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Headlines

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[RELEASE: 2026-2027 Paid Lunch Equity Tool and Accompanying Guidance](#)

Published: 55 days ago

TDA has posted the Paid Lunch Equity Tool for the upcoming SY 2026-2027 on the [NSLP Administration/Forms page](#). SFAs that had a negative balance in the nonprofit school food service account as of June 30, 2025, must follow PLE requirements according to 7 CFR 210.14(e) when establishing their paid lunch prices for SY 2026-2027. SFAs may use the SY 2026-2027 PLE tool, or an equivalent procedure, to determine their required paid lunch prices.

School Food Authorities (SFAs) with a positive or zero balance in their nonprofit school food service account as of June 30, 2025, are exempt from PLE pricing requirements for SY 2026-2027 per the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2026. This exemption is reflected in USDA policy memo SP 06-2026, Paid Lunch Equity: Guidance for School Year 2026-2027, released April 14, 2026, can be found on this [website](#).

As such, an SFA with a zero or positive fund balance as of June 30, 2025, has two options:

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- Complete and apply the SY 2026-2027 PLE calculation to the SFA's meal pricing structure. If a SFA chooses this option, the SFA will adjust meal prices as appropriate to the PLE calculation. The CE must retain the completed PLE calculation tool and other documentation demonstrating how the CE determined the meal prices to be charged; or
- Choose not to complete and not to apply the SY 2026-2027 PLE calculation. If the SFA chooses this option, the SFA may increase meal prices, but is not required to do so. The SFA must retain financial documentation that demonstrates the SFA has reconciled all costs incurred and income received through June 30, 2025, and determined that it has a zero or positive fund balance. If the SFA chooses to increase meal prices, the SFA needs to retain documentation demonstrating the amount of the price increase.

Please note that TDA recommends all SFAs perform the PLE calculation each year and retain all related documentation as information recorded in the calculation tool may be helpful if the SFA does not qualify for an exemption in the future.

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Assistance available in English and Spanish. Please call [877-TEX-MEAL \(877-839-6325\)](tel:877-TEX-MEAL) for help. Additional translations services available as well.

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1. Mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
 Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
 1400 Independence Avenue, SW
 Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. Fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

3. Email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER



