



Brownsville Independent School District

Agenda Category: General Function Board of Education Meeting: 05/05/2026

Item Title: Federal Drug Administration Grant and Texas Department of Agriculture Grant X Action Information Discussion

BACKGROUND:

The Brownsville Independent School District (BISD) Food and Nutrition Services has been selected to receive \$2,000,000.00 from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for a school meal contaminants study, and a \$10,000.00 grant from the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) for Farm to School initiatives.

As part of a national effort, the FDA study will assess the safety and nutritional quality of National School Lunch Program (NSLP) meals. BISD is one of sixteen districts selected, participating with eight campuses to identify contaminants, promote whole foods, and measure improvements in meal quality. The Chef Ann Foundation’s Research & Evaluation team will provide on-site technical assistance, virtual technical assistance, research strategy support, and on-site collection and shipping of food samples to the FDA for analysis.

The TDA grant will fund student education on fresh, locally sourced foods, strengthening connections to local agriculture and ranchers, and healthy eating.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

No cost to the district.

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend approval to accept the FDA grant in the amount of \$2,000,000.00 and the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) grant of \$10,000.00 at no cost to the District.

Jackie Cruz
Submitted by: Principal/Program Director

Recommended by: Asst. Supt./Exec. Dir.

Rosario Pena, RTSBA
Approved by: Chief Financial Officer

Approved for Submission to Board of Education:

Dr. Alda T. Benavides
Dr. Alda T. Benavides, Interim Superintendent

EXHIBIT A

Federal Drug Administration (FDA Grant)

This exhibit evidences a grant award issued by the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) in the total amount of \$2,000,000.00.

The funding was awarded to support approved activities consistent with the agency's mission, including but not limited to research, regulatory compliance, and program development.

Documentation associated with this grant is maintained as part of the official record and is available for review upon request, and includes the following:

- A1- FDA Study Related Budget for Expenditures
- A2 – FDA Grant Notification
- A3 – Chef Ann Welcome Packet

EXHIBIT A1

FDA Study Related Budget for Expenditures

FDA Study Related Budget

Item of Description	Quantity	Unit Price	Funds Requested
Beef Brisket, raw from cattle raised in Texas, grass fed, 1/20 lb.	2160	\$ 100.00	\$ 216,000.00
Beef ground, 85/15, raw from cattle raised in Texas, grass fed. 8/5 lb.	500	\$ 360.00	\$ 180,000.00
Beef, cubed, raw, USDA choice beef cut, 1/2-7/8" cubes, raw, raised in Texas.	1125	\$ 260.00	\$ 292,500.00
Organic Cut Chicken Wings, 8/5 lb. per cs.	1300	\$ 159.60	\$ 207,480.00
Yogurt Organic, 6/64 oz. per cs.	2394	\$ 40.00	\$ 95,760.00
Organic Long Grain Brown Rice, 1/25 lb.	200	\$ 41.30	\$ 8,260.00
6 well electric steamtables	12	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 420,000.00
2 compartment cold pan	2	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 40,000.00
Bulk Milk Dispenser	2	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
15 gallon countertop tilting skillet	1	\$ 20,000.16	\$ 20,000.16
Convectionless Steamer	4	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 100,000.00
Retherm Cabinet	2	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
Merchandiser 23-5/8"	6	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 90,000.00
Tasting Station	6	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 90,000.00
Slicers	8	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 80,000.00
Salad Drier	49	\$ 408.16	\$ 19,999.84
Combi Oven	2	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 40,000.00
GRAND TOTAL			\$ 2,000,000.00

