

Paid Lunch Equity (PLE)

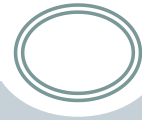
2026-2027

RCCIs do not need to complete the Paid Lunch Equity Tools, as all students are free. Exception: RCCIs with day treatment centers (students are not residents)



- **WHAT IS PAID LUNCH EQUITY?**
- **WHEN AND HOW DO I CALCULATE MY PAID LUNCH EQUITY REQUIREMENT?**
- **CAN WE APPLY FOR AN EXEMPTION FROM THE PLE REQUIREMENT?**

Paid Lunch Equity (PLE)



Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010

- Increase prices charged for “paid” lunches, or
- Provide other non-Federal sources to the nonprofit school food service account

Calculation of the Paid Lunch Equity

• SY 16-17	\$2.78
• SY 17-18	\$2.86
• SY 18-19	\$2.92
• SY 19-20	\$3.00
• SY20-21	\$3.09
• SY 21-22	\$3.18
• SY 22-23	\$3.31
• SY23-24	\$3.56
• SY24-25	\$3.85
• SY25-26	\$4.01
• SY26-27	\$4.16

Paid Lunch Equity (PLE)



SFAs Qualifying for the SY 2026-2027 PLE Exemption

- For SY 2026-2027 SFAs with a positive or zero balance in the nonprofit school food service account as of June 30, 2025, SFA's are exempt from PLE pricing requirements found at [7 CFR 210.14\(e\)](#).
 - An attestation needs to be completed verifying that SFA's nonprofit food service account was positive or zero balance as of **June 30, 2025**. *Once the attestation statement is submitted, you should receive an email receipt verifying submission. Please keep this receipt and verification of your balance of your school food service account as of June 30, 2025, to be considered approved.*
- While not required, exempt SFAs may still use the PLE tool to complete the steps necessary to determine their target SY 2026-2027 paid lunch price, consistent with Program regulation at [7 CFR 210.14\(e\)](#), and adjust their paid lunch prices accordingly,. Please note, the SY 2026-2027 PLE tool and instructions can be found at: [Paid Lunch Equity \(PLE\)](#)
- **The weighted average price for 2026-2027 should be at or above \$###**
- If you have any questions, please email: SCNFinance@doe.in.gov (*Please put your sponsor number, and "PLE Tool" in the subject line*).
- Common Questions & Answers can be found at: [Paid Lunch Equity \(PLE\)](#)

Paid Lunch Equity (PLE)



SFAs Not Qualifying for the SY 2026-2027 PLE Exemption

- SFAs that had a negative balance in the nonprofit school food service account as of **June 30, 2025**, must follow PLE requirement according to [7 CFR 210.14\(e\)](#) when establishing their paid lunch prices for SY 2026-2027. SFAs may use the PLE tool found at: [Paid Lunch Equity \(PLE\)](#) to determine their paid lunch prices.

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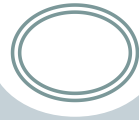


SFAs Not Qualifying for the SY 2026-2027 PLE Exemption

- In the PLE tool, SFAs may use the price they last charged students as the basis for the SY 2026-2027 paid lunch equity price calculation, even if those prices were charged during a year the SFA was not required to comply with PLE requirements.
- If an SFA did not charge for meals during SY 2025-2026, such as an SFA that operated the Community Eligibility Provision, Provision 2 or 3, or a State funded non-pricing option and is returning to standard counting and claiming in SY 2026-2027, it may use the most recent paid lunch price date as the basis for its SY 2026-2027 paid lunch calculation. If an SFA is unable to find documentation of the last paid meal price charged to students, then it must follow FNS guidance for new schools found in [Guidance on Paid Lunch Equity and Revenue from Nonprogram Foods | Food and Nutrition Service \(usda.gov\)](#).

Consistent with [7 CFR 210.14\(e\)\(4\)\(i\)](#), SFAs are not required to raise their paid lunch price by more than 10 cents for SY 2026-2027 from the last year they charged for paid lunches. SFAs can still choose to raise the price by more than 10 cents.

