

Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative



United States Department of Agriculture



USDA Food and Nutrition Services

.....
Child Nutrition Programs

April 22, 2024

9:45– 10:45 AM



Today's Speakers



Kim Visioni, MS, RD

Nutritionist

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Today's Objectives

- Provide information on the Healthy Meals Incentives (HMI) Recognition Awards and School Food System Transformation Challenge sub-grants.
- Provide ideas to promote the HMI Recognition Awards and School Food System Transformation Challenge sub-grants and to recognize School Food Authorities (SFA) that have received an award or grant.



Who are You? Let Us Know!

Raise Your Hand

- A. School
- B. Agricultural organization
- C. Food manufacturer or processor
- D. State Agency
- E. Other



Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative (HMI)

Improving the nutritional quality of school meals with innovative ideas, best practices, training and food systems transformation.



**Grants for
Small/Rural
School Food
Authorities
(SFA)**



**Recognition
Awards**



**School Food System
Transformation
Challenge Sub-Grants**



**Healthy Meals
Summits**





Grants for Small and/or Rural School Food Authorities



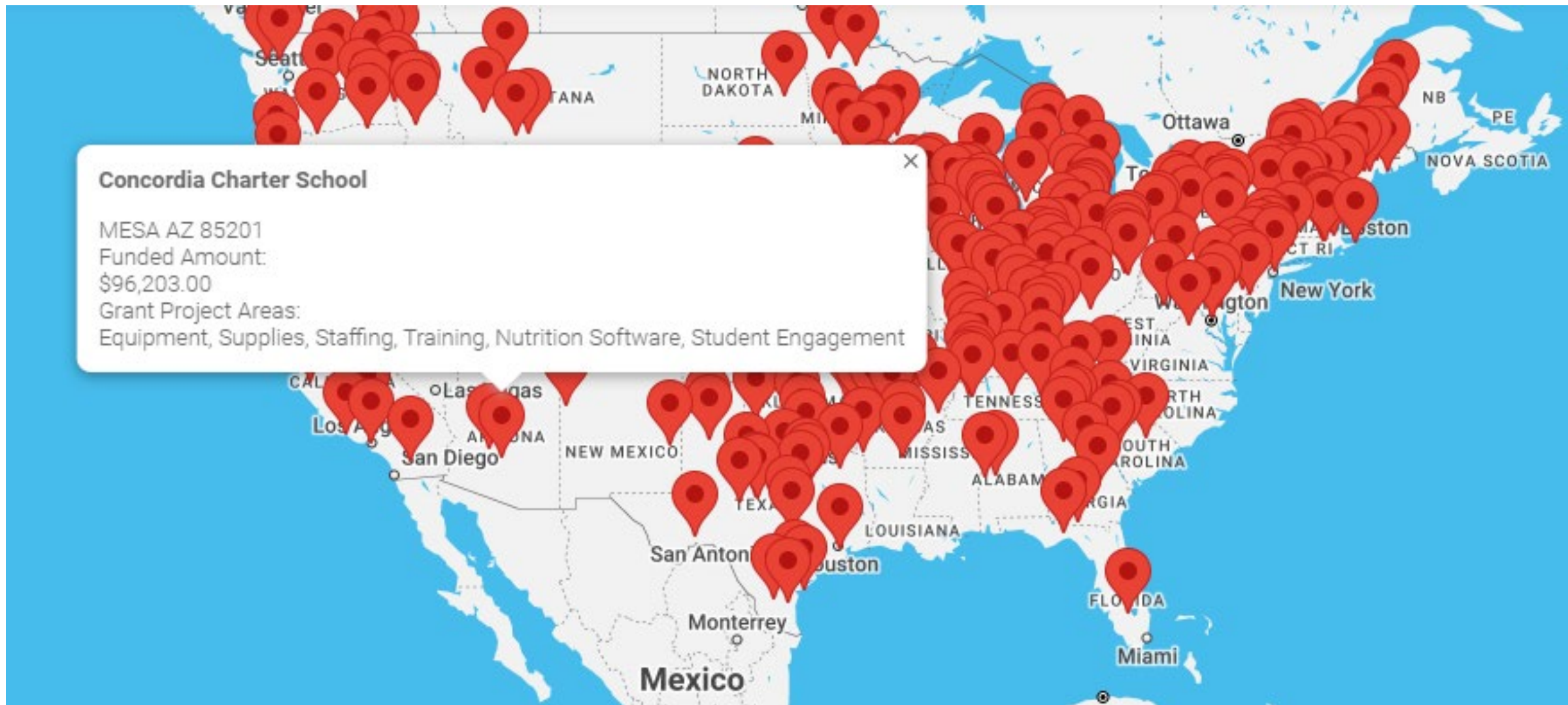
Grants for Small and/or Rural School Food Authorities

Support improvements in the nutritional quality of school meals through the generation and sharing of innovative ideas and tested practices

- Nearly \$30 million in grants awarded
- 264 SFAs receiving up to \$150,000 each
- Across 44 States and the District of Columbia
- Greatest needs for funding included equipment, staffing and supplies
- Grantees receive technical assistance from Action for Healthy Kids (AFHK) team, including RMC Health and Chef Ann Foundation



Map of Grantees





Recognition Awards for School Food Authorities



Recognition Award Categories

Trailblazer Awards



Breakfast Trailblazer



Small and/or Rural SFA Breakfast Trailblazer



Lunch Trailblazer



Small and/or Rural SFA Lunch Trailblazer



Innovation Awards

Innovative School Lunch Makeover



Innovation in the Cultural Diversity of School Meals



Innovation in the Preparation of School Meals



Innovation in Nutrition Education



Recognition Awards Application

- Application portal is open through June 30, 2025
- Technical assistance is available to applicants
- Applications reviewed on a rolling basis
- Winners will be notified and announced within two months of submitting an application
- Informational webinars and resources



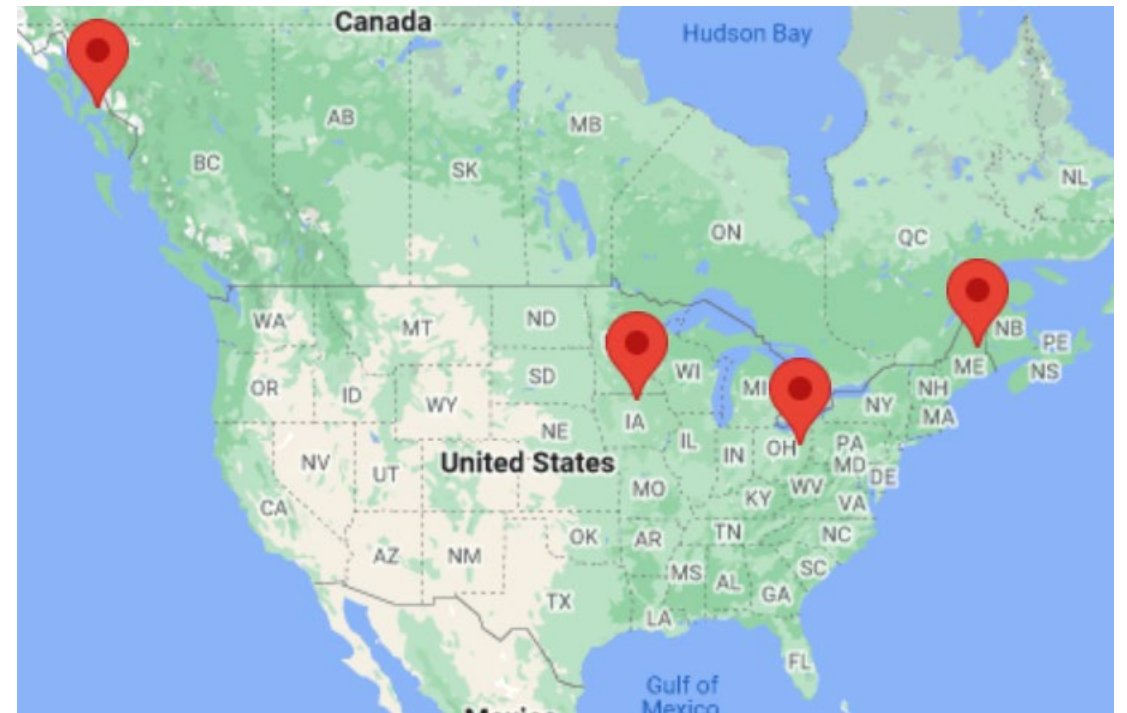
Recognition Award Winner's Celebration

- USDA and AFHK National and local recognition:
 - Shared on websites, social media posts, podcasts, and in press releases
- Awardee Toolkit:
 - Promotional materials to help publicize success to local media and the local school community
- Exclusive invitation to a national Healthy Meals Summit!



Celebrating Recognition Awardees

- ***Small and/or Rural SFA Lunch Trailblazer Award***
 - Clear Lake Community School District, Iowa
 - Sandy Valley Local School District, Ohio
- ***Innovation in the Preparation of School Meals Award***
 - Petersburg School District, Alaska
 - Regional School Unit 89, Maine



How Do I Get Started

- Visit healthymealsincentives.org/recognition-awards
- Review Recognition Award Categories and Criteria
- Create a SFA Profile in the Application Portal
- Email: awards@healthymealsincentives.org



Join the adventure of celebrating school meals!