EXHIBIT A2

FDA Grant Notification



Recipient Information 1. Recipient Name BROWNSVILLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DSITRICT 1900 E PRICE RD BROWNSVILLE, TX 78521 2. Congressional District of Recipient 34 3. Payment System Identifier (ID) 1746000418A1 4. Employer Identification Number (EIN) 746000418 5. Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) 6. Recipient's Unique Entity Identifier LNYUV6TAM7J9 7. Project Director or Principal Investigator JACKIE CRUZ jcruz2@bisd.us 956-548-8450 8. Authorized Official Mrs. Diana E Barron	Federal Award Information 11. Award Number 1U18FD008673-01 12. Unique Federal Award Identification Number (FAIN) U18FD008673 13. Statutory Authority PHS Act, Sec 1706, 42 USC 300u-5, as amended; Sec 2(d), PL 98-551 14. Federal Award Project Title Healthy School Meals: A Research Study of BISD Scratch Cooking Implementation 15. Assistance Listing Number 93.103 16. Assistance Listing Program Title Food and Drug Administration Research 17. Award Action Type New Competing 18. Is the Award R&D? Yes																								
Federal Agency Information 9. Awarding Agency Contact Information Patrick Johnson Grants Management Specialist FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION patrick.johnson@fda.hhs.gov 10. Program Official Contact Information Timothy Mueller Senior Policy Analyst FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION timothy.mueller@fda.hhs.gov	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2" style="background-color: #e0f0ff;">Summary Federal Award Financial Information</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="background-color: #e0f0ff;">19. Budget Period Start Date 08/01/2025 – End Date 07/31/2026</td> </tr> <tr> <td>20. Total Amount of Federal Funds Obligated by this Action</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$2,000,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td> 20 a. Direct Cost Amount</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$2,000,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td> 20 b. Indirect Cost Amount</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>21. Authorized Carryover</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>22. Offset</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>23. Total Amount of Federal Funds Obligated this budget period</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$2,000,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>24. Total Approved Cost Sharing or Matching, where applicable</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25. Total Federal and Non-Federal Approved this Budget Period</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$2,000,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="background-color: #e0f0ff;">26. Project Period Start Date 08/01/2025 – End Date 05/31/2027</td> </tr> <tr> <td>27. Total Amount of the Federal Award including Approved Cost Sharing or Matching this Project Period</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$2,000,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> 28. Authorized Treatment of Program Income Additional Costs 29. Grants Management Officer - Signature Kimberly Pendleton	Summary Federal Award Financial Information		19. Budget Period Start Date 08/01/2025 – End Date 07/31/2026		20. Total Amount of Federal Funds Obligated by this Action	\$2,000,000	20 a. Direct Cost Amount	\$2,000,000	20 b. Indirect Cost Amount	\$0	21. Authorized Carryover		22. Offset		23. Total Amount of Federal Funds Obligated this budget period	\$2,000,000	24. Total Approved Cost Sharing or Matching, where applicable	\$0	25. Total Federal and Non-Federal Approved this Budget Period	\$2,000,000	26. Project Period Start Date 08/01/2025 – End Date 05/31/2027		27. Total Amount of the Federal Award including Approved Cost Sharing or Matching this Project Period	\$2,000,000
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30. Remarks PLEASE REVIEW ALL TERMS AND CONDITIONS IN SECTIONS III AND IV. "Terms and Conditions," is acknowledged by the recipient when funds are drawn down or otherwise requested from the grant payment system.																									

SECTION I – AWARD DATA – 1U18FD008673-01**Award Calculation (U.S. Dollars)**

Federal Direct Costs	\$2,000,000
Approved Budget	\$2,000,000
Federal Share	\$2,000,000
TOTAL FEDERAL AWARD AMOUNT	\$2,000,000
AMOUNT OF THIS ACTION (FEDERAL SHARE)	\$2,000,000

SUMMARY TOTALS FOR ALL YEARS		
YR	THIS AWARD	CUMULATIVE TOTALS
1	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000
2	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000

* Recommended future year total cost support, subject to the availability of funds and satisfactory progress of the project.

Fiscal Information:

Document Number: UFD008673A
PMS AccountType: P(Subaccount)
Fiscal Year: 2025

IC	CAN	2025	2026
FD	699H102	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000

* Recommended future year total cost support, subject to the availability of funds and satisfactory progress of the project.

FDA Administrative Data:

PCC: HFP01 / **OC:** 4141 / **Processed:** 08/01/2025

SECTION II – PAYMENT/HOTLINE INFORMATION – 1U18FD008673-01

Acceptance of this award including the "Terms and Conditions" is acknowledged by the recipient when funds are drawn down or otherwise obtained from the grant payment system.

Grant payments will be made available through the DHHS Payment Management System (PMS). Please go to <https://pms.psc.gov/> to find more information on user access, payment, reporting and FAQs.

Inquiries should be directed to:

ONE-DHHS—the PMS Help Desk, providing assistance to all system users. Support is available Monday - Friday from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. ET (except Federal Holidays): 1-877-614-5533 or email PMSSupport@psc.gov.

The HHS Inspector General (IG) maintains a toll-free telephone number, 1-800-447-8477, for receiving information concerning fraud, waste, or abuse under grants and cooperative agreements. Such reports are kept confidential, and callers may decline to give their names if they choose to remain anonymous.

SECTION III – TERMS AND CONDITIONS – 1U18FD008673-01

Acceptance of this award including the "Terms and Conditions" is acknowledged by the recipient when funds are drawn down or otherwise obtained from the grant payment system.

Failure to adhere and comply with the terms and conditions of award, may result in disallowances, enforcement actions such suspension, termination, withholding of support and/or conversion to a

reports may be required for this award. Any additional reporting requirements will be listed under Section IV – Special Terms and Condition of the Notice of Award.

Salary Caps:

None of the funds in this award shall be used to pay the salary of an individual at a rate in excess of the current Executive Level II of the Federal Executive Pay Scale.

Certificates of Confidentiality – 42 U.S.C. 241(d)

Recipients are responsible for complying with all requirements to protect the confidentiality of identifiable, sensitive information that is collected or used in biomedical, behavioral, clinical, or other research (including research on mental health and research on the use and effect of alcohol and other psychoactive drugs) funded wholly or in part by the Federal Government. See 42 U.S.C. 241(d). All research funded by FDA, in whole or in part, that is within the scope of these requirements is deemed to be issued a "Certificate of Confidentiality" through these Terms and Conditions. Certificates issued in this manner will not be issued as a separate document.

Recipients are expected to ensure that any investigator or institution not funded by FDA who receives a copy of identifiable, sensitive information protected by these requirements, understand they are also subject to the requirements of 42 U.S.C. 241(d). Recipients are also responsible for ensuring that any subrecipient that receives funds to carry out part of the FDA award involving a copy of identifiable, sensitive information protected by these requirements understand they are also subject to subsection 42 U.S.C. 241(d).

Acknowledgment of Federal Support:

When issuing statements, press releases, publications, requests for proposal, bid solicitations and other documents –such as tool-kits, resource guides, websites, and presentations (hereafter "statements")– describing the projects or programs funded in whole or in part with FDA federal funds, the recipient must clearly state:

1. the percentage and dollar amount of the total costs of the program or project funded with federal money; and,
2. the percentage and dollar amount of the total costs of the project or program funded by non-governmental sources.

When issuing statements resulting from activities supported by FDA financial assistance, the recipient entity must include an acknowledgement of federal assistance using one of the following statements.

If the FDA Grant or Cooperative Agreement is NOT funded with other non-governmental sources:

This [project/publication/program/website, etc.] [is/was] supported by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award [FAIN] totaling \$XX with 100 percent funded by FDA/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by FDA/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

If the FDA Grant or Cooperative Agreement IS partially funded with other nongovernmental sources:

This [project/publication/program/website, etc.] [is/was] supported by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award [FAIN] totaling \$XX with XX percentage funded by FDA/HHS and \$XX amount and XX percentage funded by non-government source(s). The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by FDA/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

The federal award total must reflect total costs (direct and indirect) for all authorized funds (including supplements and carryover) for the total competitive segment up to the time of the public statement. Any amendments by the recipient to the acknowledgement statement must be coordinated with FDA. If the recipient plans to issue a press release concerning the outcome of activities supported by FDA financial assistance, it should notify FDA in advance to allow for coordination.

Additional prior approval requirements pertaining to Acknowledgement of Federal Support, publications, press statements, etc. may be required, and if applicable, will be listed under Section IV – Special Terms

and Condition of the Notice of Award.

Prior Approval:

All prior approval requests must be submitted using the Prior Approval module in eRA Commons. Any requests involving budgetary issues must include a new proposed budget and a narrative justification of the requested changes. If there are any questions regarding the need or requirement for prior approval for any activity or cost, the recipient is to contact the assigned Grants Management Specialist prior to expenditure of funds.