Paid Lunch Equity (PLE)



PLE Tool Excel Tabs:

Tab 1: Guidance

Tab 2: Instructions (Enter sponsor number and name in cell A3)

Tab 3: SY 26-27 Requirement Calculator

Tab 4: SY 26-27 Price Raise Calculator

Tab 5: SY 26-27 Non-Federal Calculator

Tab 6: SY 26-27 Split Calculator

Tab 7: SY 26-27 REPORT

Tab 8: SY 10-11 Price Calculator

You will start with the Instructions tab by entering your sponsor number and school name in cell A2

Program Year: 2025 Sponsor:  

Unrounded Requirement Finder Step 1



Tab 2: Unrounded Requirement Finder

If a PLE Tool was not completed for 2025-2026, you may want to enter your October 2024 Monthly # of Paid Lunches, and Paid Lunch Price on the SY 25-26 Price Calculator tab

Price requirement
(unrounded) from SY 2025-
2026 PLE Tool

SY 26-27 Weighted Average Price Requirement Calculator

Step 1
The weighted average price is based on adjusting the SY 2025-26 price requirement by the 2% rate increase plus the Consumer Price Index (3.85%).

Unrounded Price Requirement for SY 2025-26	Weighted Average Price Requirement for SY 2026-27
Found in Section 1, Block A of the PLE Report from SY 2025-26 or in cell B32 of the Annual Unrounded Requirement Finder	Requirement to the nearest cent
	\$ -

If the Unrounded Price Requirement for SY 2025-26 is not known, the Unrounded Price Requirement from the most recent school year can be used.

Weighted Average Price Calculator (Step 2)



SFA NAME: [TYPE SFA NAME HERE]

The prices are based on adjusting SY 2024-25 price requirement by the 2% rate increase plus the Consumer Price Index (6.03%

SY 2025-26 Weighted Average Price Requirement	
Requirement to the nearest cent	Requirement ROUNDED DOWN to the nearest 5 cents
\$ -	\$ -

SY 2025-26 Price Raise Calculator

Step 1

If the SY 2024-25 Weighted Average Price is equal to or above the target price of \$4.01 then the SFA is compliant for SY 2025-26.

SY 2024-25 Weighted Average Price Calculator

Enter the paid prices and number of paid lunches sold at each price for October 2024.

	Number of Paid Lunches	Paid Lunch Prices	Monthly Revenue	Weighted Average Price for SY 2024-25
1			\$ -	
2			\$ -	
3			\$ -	
4			\$ -	
5			\$ -	
6			\$ -	
7			\$ -	
8			\$ -	
9			\$ -	
10			\$ -	
Total	-		\$ -	\$ -

Current Weighted Average Price

Step 2

Shortfall or Credit

Enter any shortfall or credit carried forward from SY 2024-25

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Step 3



(Optional Step)

Pricing Estimation Calculator

Below is a tool allowing users to manipulate prices to achieve the required weighted average price for SY 2026-27.

	Number of Paid Lunches	Paid Lunch Prices	Monthly Revenue	Weighted Average Price for SY 2026-27
1			\$ -	
2			\$ -	
3			\$ -	
4			\$ -	
5			\$ -	
6			\$ -	
7			\$ -	
8			\$ -	
9			\$ -	
10			\$ -	
Total	-		\$ -	\$ -

New Weighted Average Price

PLE Exemptions



- A PLE Exemption, if approved by the State Agency, allows a school meeting pre-determined criteria, an exemption from the PLE Pricing requirements. This means the school will not have to raise paid lunch prices for that year. The school will need to complete an attestation statement that can be found at: [Paid Lunch Equity \(PLE\)](#)
- Congress determines whether to allow exemptions each year and the State Agency has the authority to approve or deny the requests based on multiple factors.

PLE Exemptions SY 2026-2027



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State Agency Contact



For questions about **Financial Management of the Food Service Account**, contact:

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Andrea Hollin

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(317) 232-0410

Common questions and answer can be found at: [Paid Lunch](#)

[Equity \(PLE\)](#) Or

Email: SCNfiance@doe.in.gov

(Please be sure to include your sponsor number and PLE Tool in the subject line)