example, schools will not meet the HUSSC criteria by only offering whole-wheat bread as a daily whole-grain item. Schools are encouraged to offer different types of whole grains, such as brown rice, whole-grain pasta, whole cornmeal, quinoa, oatmeal, or other cooked whole grains to increase the use of whole grains in schools. Schools may also offer different forms of the same whole-grain foods, such as whole-wheat bread, whole-wheat rolls, and whole-wheat tortillas. A variety of whole-grain foods are also available for schools to use through the USDA Foods program (formerly known as Commodity Foods). Check the [HUSSC website](#) often for availability of the Whole Grains Resource for School Meal Programs, which will serve as the authority for whole grain criteria for HUSSC.

5. *What are some examples of food products that may be considered a grain-based dessert?*

Grain-based desserts are noted with footnotes 3 and 4 in the updated Exhibit A chart located in policy memo [SP 30-2012](#). Examples of grain-based desserts include but are not limited to: cakes, cookies, dessert pies and cobblers, sweet crackers, brownies, and cinnamon rolls.

6. *How can my school obtain whole grain-rich USDA Foods (formerly known as Commodity foods)?*

The USDA Foods program is administered at the State level and provides our Nation's school children with nutritious, safe, appealing, and 100-percent American-grown food. The State distributing agency selects food items from the USDA foods available list, those foods that they believe will be most popular in the school/child nutrition programs in their State. If you would like to see more whole grain-rich

product options, please contact your State distributing agency. The FNS website provides a [list of State contacts](#) and a [list of foods available](#).

7. *Are there any recipes for whole grain-rich foods?*

The Recipe for Healthy Kids cookbook provides kid-tested recipes that incorporate whole grain-rich foods, as well as vegetables and beans and peas. These recipes have been standardized for use in institutional settings. The [Recipe for Healthy Kids cookbook](#) can be found on the Team Nutrition Website.

8. *Where can I find helpful tips for adding whole grain-rich foods, fruits, dark green, red and orange, and dry beans and peas into my menus?*

The Healthy Meals Resource System Best Practices database offers State resources that may assist with incorporating whole grain-rich foods, fruits, dark green, red and orange, and dry beans and peas into menus, while also meeting meal pattern requirements. For additional information, please visit the [Best Practices Database](#).

Nutrition Education and Physical Education

1. What are the nutrition education criteria for elementary schools?

Nutrition education is provided to all full-day students at all grade levels in the school.

- Healthy eating messages and activities are integrated into existing classroom instruction, such as health education, science, language arts, and reading and writing classes. This type of instruction should include the use of Team Nutrition materials, or their equivalent. You can order or download lessons and resources from the [Team Nutrition Resources](#) page.
- Nutrition education activities involve the classroom, cafeteria, and home/family.
- Messages are reinforced by prohibiting the use of food as a reward (school holiday parties are excluded).

2. *What are the nutrition education criteria for middle and high schools?*

- Nutrition education is offered to middle school students in at least one grade (Bronze/Silver level) and in at least two grades (Gold/Gold Award of Distinction level) during the school year.
- Nutrition education is offered to high school students in two courses required for graduation.

- Nutrition education involves multiple channels of communication, which at a minimum will include the classroom, cafeteria, and the home.
- Messages are reinforced by prohibiting the use of food as a reward (school holiday parties are excluded.)

3. *What are the physical education criteria for elementary schools?*

Structured physical education (PE) classes are provided to students throughout the school year. These classes count toward the PE time requirements. Bronze and Silver level applicants must provide at least 45 minutes of PE throughout each week. Gold level applicants must provide at least 90 minutes of PE throughout each week. Gold Award of Distinction level applicants must provide at least 150 minutes of PE throughout each week.

Up to 20 minutes (Bronze/Silver) and 45 minutes (Gold/Gold Award of Distinction) of the PE requirement may be met by providing *structured* physical activity, which means that it is planned by a certified PE teacher but may be implemented by a classroom teacher or school administrator. All students must participate, unless physically disabled, in the physical activities which must be at least moderate-intensity and in increments of at least 10 minutes. In addition, if using structured physical activity to help meet physical education requirement, the school must also offer other daily physical activity opportunities. See additional questions related to physical activity criteria under *Physical Activity* for more information.

