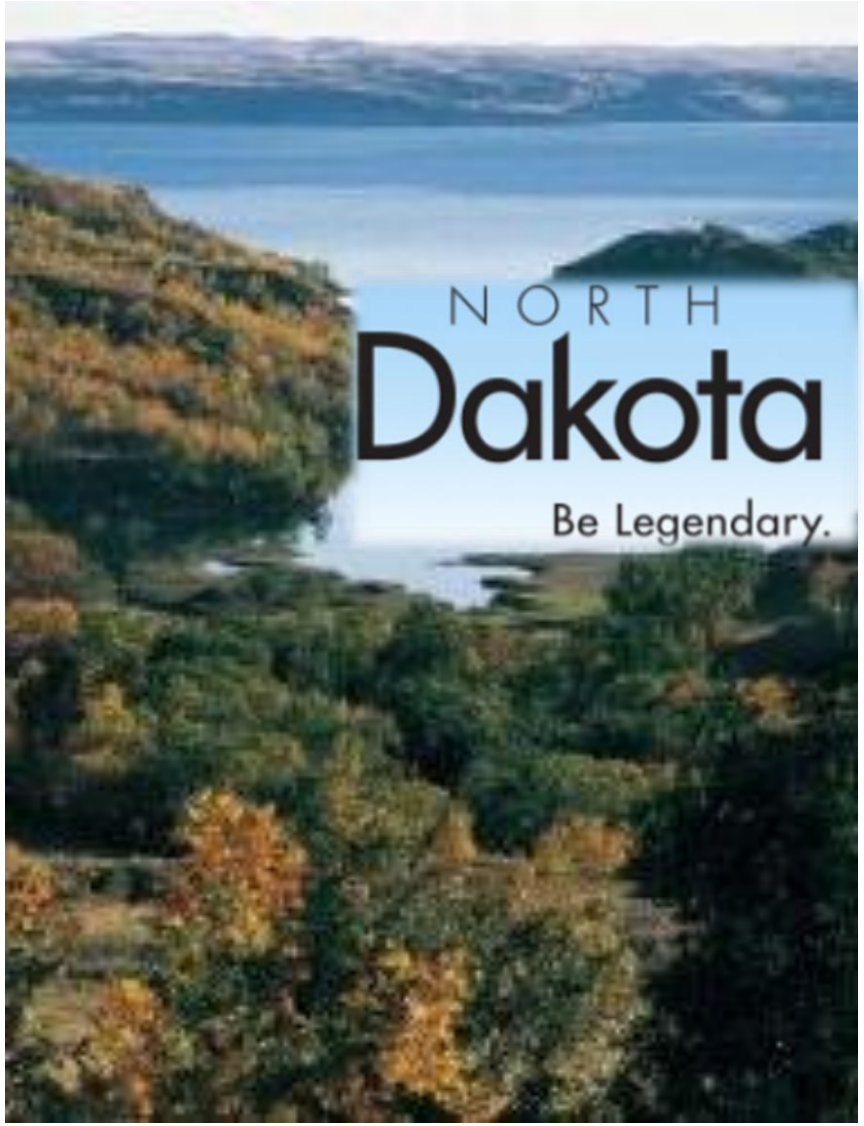
NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

