

Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) Waiver Approval

Per regular PLE requirements, SFAs would need to increase paid lunch prices each year or offset any difference with non-federal funds. However, USDA Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) recognizes that during this transition year, requiring SFAs to increase their paid meal prices could place a burden upon families who have not paid for meals over the last two school years.

- Pursuant to the waiver authority granted in Section 12(l) of the National School Lunch Act (NSLA), FNS waives paid lunch equity requirements found in Section 12(p) of the NSLA, 42 U.S.C. 1760(p) and implemented in 7 CFR 210.14(e). This waiver pertains to school lunch prices for SY 22-23.
- USDA announced a waiver option for the 22-23 PLE requirement. IDOE received approval, making all schools eligible to implement the waiver.
- The PLE waiver provides schools with the flexibility to not raise their paid lunch prices in SY 2022-23
- This provides schools the flexibility to price their paid lunches at levels they feel is best based on their local needs. This includes decreasing paid lunch price from their previous levels.

Schools should carefully review their budgets before adjusting paid lunch prices in SY 2022-23. Some considerations include:

- Reimbursement will return to NSLP rates
- Reimbursement will still be based on eligibility of child
- Increased food costs
- Fluctuation in participation
- Meal quality should not decrease if a school decides to lower their paid lunch prices.
- As a reminder, the PLE requirement only applies to school lunch paid price for the 2022-2023 school year.

Questions? Email scnfinance@doe.in.gov with "PLE Tool" in the subject line.

Coming Soon: Paid Lunch Equity Q&A on [PLE webpage](#).

Information on how to calculate 2023-2024 paid lunch prices will be available at a later date.