For grant awards not covered under Expanded Authorities, Carryover and No Cost Extension (NCE) requests will require prior approval. All Carryover and NCE requests should be submitted using the Prior Approval module in eRA Commons. ****Please review the section on Expanded Authorities to determine if this award is covered/not covered under Expanded Authorities and whether prior approval is needed for carryover and no cost extension requests.****

The following activities require prior approval from FDA on all awards:

1. Change in Recipient Organization
2. Significant Rebudgeting
3. Change in Scope or Objectives
4. Deviation from Terms and Conditions of Award
5. Change in Key Personnel which includes replacement of the PD/PI or other key personnel as specified on the NoA.
6. Disengagement from the project for more than three months, or a 25 percent reduction in time devoted to the project, by the approved PD/PI. No individual may be committed to more than 100% professional time and effort. In the event that an individual's commitment exceeds 100%, the recipient must make adjustments to reduce effort. For FDA-sponsored projects, significant reductions in effort (i.e., in excess of 25% of the originally proposed level of effort) for the PD/PI and key personnel named on named on this Notice of Award must receive written prior approval from FDA.

Additional prior approval requirements may be required for this award, and if applicable, will be listed under Section IV – Special Terms and Condition of the Notice of Award.

Audits and Monitoring:

Audit Requirements:

1. Recipients of Federal funds are subject to annual audit requirements as specified in 45 CFR 75.501 (https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=1&SID=8040c4036b962cc9d75c3638dedce240&ty=HTML&h=L&r=PART&n=p445.1.75#se45.1.75_1501). Recipients should refer to this regulation for the current annual Federal fund expenditure threshold level which requires audit.
2. Foreign recipients are subject to the same audit requirements as for-profit organizations (specified in 45 CFR 75.501(h) through 75.501(k).
3. For-profit and foreign entities can email their audit reports to AuditResolution@hhs.gov or mail them to the following address:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Audit Resolution Division, Room 549D
Attention: Robin Aldridge, Director
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Monitoring:

Recipients are responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of grant-supported activities using their established controls and policies, as long as they are consistent with Federal, DHHS and FDA requirements. However, to fulfill their role in regard to the stewardship of Federal funds, FDA monitors our grants to identify potential problems and areas where technical assistance might be necessary. This active monitoring is accomplished through review of reports and correspondence from the recipient, audit reports, site visits, and other information available to FDA.

1. **Desk review:** FDA grants monitoring specialists will periodically reach out to recipients to request information for the completion of desk reviews. Requested information may include:
 - Policies and procedures
 - List of grant expenditures
 - Accounting records
 - Supporting documents (e.g., invoices, receipts, paystubs, timesheets, contracts, etc.)
 - Financial statements
 - Audit reports
 - Other related documentation
2. **Site visits:** FDA will conduct site visits when necessary and will notify the recipient with reasonable advance notice of any such visit(s).
3. **Foreign entities:** All Foreign entities are subject to the same monitoring requirements as domestic entities. Foreign entities covered under immunity Executive Orders will provide supporting documents for monitoring requirements unless such an action is a violation of the Executive Orders. Recipients may discuss with the FDA to come up with an alternate approach to satisfy the award monitoring requirements.

All recipients will make reasonable efforts to resolve issues found, including audit findings. Successful resolutions to issues are important as they are part of the grant performance review. All recipients are responsible for submitting all requested information in an expeditious manner. **Failure to submit timely reports and/or respond to inquiries from FDA may affect future funding or enforcement actions, including withholding, or conversion to a reimbursement payment method.**

Financial Conflict of Interest (FCOI):

This award is subject to the Financial Conflict of Interest (FCOI) regulation at 42 CFR Part 50 Subpart F.

Closeout Requirements (when applicable):

A Final Research Performance Progress Report (FRPPR), Final Invention Statement (FIS) HHS-568 (if applicable), Tangible Personal Property Report SF-428 (if applicable), and Statement of Disposition of Equipment (if applicable) must be submitted within 120 days after the expiration date of the project period. All closeout documents must be submitted electronically in eRA Commons.