4. *What are the physical education criteria for middle and high schools?*

Offer structured physical education classes to at least two grades and provide students in all grades opportunities to participate in physical activity, such as intramural/interscholastic sports or activity clubs, throughout the school year. The PE requirement for middle and high schools is not time-specific and does not have to be offered for the full school year; it can be offered for a semester or trimester.

Physical Activity

1. *What are the physical activity criteria for elementary schools?*

Physical activity opportunities must be provided daily for students outside of physical education class. For example, scheduled recess, walking clubs, bike clubs, intramural sports, a walk-to-school program, etc. Such opportunities for physical activity are not the same as physical education.

Physical activity education messages are reinforced by neither denying nor requiring physical activity as a means of punishment.

2. *What are the physical activity criteria for middle and high schools?*

Actively promote participation in physical activities to all students, both in and out of school. Encourage participation in intramural sports, walking to school (if safe), biking, school or community 5K events, etc.

Physical activity education messages are reinforced by neither denying nor requiring physical activity as a means of punishment.

School Wellness Policies

1. *May a school submit their district wellness policy if it does not have a school wellness policy?*

Yes. Schools that do not have an individualized local wellness policy may submit a copy of their district wellness policy and satisfactorily complete the HUSSC School Wellness Policy Worksheet located within the application to show how they are meeting the local school wellness policy criteria.

2. *May a school submit their individual school's wellness policy instead of the district's policy?*

Yes. Although schools are not required to have a school-level wellness policy, but if it does, it should be the policy submitted.

3. *What are some ways for parents, students, school administration and staff, and the community to get involved in the implementation of the local school wellness policy?*

Becoming a part of the school's Wellness Committee, campaigning to provide healthier vending machine choices for students, or volunteering to assist with school wellness events are just a few of the ways parents, students, school administration and staff, and the community can be involved with the local school wellness policy. [Healthier Middle Schools: Everyone Can Help](#) is a collection of communication tools (print and video) designed to help you engage principals, school food service managers, teachers, parents and student in school wellness activities.

Other Criteria for Excellence

1. *What types of activities or practices are acceptable to demonstrate that a school is working to increase School Breakfast Program (SBP) participation?*

Innovative practices, such as Breakfast in the Classroom, Breakfast on the Bus, Grab and Go Breakfast and many others may be used as examples to show that your school is implementing an innovative practice to increase SBP participation. If a school is offering breakfast in a method that is not described here, please submit a description under Program Outreach Excellence. Use of outreach resources provided by FNS, such as the [School Breakfast Toolkit](#), can provide additional activities and ideas for SBP.

2. *Do the afterschool or summer food programs have to be conducted on school grounds to qualify under the options for Program Outreach Excellence?*

No. If the school partners with an afterschool or summer food program that occurs at a local facility located off the school property, it would qualify under Program Outreach. However, the program must participate in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), Afterschool Snack Program or at-risk afterschool meals component of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

3. *Which programs would meet the summer meals criteria?*

Schools located in areas where more than 50 percent of the children are eligible for free or reduced price meals may operate a summer food site open to the community through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Seamless Summer Option or through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). If the school only wants to serve meals to children enrolled in the summer school program, it can continue its participation in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP), but this practice would not be considered SFSP. For information on the differences between SFSP, NSLP/SBP, and Seamless Summer Option please see the [Comparison of Programs SFSP/NSLP/Seamless Option Chart](#).

4. *Where can we find resources on CACFP afterschool meals and SFSP?*

Resources related to CACFP at-risk afterschool meals, including the [At-Risk Afterschool Handbook](#) and policy memo [CACFP 08-2012: At-Risk Afterschool Meals Component of the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Questions and Answers](#), are available online. [SFSP handbooks](#) are also available online.

5. *Are schools required to follow different meal patterns if they provide meals through the CACFP at-risk afterschool meals component or SFSP?*

No. Schools participating in Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) may choose to use the NSLP and SBP meal patterns or the CACFP meal patterns. For Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), the SFSP State agency may grant a school permission to use NSLP and SBP meal patterns instead of the SFSP meal patterns.