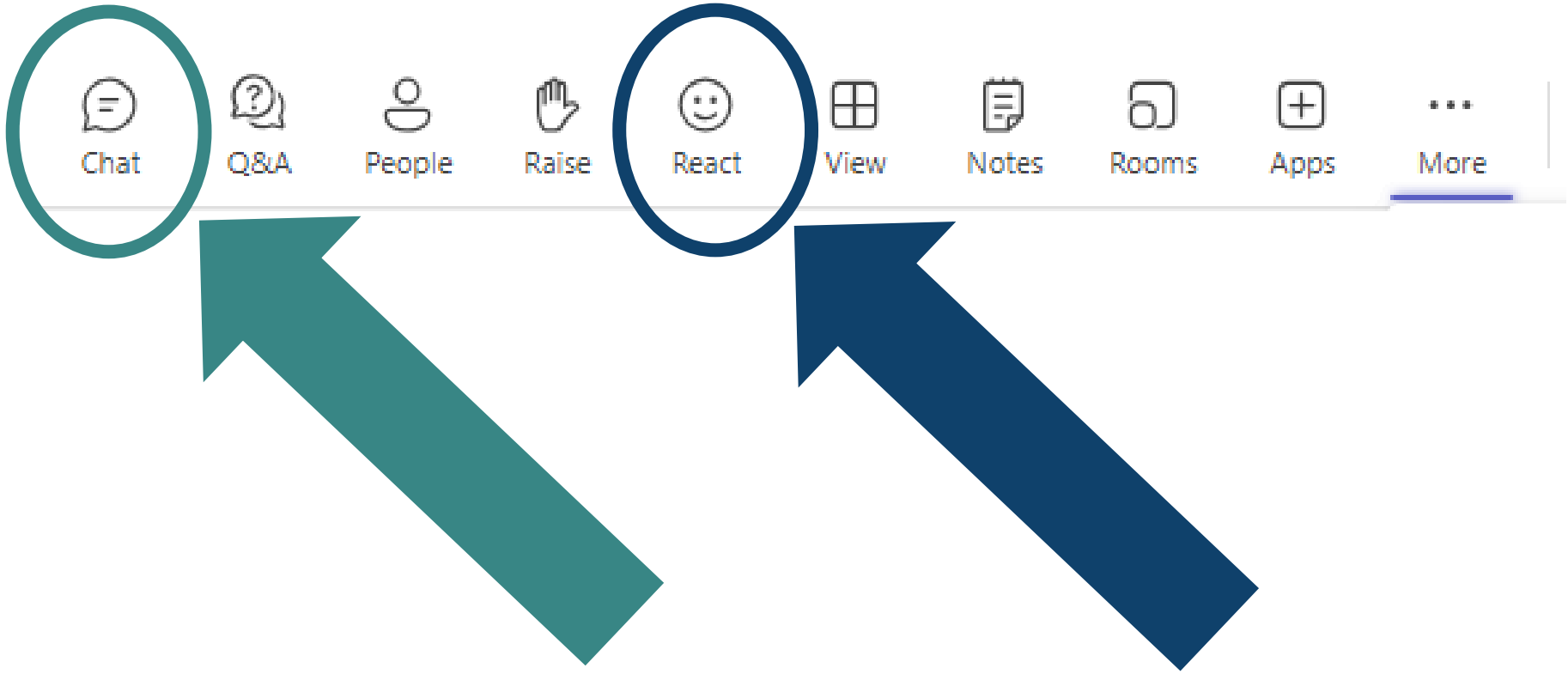
ACROSS THE DESK

October 2026

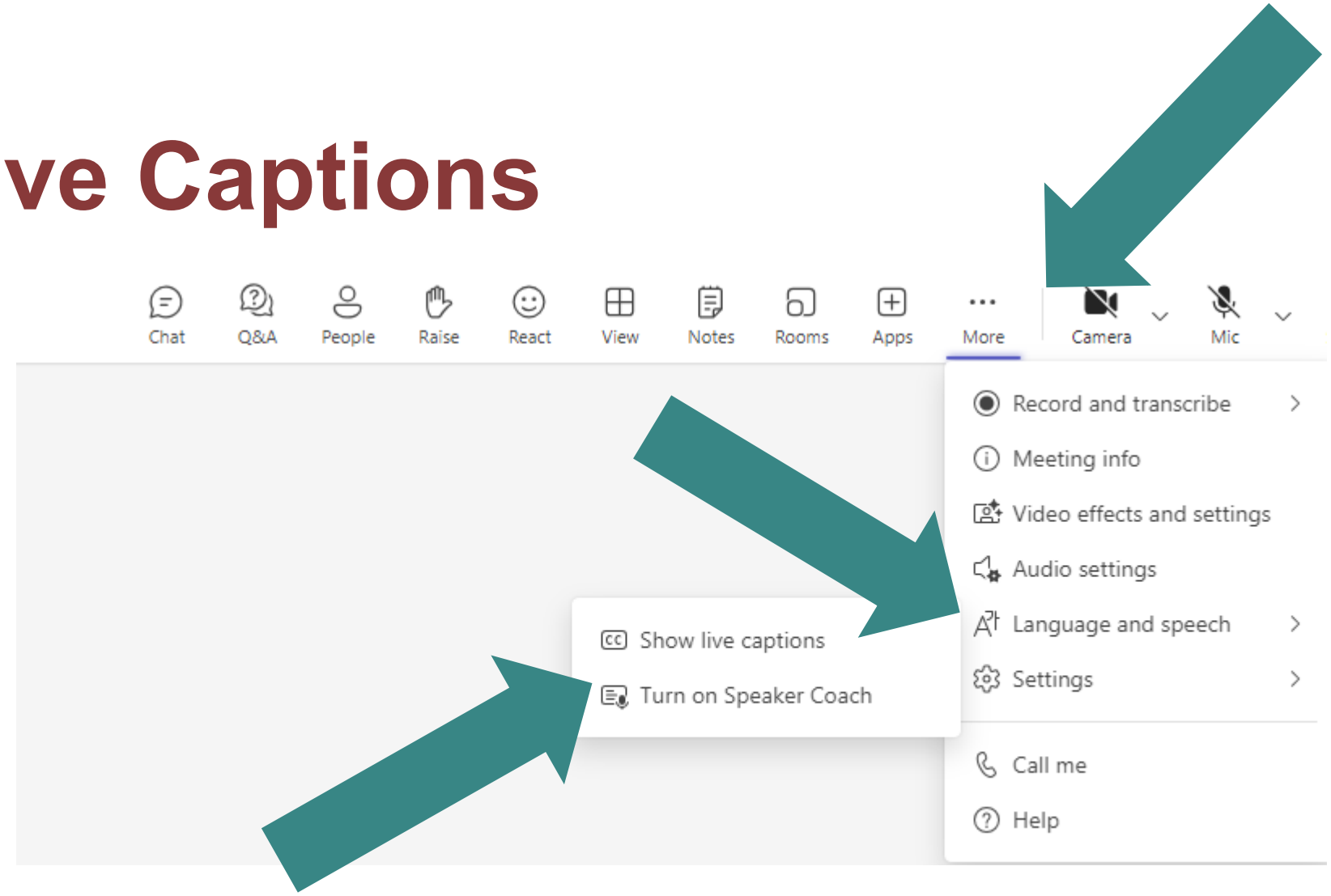


Lake Sakakawea

Chat Your Questions



Live Captions



Housekeeping - Website

NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Data | Districts/Schools | Educators | Education Programs | Policy/Guidelines | Families/Community

Districts/Schools
- Assessments
- Child Nutrition and Food Distribution
  - Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
  - Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)
  - Farm to Child Nutrition
  - Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
  - Fresh Fruits & Vegetables Program (FFVP)
  - School Nutrition Program (SNP)
  - School/Child Nutrition Food Program (SCH)
  - Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)
  - Team Nutrition
  - The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)
  - Updates

Home / Districts/Schools / Child Nutrition and Food Distribution / UPDATES

UPDATES

NEWSLETTERS

- **School Nutrition Newsletters**
- **USDA Foods in School Program Updates**