The Final Federal Financial Report (FFFR) SF-425 must be submitted in the Payment Management System (PMS) within 120 days after the expiration date of the project period. Recipients have 90 days after the project period end date to liquidate all obligations in PMS. All obligations must be liquidated prior to the submission of the Final FFR. The Final FFR must indicate the exact balance of unobligated funds and may not reflect unliquidated obligations. There must be no discrepancies between the Final FFR expenditure data and FFR cash transaction data in the Payment Management System (PMS). The expended funds reported on the Final FFR must exactly match the disbursements and the charge advances in PMS. It is the recipient's responsibility to reconcile reports submitted to PMS and to the FDA.

Program Income:

The recipient is required to report any Program Income generated during the Project Period of this grant. Except for royalty income generated from patents and inventions, the amount and disposition of Program Income must be identified on lines 10 (l), (m), (n), and (o) of the recipient's Federal Financial Report (FFR) SF-425.

Examples of Program Income include (but are not limited to): fees for services performed during the grant or

including providing program access, reasonable modifications, and taking appropriate steps to provide effective communication, see <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/civilrights/understanding/disability/index.html>.

- HHS funded health and education programs must be administered in an environment free of sexual harassment, see <https://www.hhs.gov/civil-rights/for-individuals/sex-discrimination/index.html>.
- For guidance on administering your project in compliance with applicable federal religious nondiscrimination laws and applicable federal conscience protection and associated anti-discrimination laws, see <https://www.hhs.gov/conscience/conscience-protections/index.html> and <https://www.hhs.gov/conscience/religious-freedom/index.html>.

SECTION IV – FD Special Terms and Condition – 1U18FD008673-01

The advancement of funding for this award is contingent on all awardees attending a kickoff meeting where representatives from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will request additional information to confirm all funding is aligned with the scope of this research study. Awardees will be provided the opportunity to update their funding structure, if needed, based on this additional information.

Specifically, recipients must ensure:

- No funding is being used for laboratory analysis, as all laboratory analysis will be conducted by the FDA, consistent with the Notice of Funding Opportunity: The assigned FDA PO and SMEs will be substantially involved in the coordination of food sampling, analysis, and data collection efforts. Food samples will be analyzed by FDA in FDA laboratories.
- All activities and third-party contractor support is fully defined to ensure all activities funded by the FDA are directly aligned with the goals of the study as provided in the Notice of Funding Opportunity:
The goals of this funding opportunity are to:
 1. Identify contaminants (e.g., heavy metals) present in school meals.
 2. Promote whole food offerings and minimize the use of foods commonly considered ultra-processed,
 3. Measure potential changes in contaminant levels and nutritional content pre- and post-intervention.

Applicable Regulatory Provisions. Prior to October 1, 2025, this award is subject to 45 C.F.R. 75 except for eight flexibilities from 2 C.F.R. 200 adopted by HHS on October 1, 2024. After October 1, 2025, this award will be subject to any applicable provisions of 2 C.F.R. 200 and 2 C.F.R. 300.

Termination. Prior to October 1, 2025, this award is subject to the termination provisions at 45 C.F.R. 75.372. Starting on October 1, 2025, this award is subject to the termination provisions at 2 C.F.R. 200.340. Pursuant to 2 C.F.R. 200.340, the recipient agrees by accepting this award that continued funding for the award is contingent upon the availability of appropriated funds, recipient satisfactory performance, compliance with the Terms and Conditions of the award, and a decision by the agency that the award continues to effectuate program goals or agency priorities.

By accepting this award, including the obligation, expenditure, or drawdown of award funds, recipient certifies as follows:

Recipient is compliant with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681 et seq., including the requirements set forth in Presidential Executive Order 14168 titled Defending Women From Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government, and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d et seq., and Recipient will remain compliant for the duration of the Agreement.

The above requirements are conditions of payment that go the essence of the Agreement and are therefore material terms of the Agreement.

Payments under the Agreement are predicated on compliance with the above requirements, and therefore Recipient is not eligible for funding under the Agreement or to retain any funding under the Agreement

absent compliance with the above requirements.

Recipient acknowledges that this certification reflects a change in the government's position regarding the materiality of the foregoing requirements and therefore any prior payment of similar claims does not reflect the materiality of the foregoing requirements to this Agreement.

Recipient acknowledges that a knowing false statement relating to Recipient's compliance with the above requirements and/or eligibility for the Agreement may subject Recipient to liability under the False Claims Act, 31 U.S.C. § 3729, and/or criminal liability, including under 18 U.S.C. §§ 287 and 1001.

By applying for or accepting federal funds from HHS, recipients certify compliance with all federal antidiscrimination laws and these requirements and that complying with those laws is a material condition of receiving federal funding streams. Recipients are responsible for ensuring subrecipients, contractors, and partners also comply.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

Revised Budget

Recipient must work with the assigned FDA Program Official (PO) and Grants Management Specialist (GMS) to revise and submit the SF 424 Budget and Budget Justification Narrative. All responses to award terms and conditions must be submitted as PDF documents in eRA Commons. For more information on how to respond to tracked terms and conditions please refer to [View Terms Tracking Details Screen for Grantees](#).

DUE DATE	TASK NAME	DUE DATE STATUS	DECISION DATE
09/02/2025	Submit a revised budget.	Unresolved	

Documentation of Eligibility

Eligibility for funding is limited to schools that actively participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), including both public and nonprofit private schools. Recipient must submit documentation of eligibility. All responses to award terms and conditions must be submitted as PDF documents in eRA Commons. For more information on how to respond to tracked terms and conditions please refer to [View Terms Tracking Details Screen for Grantees](#).

DUE DATE	TASK NAME	DUE DATE STATUS	DECISION DATE
09/02/2025	Submit documentation.	Unresolved	

Direct inquiries regarding fiscal, grants policy, procedures and/or administrative matters to the grants management specialist listed on page one of the Notice of Award (NoA).

Direct inquiries regarding scientific, technical and programmatic issues to the program official listed on page one of the Notice of Award (NoA).

All formal correspondence/reports regarding the grant should be signed by an authorized institutional official and the Principal Investigator and should be sent to the attention of the grants management specialist, unless otherwise explicitly directed.

EXHIBIT A3

Chef Ann

Welcome Packet

The United States Food and Drug Administration

Welcome Packet





Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Who We Are	3
Our Mission	3
How We Work	4
As your partner:	4
What makes a great partner?	4
The Chef Ann Foundation Team	5
FDA Program Overview	7
Program Goals	7
Required Activities	7
Chef Ann Foundation Deliverables	8
On-site Food Collection	8
Activities #1 (Baseline Assessment) and #5 (Post-Assessment)	8
On-site Technical Assistance	9
Activities #2 (Implementation Phase), #3 (Full Menu Roll-Out), and #4 (Refinement)	9
Roles and Responsibilities	10
Timeline	11
Budget Period 1: Aug. 1, 2025 - July 31, 2026	11
Data Request	13



Introduction

Who We Are

The Chef Ann Foundation is dedicated to promoting whole-ingredient, scratch cooking in schools. Scratch cooking enables schools to serve the healthiest, tastiest meals so that kids are well-fed and ready to learn.

As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, we work with K-12 schools in all 50 states. Founded in 2009 by Chef Ann Cooper, we've helped more than 16,000 schools and 4.4 million kids eat healthier, fresher school meals.

Our Mission

Ensure that school food professionals have the resources, funding, and support they need to provide fresh, healthy, delicious, cooked-from-scratch meals that support the health of children and our planet.

Our Vision

All children have equal access to fresh, healthy, delicious food, providing them with the foundation to thrive and meet their true potential.



How We Work

As we begin our work together, it's important that we establish our ways of working norms that complement your existing ways of working, foster collaboration and mutual trust, and achieve the best possible outcomes.

As your partner:

1. We work hard for you.
2. We have an action-oriented and solutions-oriented approach.
3. We bring our belief in and passion for your work to our work together.
4. We strive for clarity and practice honesty and accountability.
5. We are responsible for our clients' resources, time, and our own work.
6. We provide reliable access to our leaders and teams and maintain responsiveness to clients' needs.

What makes a great partner?

1. They read us into the organization's programmatic strategy and any shifts that arise.
2. They stick to the expectations and goals they set forth at the beginning of our partnership.
3. They provide us with clear decision-making and approval processes.
4. They are willing to collaborate.
5. They allow us to earn their trust.

Meet the Chef Ann Foundation Team

Our dedicated staff is integral to running the day-to-day operations of Chef Ann Foundation and delivering our mission by continuously growing our reach, capabilities, and available resources.