6. *What is a school-sponsored non-competitive afterschool physical activity program?*

Any physical activity program sponsored by the school where students do not compete against each other falls into this category. Schools may choose to sponsor activities that can include dancing, hiking, yoga, martial arts, walking or biking clubs.

7. *What are the benefits of offering recess before lunch?*

Offering recess before lunch allows students to engage in physical activity prior to eating their meal. Research shows that offering recess before lunch can reduce plate waste, increase food intake, decrease the time students spend waiting in line, and reduce student discipline referrals. For additional information, see the [Recess/Recess Before Lunch](#) section of the HealthierUS School Challenge Resources webpage.

8. *What are some examples of how a school can actively support and promote walking or bicycling to and from school?*

Schools may support and promote walking or bicycling to and from school by encouraging students and their families to utilize these options in newsletters sent home, at PTA meetings, through the use of posters/advertisements, and encouraging participation in events like Bike to School Day or Walk to School Day. For additional information, see the [HealthierUS School Challenge Resources](#) webpage.

9. *What is the Chefs Move to Schools program and what does a school need to do to meet the criteria of excellence related to partnering with a chef in the Chefs Move to Schools Program?*

The *Chefs Move to Schools* program, founded in May 2010, is a part of First Lady Michelle Obama's initiative, *Let's Move!* This program taps into the creative power and potential that chefs have to change the nutrition environment in schools and local communities. By partnering with school foodservice professionals, chefs have the ability to offer their assistance and work with the school to make school meals healthy and appealing to students. To meet the HUSSC criteria of excellence related to partnering with a chef in the *Chefs Move to Schools* program, the chef and school need to be listed as being matched on the [Chefs Move to Schools](#) website.

10. My school has implemented a chef in the classroom program. Would this qualify under the Nutrition Education Excellence option (in place of participation in the Chefs Move to School program)?

Yes, if your school is involved in a similar type of program as *Chefs Move to Schools (CMTS)*, it can qualify under the Nutrition Education Excellence option if the chef signs up in the CMTS program and selects the school as a match. The school would also need to provide a brief description of the program and a contact person for future follow-up if needed. The chef and school would not need to participate in CMTS activities.

11. What are some examples of ways students can provide input on school food and physical activity options?

Students can be involved in many ways to help schools improve their environment. By creating or starting a school wellness team, students can make suggestions regarding food offered in the cafeteria or vending machines, as well as, sharing ideas to broaden physical activity options available at school. Students may generate interest from other students and teachers by starting a petition supporting food changes and physical activity options in the school. For additional ideas for how students can get involved in creating or sustaining a healthy school environment, please visit Team Nutrition's website to view [Empowering Youth](#) and [Healthier Middle Schools](#) resources.

12. What are examples of some activities that are considered a Farm to School initiative?

A main activity of farm to school programs involves buying food from local or regional vendors. The options are numerous; consider working with local or regional farmers, ranchers, fishermen, food processors or manufacturers to incorporate local items on the menu. In addition to procurement efforts, there are many hands-on activities such as school gardens, field trips to local farms, and cooking classes that are also included in the concept of farm to school. Standards-based garden curriculum often integrates into these activities as well, to enhance the student's overall knowledge and experience. See the [Farm to School](#) resource. For additional resources, visit USDA's [Farm to School](#) website and the [Healthy Meals Resource System's Farm to School Resources](#) webpage for more ideas on how you can integrate farm to school activities in your area.

13. Do the Smarter Lunchroom techniques have to be implemented in all serving lines in order to qualify under the School Food Service Excellence options?

We encourage the implementation of Smarter Lunchroom techniques throughout the cafeteria, but Smarter Lunchroom techniques must be implemented in at least *one* serving line to qualify under the School Food Service Excellence options.

Competitive Foods and Beverages (Including a la Carte and/or Vended Items)

1. *What is the basis for the competitive foods criteria?*

The HUSSC competitive foods criteria reflect the recommendations of the 2010 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, and the Institute of Medicine (IOM) published recommendations (April 2007) for foods that should be served in schools outside of the organized school lunch meals. Competitive foods criteria emphasize limiting the intake of foods high in calories, total fat, saturated fat, *trans* fat, added sugars, and sodium.