**Follow Us On
Social Media**



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School Food System Transformation Challenge Sub-Grants



HMI: School Food System Transformation Challenge

Sub-Grants Cooperative Agreements

Awardees:

- Center for School and Community Partnerships at Boise State
- Chef Ann Foundation
- Full Plates Full Potential
- Illinois Public Health Institute



Goals:

- Support local and regional food systems
- Expand school food procurement pathways
- Engage supporting organizations
- Balance Regional and National focus





SCALES
Supporting Community Agriculture
& Local Education Systems



Closed in January



A program of the
Chef Ann Foundation



Opened in February



**Full Plates
Full Potential**
ENDING CHILD HUNGER IN MAINE

Opened in March

fns.usda.gov/school-meals/hmi/school-food-system-transformation-challenge

Goals of Project SCALES:

Focus: National

Award:\$150K



SCALES

Supporting Community Agriculture
& Local Education Systems

To support local innovations and collaborations that improve the K-12 food system



To improve the K-12 school food supply chain by incentivizing innovation.



To establish and/or strengthen partnerships between components of the food system:

- schools
- food producers
- processors/distributors/industry
- other potential partners



To create a sustainable, resilient, equitable, and nutritious school food system.



To collect and disseminate lessons learned, and to share best practices.



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<https://projectscales.com/>



A program of the
Chef Ann Foundation

Goals of PLANTS:

Focus: National

Award: \$500K – \$600K

Building and strengthening relationships

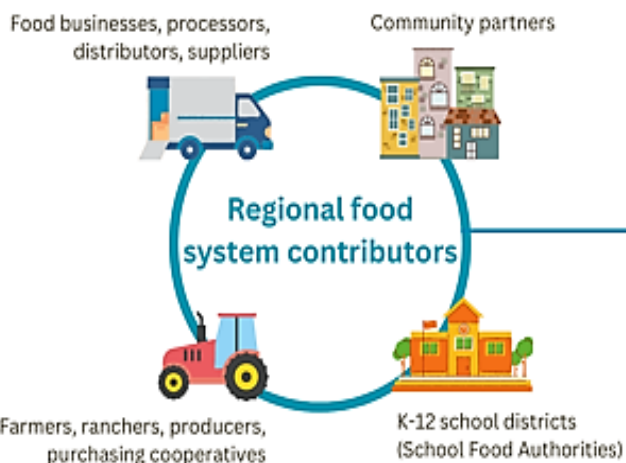
Improving school food supply chain coordination

Expanding scratch cooking operations

Increasing awareness of and access to K-12 markets

Establishing a sustainable approach and best practices

At least 3 partners located within 250 miles of the Lead Partner
(must include at least 1 SFA)



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<https://www.thelunchbox.org/apply-for-a-grant/plants-grant/>



LAKE MICHIGAN SCHOOL FOOD SYSTEM INNOVATION HUB

Focus: Lake Michigan Region

Awards: \$10k – \$250k

SPARK AWARDS

Spark Awards fund projects that need a short-term infusion of funds for school food system and marketplace improvements, such as capacity-building, planning, and product testing projects.

Award Range: \$10,000 – \$75,000

Grant Cycle: One year, with optional 4-month extension period

Project Timeline: August 1, 2024 – July 31, 2025

INNOVATION COLLABORATIVE AWARDS

Innovation Collaborative Awards fund projects that promote systems-level change of the school food system and marketplace, such as scaling up of programs, regional partnerships, or new program or product development and integration.

Award: \$250,000

Grant Cycle: 2.5 years

Project Timeline: August 1, 2024 – December 31, 2026



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<https://innovateschoolfood.org/>



School Food System Innovation Grant

Supports innovative and collaborative pilot projects that reimagine what Maine's school food system could look like

- ❖ Strengthen Maine's food supply chain
- ❖ Increase the sourcing and use of Maine-based foods
- ❖ Address barriers for schools
- ❖ Support school nutrition teams
- ❖ Establish sustainable solutions and best practices
- ❖ Foster lasting partnerships and collaborations





Healthy Meals Summits



National Healthy Meals Summits

- Dates and locations
 - October 22-23, 2024 in Las Vegas
 - October 23-24, 2025 in Las Vegas
- Celebrate accomplishments
- Share best practices and strategies for sustaining success
- National conversation about the critical importance of school meals
- Network with peers and school nutrition partners
- Participate in professional development sessions



Spread the News

- Include information about the Recognition Awards and School Food System Transformation Challenge Sub-Grants in regular communications to SFAs
- Personally invite SFAs to *join the adventure* and apply for one or more of the Recognition Awards
- Highlight SFAs that have received a Recognition Award or HMI grant on your webpage and on social media



For more information visit:

 fns.usda.gov/school-meals/hmi

 healthymealsincentives.org



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