Dr. Reece Lyerly (he/him) - Sr. Director, Research & Evaluation

Reece will be the lead researcher and evaluator, and lead onsite food collection.



Megan Fogata McManus (she/her) - Sr. Coordinator, Research & Evaluation

Megan will provide research and evaluation support and on-site food collection.



Brandy Dreibelbis (she/her) - Executive Director of Culinary

Brandy will provide on-site and virtual technical assistance in the Brownsville Independent School District



Thandi Ngoma (she/her) - Senior Coordinator of Specialized Programs

Thandi will assist with coordinating virtual and on-site programmatic technical assistance and manage travel coordination.



Jessica Lawrence (she/her) - Senior Director of Specialized Programs

Jessica will assist with contract and invoicing management.

We recognize that navigating a federal grant is complex, and many partners are involved. Jessica Lawrence and Dr. Reece Lyerly are the primary contacts from the Chef Ann Foundation for this project. They will ensure that any of your questions are directed to the appropriate team member and that you feel comfortable and confident executing the planned grant activities.



FDA Program Overview

Program Goals

1. Identify contaminants (e.g., heavy metals) present in school meals.
2. Promote whole food offerings and minimize the use of foods commonly considered ultra-processed.
3. Measure potential changes in contaminant levels and nutritional content before and after intervention.

Required Activities

1. Baseline Assessment (Aug. - Dec 2025) – food sample submission & menu planning.
2. Implementation Phase (Sept. - Dec. 2025) – launch meal transition with ongoing evaluation.
3. Full Menu Roll-Out (Jan. - June 2026) – deploy new meals across recipients.
4. Refinement (Jan. - Apr. 2026) – adjustments based on early results.
5. Post-Evaluation (May - June 2026) – final sampling and data collection.
6. Final Reporting (July - May 2027) – submit findings & evaluation.

Please note: ALL activities must be completed during the 2025-26 school year. Additionally, food sample submissions are currently paused due to the government closure. We will provide updates as soon as we can resume sending samples to the FDA labs.



Chef Ann Foundation Deliverables

Onsite Food Collection

The Chef Ann Foundation's Research & Evaluation team will provide on-site support for collecting and shipping food samples to the FDA for analysis. The FDA will supply detailed guidance on sample collection procedures, along with all required materials for sampling and shipping. Food collection will take place twice during the study—once for a baseline assessment and again for a post-assessment collection. Please note that only the designated school sites participating in the research study will be required to provide food samples. These school sites include:

Brownsville Independent School District

1. Brownsville Early College High School
2. Lincoln Park High School
3. Veterans Memorial Early College High School
4. Manzano Middle School
5. Pullam Elementary School
6. Keller Elementary School
7. Southmost Elementary School
8. Ben Brite Elementary School



On-site Technical Assistance

Chef Ann Foundation will provide **two on-site visits**. The primary goal of the on-site visits will be to support your district in promoting whole food offerings and minimizing ultra-processed foods in school meals. On-site Technical Assistance topics will be determined between the Chef Ann Foundation and the district. On-site Technical Assistance can include a presentation on the “Why” Behind Scratch Cooking, a cooking demonstration, recipe recommendations and training, kitchen efficiency, equipment training, customer service training, salad bar implementation, and bulk milk implementation for the department’s staff.

Virtual Technical Assistance

Chef Ann Foundation will provide **six one-hour virtual technical assistance sessions** during the 2025-26 school year. Virtual technical assistance will focus on identifying menu items that qualify as “ultra-processed” and supporting districts with implementing changes to move along the scratch-cooking continuum. Virtual Technical Assistance topics will be determined between Chef Ann Foundation and the district, related to our five key areas of school food systems change (food, finance, facilities, human resources, and marketing).

Research Strategy

Chef Ann Foundation is partnering with researchers from the [UConn Rudd Center for Food Policy and Health](#) and the [Center for Health Innovation, Research, and Policy at Merrimack College](#) to support the research goals related to this grant. Our primary objective is to demonstrate how a transition towards more scratch cooking reduces ultra-processed foods on school menus. This offers an effective and practical solution for policymakers interested in reducing processed foods in schools. We will support your districts with all aspects of data collection for the FDA and ask for supplemental information to support the overarching research strategy.



Roles and Responsibilities

The participating school district(s) shall serve as the Lead Applicant(s) under the Grant, and the Chef Ann Foundation shall serve as a subcontractor to the District(s). As a subcontractor, CAF will assist with collecting food samples for FDA testing, provide guidance on incorporating scratch-cooked menu items, deliver technical assistance related to menu implementation, and conduct the second round of food sample collection for submission to FDA laboratories. The District(s) will lead and enforce implementation of scratch-cooked menu items, ensure that all Grant funds are used appropriately and in accordance with FDA requirements—including management through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Payment Management System (PMS)—and prepare and submit all required financial, performance, and closeout reports as detailed in the Grant application and award terms. The District(s) remain responsible for overall compliance with all Grant terms and conditions, and CAF will perform its subcontracted services in support of the District(s) and in accordance with applicable Grant requirements.



Timeline

Budget Period 1: August 1, 2025 - July 31, 2026

Timeline	Deliverables
August 2025	Finalize grant award and subcontracts
*TBD Sept 2025 - Dec 2025	Baseline Assessment (on-site food sampling)
October 2025	Kickoff planning for the implementation phase Scratch Cooking Worksheet
November 2025	Identify technical assistance needs based on FDA results Virtual TA Session #1
December 2025	On-site Visit #1
January 2026	New menu rollout Virtual TA Session #2
February 2026	Virtual TA Session #3
March 2026	Refinement of the new menu Virtual TA Session #4 2nd Scratch Cooking Worksheet
April 2026	On-site Visit #2 Virtual TA Session #5
May 2026	Follow-up Assessment (on-site food sampling)



	Virtual TA Session #5
June 2026	Data Cleaning & Analysis
July 2026	Year One Reporting

*Please note that on-site visits and virtual technical assistance sessions are subject to change as needed to best support the district and ensure all grant deliverables are met.

* Additionally, due to government closures, the initial food sample collection has been temporarily paused until FDA labs reopen.



Data Request

At this time, we are requesting the following information from each participating district:

1. Copy of the most recent Administrative Review
2. School schedules for participating school sites –
 - a. Please provide school hours (when does the admin. office open) and breakfast and lunch schedules. At a minimum, provide when breakfast starts and stops at each site and when lunch starts and stops. If detailed lunch schedules (by grade) are available, please provide them.
3. October 2025 lunch and breakfast menu for all grade levels

Please note that there may be additional data requests once the research strategy is finalized and approved by the FDA.

EXHIBIT B

Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) Grant

This exhibit evidences a grant award issued by the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) in the total amount of **\$10,000.00**.

The funding was provided to support eligible agricultural initiatives, community programs, or related development efforts in accordance with TDA guidelines.

All supporting documentation for this grant is retained in the official records and may be reviewed as necessary and includes the following:

- TDA Grant Notifications

EXHIBIT B

TDA Grant Notification

Subject: Farm Fresh Student Engagement Grant
Date: Thursday, February 5, 2026 at 1:22:17 PM Central Standard Time
From: Megan Steele
To: jcruz@bisd.us, Nora Navarro
Attachments: image001.png

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of Brownsville ISD. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello Jackie and Nora,

I'm emailing to let you know that I will be replacing Christie Beaulieu as your contact for the Farm Fresh Student Engagement grant.

I'm aware you've been notified of your acceptance into the grant, but have not yet been told the amount you've been awarded. It is my pleasure to let you know you've been awarded \$10,000.

We're very excited to see what your district accomplishes with these funds. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Megan Steele
Program Engagement Specialist
512.463.6324

Subject: Application FES2026032 - Approved
Date: Monday, March 30, 2026 at 8:25:09 PM Central Daylight Time
From: TDA-GO@IntelliGrants.com
To: Nora Navarro

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of Brownsville ISD. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Howdy Neighbors!

Congratulations! Brownsville ISD has been awarded a grant by the Texas Department of Agriculture for application# FES2026032 for the F&N Farm Fresh Student Engagement Grant funding opportunity.

To view project details please log in to [TDA-GO!](#). TDA Staff will be in touch to discuss next steps.

I wish you success on your grant project. Remember friends, Texas Agriculture Matters!

Sid Miller

Commissioner of Agriculture