2. *Were any changes made to the HUSSC competitive foods criteria in the HUSSC criteria that went into effect on July 1, 2012?*

There are no changes to the HUSSC criteria for foods sold outside of the meal program (i.e., Competitive Foods).

3. *Do these criteria eliminate selling whole milk and 2 percent milk either a la carte and/or through school vending? Why?*

Yes. The 2010 *Dietary Guidelines* specifies that Americans (age 2 and older) use fat-free and low-fat milk and milk products.

4. *May low-fat flavored milk be served as a competitive food (a la carte or through vending)?*

Yes. There have been no changes to the HUSSC criteria related to foods sold outside of the school meals programs.

5. *Why was a 200-calorie limit put on portions of items for vended sale?*

A 200-calorie limit was placed upon pre-packaged vended or a la carte sales in an effort to control portion size and thus calories. Additionally, schools that prepare foods for a la carte sales are required to limit the portion to the serving size of the food served as part of the reimbursable meal. For example, if a 2 ounce bagel is served as a part of the reimbursable meal, a 4 ounce bagel would not be offered as a pre-packaged vended item or a la carte sale item.

6. *May my school offer an entrée or side item (non-entrée) as an a la carte item if it is not offered as part of the lunch menu that day?*

Yes. However, the entrée or side item (non-entrée) would have to meet the HUSSC Competitive Foods criteria. For example, if pizza or broccoli is sold a la carte, but is not offered as a part of the reimbursable meal on that day, the pizza or broccoli would have to meet all competitive food criteria.

7. *Do beverages have to meet the sugar criteria?*

No. Only low-fat or fat-free milk, 100 percent juice, and water can be sold as competitive beverages in order to meet any of the HUSSC award levels. Low-fat or fat-free milk and 100% juice are exempt from the sugar criteria. Milk cannot contain non-nutritive sweeteners. Water must be unflavored, unsweetened, non-carbonated, and caffeine-free.

8. *Are any carbonated beverages allowed for HUSSC?*

Carbonated milk, juice, or water are not allowed for schools applying for HUSSC.

9. *Do the Gold/Gold Award of Distinction competitive foods criteria address only items sold by the school, or do they include other school-sponsored activity sales?*

The Gold/Gold Award of Distinction criteria include all foods and beverages made available at the school, to students on the school campus, and throughout the school day. Examples of food and beverage sales/service that would require meeting the nutrition guidelines or standards are:

- Foods or beverages sold a la carte in the school cafeteria
- Foods or beverages sold in vending machines, school stores, or snack bars operated by the school
- School-sponsored food and beverage sales during the school day

10. *Do the foods served at birthday parties or other classroom events have to meet the Challenge criteria?*

No. Schools are not expected to monitor what a parent sends to school for a birthday party. However, schools may have policies on birthday parties/classroom events as part of their school wellness policies.

11. Do the food items sold at a fundraiser after school have to meet the competitive foods criteria?

No, the food items sold at an afterschool fundraiser do not have to meet the competitive foods criteria. The competitive foods criteria only apply to school-sponsored foods and beverages sold during the school day.

Certification Period

1. What kind of recordkeeping and/or documentation is required of schools after they have received certification?

Schools should maintain the HUSSC criteria during the 4-year award period. The school must keep copies of the following documents on file during the certification period:

- Menus served
- Production records (except for the Bronze Award)
- Recipes for products sold/served, if school-made
- Child Nutrition (CN) Labels
- Food Product Ingredient Labels or Manufacturer Statement
- Nutrition Facts Labels

2. What is the time period for my award?

The time period for all awards is four years from the date of the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) approval. Before your award expires, you should apply for recertification. If possible, try for the next higher award level.

3. If a school was recently approved for an award, how long does the school have to wait before applying for a higher award level?

Effective SY 2011-2012, HealthierUS School Challenge applicants that have been awarded previously will be allowed to begin the application process for another award at any level one year from the date they received their last award. For example, if a school or a district was certified in October 2010, they would be eligible to start the application process for another award in October 2011 (serve menus, etc.).