- **CACFP Round Up Newsletter**

WEBINARS

- **Kitchen Counter Conversa**
- **Across The Desk**
- **Other Webinars- 2025 Summer EBT / Medicaid Direct Certification**
- **Farm to School 2024 Series**

USDA MEMOS

July 14, 2026 Webinar

Slide Deck

- NSLP Program Renewal in NDFoods

May 12, 2026 Webinar

Slide Deck

- Updates on Whole Milk for Healthy Kids and Buy American
- Setting Meal Prices for next year
- Top 10 Administrative 'Oops' on 25-26
- End of the Year checklist
  - Top 5 Checklist Resource
- Renewal is Coming! Renewal is Coming!

March 10, 2026 Webinar

Slide Deck

- Free/Reduced Data Posted
  - Meals served data also available
- Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) essentials
- Buy American Reminders



Disclaimers

NDDPI Does Not Endorse Any Specific Brands or Products.

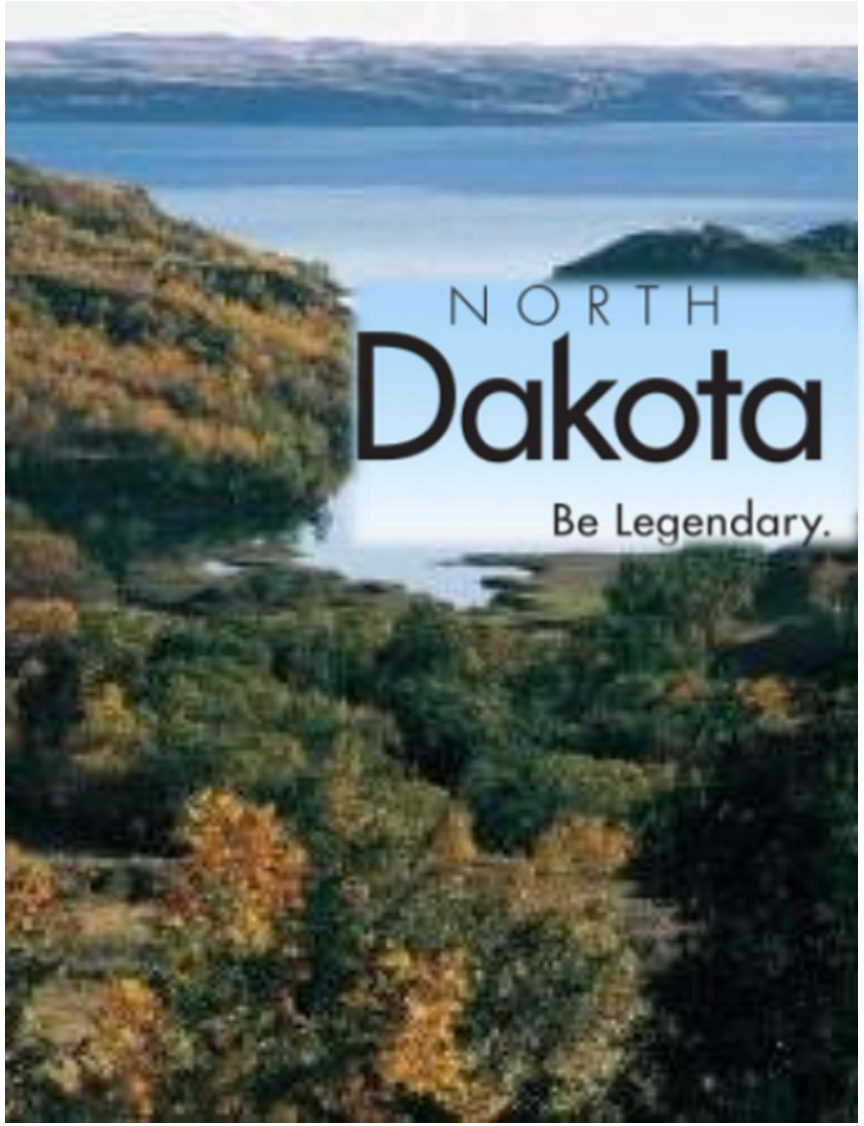
Topics Discussed Today are for General Information and to Generate Operational Discussions and Exploration. Please Seek the Guidance of Your State Agency for Specific Situations and Requirements.

Please be advised that due to privacy concerns and potential legal implications, the use of external AI transcription tools is strictly prohibited in NDDPI meetings. If you wish to record a meeting for transcription purposes, please submit your request to the meeting organizer.

NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

ACROSS THE DESK

- Verification Process
- Are you Review Ready?

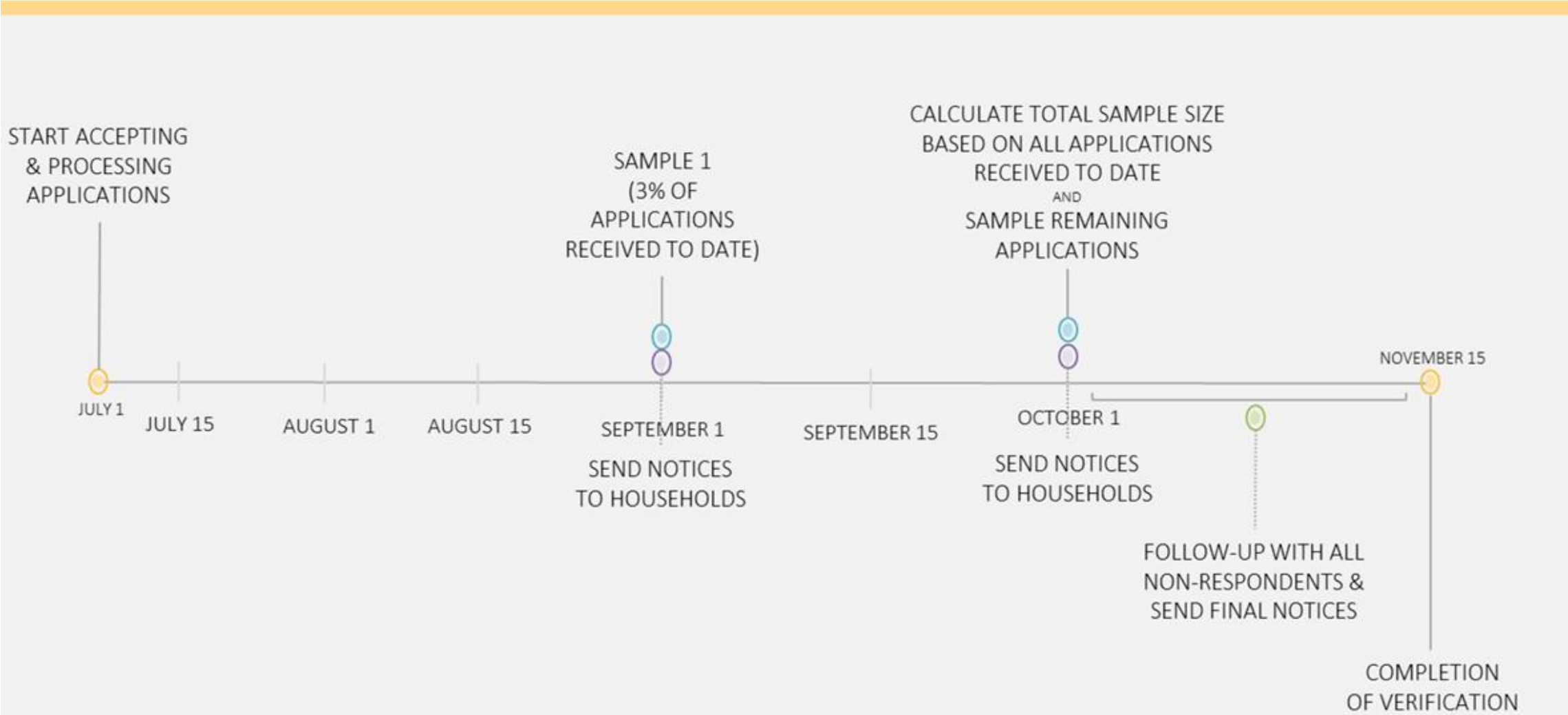


Lake Sakakawea

Goals for Today's Meeting

1. Talk through the Process for Verification
2. Cover what Resources are Available
3. Get a start on the Verification Report
4. Are you Review Ready, if time
5. What else is going on in Child Nutrition.

Verification Process (USDA Recommendation)



Choosing the Applications

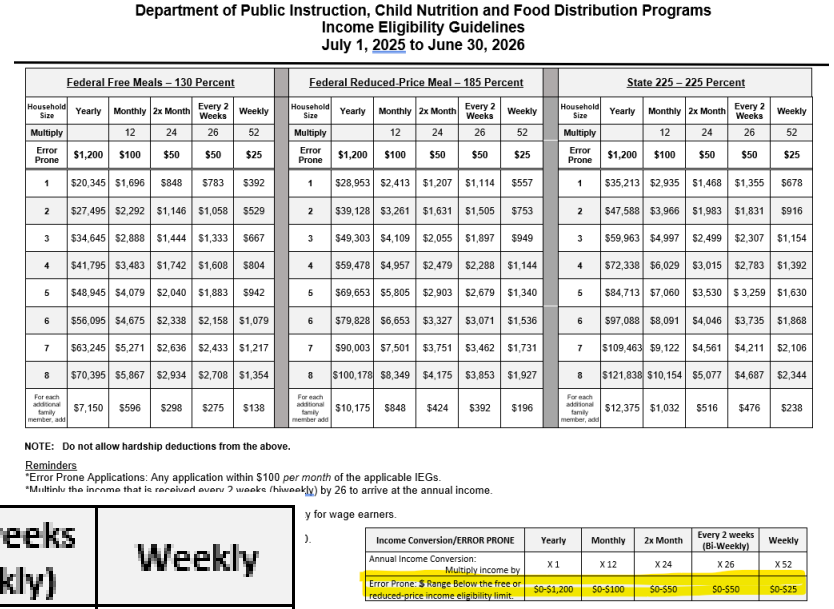
- 1. Count the number of applications
  - October 1st
  - Paper and Electronic
  - Qualifying (not denied)
  - Federal Free and Reduced
- 2. Multiply the number of applications by 3% (#x.03)
  - Result is rounded up (1.05 is rounded up to 2)

33 applications x .03 = .99

Choosing the Applications

- 3. Choose applications
  - Randomly
  - From Error Prone First

Income Conversion/ERROR PRONE	Yearly	Monthly	2x Month	Every 2 weeks (Bi-Weekly)	Weekly
Annual Income Conversion: Multiply income by	X 1	X 12	X 24	X 26	X 52
Error Prone: $ Range Below the free or reduced-price income eligibility limit.	$0-$1,200	$0-$100	$0-$50	$0-$50	$0-$25



Department of Public Instruction, Child Nutrition and Food Distribution Programs
Income Eligibility Guidelines
July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026

Federal Free Meals – 130 Percent					
Household Size	Yearly	Monthly	2x Month	Every 2 Weeks	Weekly
Multiply		12	24	26	52
Error Prone	$1,200	$100	$50	$50	$25
1	$20,345	$1,696	$848	$783	$392
2	$27,495	$2,292	$1,146	$1,058	$529
3	$34,645	$2,888	$1,444	$1,333	$667
4	$41,795	$3,483	$1,742	$1,608	$804
5	$48,945	$4,079	$2,040	$1,883	$942
6	$56,095	$4,675	$2,338	$2,158	$1,079
7	$63,245	$5,271	$2,636	$2,433	$1,217
8	$70,395	$5,867	$2,934	$2,708	$1,354
For each additional family member, add	$7,150	$596	$298	$275	$138

Federal Reduced-Price Meal – 185 Percent					
Household Size	Yearly	Monthly	2x Month	Every 2 Weeks	Weekly
Multiply		12	24	26	52
Error Prone	$1,200	$100	$50	$50	$25
1	$28,953	$2,413	$1,207	$1,114	$557
2	$39,128	$3,261	$1,631	$1,505	$753
3	$49,303	$4,109	$2,055	$1,897	$949
4	$59,478	$4,957	$2,479	$2,288	$1,144
5	$69,653	$5,805	$2,903	$2,679	$1,340
6	$79,828	$6,653	$3,327	$3,071	$1,536
7	$90,003	$7,501	$3,751	$3,462	$1,731
8	$100,178	$8,349	$4,175	$3,853	$1,927
For each additional family member, add	$10,175	$848	$424	$392	$196

State 225 – 225 Percent					
Household Size	Yearly	Monthly	2x Month	Every 2 Weeks	Weekly
Multiply		12	24	26	52
Error Prone	$1,200	$100	$50	$50	$25
1	$35,213	$2,935	$1,468	$1,355	$678
2	$47,588	$3,966	$1,983	$1,831	$916
3	$59,963	$4,997	$2,499	$2,307	$1,154
4	$72,338	$6,029	$3,015	$2,783	$1,392
5	$84,713	$7,060	$3,530	$ 3,259	$1,630
6	$97,088	$8,091	$4,046	$3,735	$1,868
7	$109,463	$9,122	$4,561	$4,211	$2,106
8	$121,838	$10,154	$5,077	$4,687	$2,344
For each additional family member, add	$12,375	$1,032	$516	$476	$238

NOTE: Do not allow hardship deductions from the above.

Reminders
*Error Prone Applications: Any application within $100 *per month* of the applicable IEGs.
*Multiply the income that is received every 2 weeks (biweekly) by 26 to arrive at the annual income.

y for wage earners.

).

Income Conversion/ERROR PRONE	Yearly	Monthly	2x Month	Every 2 weeks (Bi-Weekly)	Weekly
Annual Income Conversion: Multiply income by	X 1	X 12	X 24	X 26	X 52
Error Prone: $ Range Below the free or reduced-price income eligibility limit.	$0-$1,200	$0-$100	$0-$50	$0-$50	$0-$25

- Use the Verification Tracker to complete the Verification process

Use the Verification Tracker

ND Verification Tracker Attach a copy of this tracker to each application for Verification

Household Name:_____ **School Year:**_____
Application Selected for (check one): ____ Regular Verification Process or ____ Verification for Cause

Number of Students on the Application: _____ Total Number of People in the Household: _____

Original Approval was (check one): ____ Free based on SNAP/TANF/FDPIR ____ Free based on Foster
____ Free based on Income ____ Reduced Price Eligible

Step 1: Confirming Official must review the application for accuracy, then sign and date the application. The Confirming official cannot be the same person as the Determining Official who made the original approval.

Results from Confirmation review: Confirming Official is: _____Date of Second Review: _____

_____ No Change in Benefits from the original determination.
_____Changed from Reduced to Free. Notify the Household of the increased benefits.
Change the eligibility status on the Benefit Issuance Document (Roster) within 3 days. Continue with verification process.

_____Changed from Free to Reduced. Do not change benefits. Continue with verification process.

_____Changed to Paid. For FNS 742 Verification Collection Report, 'Paid' is either State 225 (Exempt) or Denied - Paid

- Notify the Household. Record the Date that the letter was sent: _____ Change benefits after 10 calendar days of the Date that the letter was sent to the household.

Record the date that the eligibility status is changed on the Benefit Issuance Document: _____
Remove this application from verification. Select a new application for verification and restart the entire process.

Use the Verification Tracker

Step 2: Send a Letter to the Household Selected for Verification.

Date Verification Notice Sent: _____ Date Response Due from Household*: _____

*If no response from household by due date, document the follow-up made either by letter, email or phone call. At least one attempt to contact the household must be made when no or incomplete response is received.

Date Second Notice Made (or N/A): _____ Signature of Follow-up Official: _____

Date Documentation is Received from Household: _____

Step 3: Verify the application information from the documentation sent by the household.

Verification Official is: _____ The verification official can be either the same person who did the original approval, the confirming official or even a third person. Remember all information must remain confidential.

Step 4: Record the verification results.

____ No Change in benefits, Free
____ Changed from Free to Reduced
____ Responded, Changed from Free to Paid
___ State 225 (Exempt) or ___ Paid
____ No Response, Changed from Free to Paid

____ No Change in Benefits, Reduced
____ Changed from Reduced to Free
____ Responded, Changed from Reduced to Paid
___ State 225 (Exempt) or ___ Paid
____ No Response, Changed from Reduced to Paid

Check documentation…

- 1. Check payment ‘type’ – Biweekly versus Twice monthly.

  Pay Period: 09/09/2026 through 9/23/2026

  15 days = twice a month;
  14 days is biweekly

- 2. Check all income –
  - Earnings from work = Gross pay, all normal wages & salary; tips, commissions & bonuses
  - Grandparents living in the household may have Social Security income; if Students have income, you need documentation
  - List of all income types are on the back of the application form and Page 26 of Eligibility Manual

Use the Verification Tracker

Keep all your documentation together for 3 years plus the operating year.

Step 5. Send Results of Verification notice to Households Date Notice letter was sent: _____

(Verification is considered complete when the household is notified of the outcome.)

__Reduced changed to Free. Send Notification of Change in Benefits letter. Attach a copy of the letter to this form. Change eligibility status on Benefit Issuance document within 3 operating days of date letter was sent.

__Free changed to Reduced. Send Notification of Change in Benefits letter. Attach a copy of the letter to this form. Change eligibility status on Benefit Issuance document after 10 calendar days of date letter was sent.

__Free or Reduced changed to State 225 (Exempt). Send Notification of Change in Benefits letter. Attach a copy of the letter to this form. Change eligibility status on Benefit Issuance document after 10 calendar days of date letter was sent. **NOTE**: in the 742 Verification Collection report, a change to State 225 will be recorded as a change to the federal category 'Paid'.

__No Response. changed to Paid. Send Notification of Change/Termination of Benefits letter. Attach a copy of the letter to this form. Change eligibility status on Benefit Issuance document after 10 calendar days of date letter was sent. Verification is not complete for this household. If they send in a new application during the school year, start the verification process again.

Improving Verification Response Rates

- Use noticeable, easy-to-identify mailings and send packets home with the youngest child
- Make materials clear and user-friendly: highlight key info and include examples of acceptable documents.
- Reduce barriers: provide prepaid return envelopes and send materials in the family's preferred language.
- Communicate early and often: call or send a pre-notice, and follow up if no response
- Build trust: use a friendly tone, offer help by appointment, and include a personal touch like a familiar signature.
- Show value clearly (without implying benefits are guaranteed) to motivate timely responses

Effective July 1, 2026

- **2026-2027 APPLICATION RESOURCES for FREE and REDUCED-PRICE SCHOOL MEALS** +
- **Income Information for Determining Applications** +
- **Letters of Eligibility Notifications** +
- **Verification** −

Verification

Each school district must verify the information on 3% of eligible income applications received by October 1st each year.

Verification Tracker

Letter to Household Selected for Verification

- This letter template is to be sent to the household(s) that have been selected to verify the information on their application. The household must receive this notification in writing, and it must provide a list of documents or other forms of evidence to confirm eligibility. It must also have a date by which the household needs to respond with the requested information. If the NDDPI template letter is not used for verification, please find the 10 requirements for a verification notification letter on page 107 of the Eligibility Manual or call our office to check that you have covered the requirements with your alternative document.

Notification of Change in Benefits/Termination of Free or Reduced-Price Benefit

- If a household receiving benefits is found to have a reduction in meal benefits during verification or does not respond to the verification notice, the letter notifying the household of a change or termination of the free or reduced-price meals must be sent. If benefits are terminated, the letter must state that the household may reapply for benefits if there is a change in their household. The school district must give the household 10 days to respond before benefits are reduced or terminated.

Verification Collection Help

Starting as soon as Sept 15th, Sponsors must verify (ask for documentation) 3% of the total number of income applications received by October 1 every year. Verification is confirmation of eligibility for free and reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program. The verification process must be separate from the approval process. Verification information may be provided at the time application is made for free and reduced-price meal benefits, but the application must be initially approved or denied based on the information supplied on the application. 3% is only 1 out of every 33 applications. When calculating the 3% all fractions must be rounded up to the nearest whole number.

Confirmation Review Before Verification

Each application selected for verification must be re-evaluated by a different person than the person who made the original determination. Once the required confirmation review is completed, the sponsor may proceed with verification if the initial determination was correct. If the confirmation review indicates the new eligibility status is to the household's benefit, the sponsor should make the changes as soon as possible and proceed with verification. If the confirmation review shows that there should be a decrease in benefits. The sponsor proceeds with and completes verification before any notification of a

Resources

https://www.nd.gov/dpi/districtsschools/child-nutrition-and-food-distribution/school-nutrition-program/snp-free-reduced

Last accordion at the bottom of the screen

Completion of Verification

Verification of the selected/chosen sample size must be completed by November 15 of each year. Information must be recorded on the Verification Summary Report in NDFoods.

Online Verification Summary Report Instructions

- Starting November 15th, school districts must file a summary of their verification report in ND Foods. The instructions for collecting the data and filling out the report are linked above.

USDA Verification Tool Kit

Verification Summary Report Help Document

- Even when we think the instructions for filing a federal report seem crystal clear, there can be confusion with wording, timelines, which data to use, and more. Please access this help document to help answer your questions but feel free to contact NDDPI Child Nutrition and Food Distribution at any time with questions regarding verification, the application process, or the school meal programs in general.

All letters that reference federal school meal programs must include the nondiscrimination statement in its entirety, in a font that is no smaller than the majority of the text in the document. Please make sure that the nondiscrimination statement (NDS) is the one used by USDA-FNS. NDS for Title programs, the school district, and others are often different than the school meal program NDS.

The following videos will guide you through the Verification Reporting Process.

SFA Verification Collection Report - Gathering Information - https://youtu.be/-PN29wFBTUg

SFA Verification Collection Report – Report Completion

- (Public/Private) - https://youtu.be/w4FsP6gsHP8
- (CEP's) - https://youtu.be/qz4PGIWUGCc
- (Provision 2/3) - https://youtu.be/Iqkb-ISs4rc
- (RCCI's) - https://youtu.be/BhX79Of1pfs

FREE
Income Eligible
APPLICATIONS ____
STUDENTS ____

FREE
SNAP / TANF
Case Number Provided
APPLICATIONS ____
STUDENTS ____

REDUCED
Income Eligible
APPLICATIONS ____
STUDENTS ____

Always Check your DC List in STARS and remove any applications that are indicated on that list.

These applications are not included in Verification or counted in student or application counts.

Any qualified State 225 application or student is also not included in verification or counted in student or application counts.

Change to DC

VERIFICATION
3% round up

OCTOBER 1st
After removing the Directly Certified Applications from your folders, count the remaining Applications and multiply it by 0.03.
This is the number of applications that your district must verify.

Always round up to the following whole number (Ex. 1.01 should round to 2)

Preference for selection should be given to Error Prone Applications.

All applications selected need to be verified by a Confirming Official.

DC
SNAP
STUDENTS ____

DC
TANF, FDPIR +
Foster, Homeless, Migrant, Runaway, Head Start
STUDENTS ____

DC Medicaid
Free
STUDENTS ____

DC Medicaid
Reduced
STUDENTS ____

Two attempts to contact the family must be made.

1st attempt is the Notification letter, either mailed or emailed.

2nd attempt must be documented but can be by mail, email or phone.

All responses must be completed by November 15th

The Verification Collection Report is due in NDFoods by December 15th

From your DC Report in STARS, record your students by category.
DHS-FS = SNAP / DHS-AF = TANF / DHS-MF = Medicaid Free /DHS-MR = Medicaid Reduced
Make sure these students are not counted in any of the other folders.

PAID
Not Income Eligible

For the 2025-2026 School Year
Federal Denied (over federal income guidelines) applications are matched against the STATE 225 guidelines.

Although Students will receive meals at no cost, these applications are not subject to Federal Verification.

STATE 225
Not Counted for Verification
APPLICATIONS ____
STUDENTS ____

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

NDDPI NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

OCTOBER 1st

ter removing the Directly Certified Applications from your folders, count the remaining Applications and multiply it by 0.03.

This i verify.

Alway should

efere lications.

appl Official.

For the 2026-2027 School Year
Federal Denied (over federal income guidelines) applications are matched against the STATE 225 guidelines.

Although Students will receive meals at no cost, these applications are not subject to

DC Report in STARS, record your students by category.

= TANF / DHS-MF = Medicaid Free /DHS-MR = Medicaid Reduced

ese students are not counted in any of the other folders.

All responses must be completed by November 15th

The Verification Collection Report is due in NDFoods by December 15th

STARS
State Automated Reporting System

NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Direct Certification 2025 - 2026

Status: NOT APPLICABLE

Sections
- Broadcast Notifications
- Matched Notifications

Tools
- Export to CSV
- Student Lookup
- Export to PDF

Main Contact
Contact: Lynelle Johnson
Email: ✉
Phone: 701-328-4565

Print Page
Help

STARS Home ▸ Direct Certification ▸ Broadcast Notifications

Direct Certification Broadcast Student Eligibility Notifications

Please review the list of student(s) provided below.
Students eligible for Directly Certified free meal benefits not matching a district enrollment are displayed on the Broadcast Notification List of the five closest school districts to the student's address.

1. If a student on the Broadcast Notification list is **Not Enrolled** in your district, check the box in front of the student(s) blue underlined name(s) or the mass selection box in the top left of the table and click 'Not Enrolled.'
2. If a student on the Broadcast Notification list **Is Enrolled** in your district, click on the blue underlined name of the student.

   The Enrolled button will be inactive. To activate the Enrolled button, enter the student's name into the simple student search section below the enrollment buttons to find the student in your enrollment.

   If the student's name shows in the search results, t

   Once the student's name is found, the Enrolled butt

   You will be asked if you want to enroll the student w

To Mass Decline Check the items to edit and click the Link a
Use the link below to mass decline selected student not
Not Enrolled

☐	Name	Gender
No Broadcast Notifications were found.		

Direct Certification

Status: NOT APPLICABLE

Sections
- Broadcast Notifications
- Matched Notifications

Tools
- Export to CSV
- Student Lookup

Functions
Export

Main Contact
Contact: Linda Schloer
Email: ✉
Phone: 701-328-4565

Print Page
Help

STARS Home ▸ Direct Certification

Export

Available Exports:
Direct Certification Students

Selected Export Description:
Export list of Direct Certification students for a district

NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
1	StateIssuedID	SchoolYear	StateID	FirstName	LastName	MiddleName	DOB	Gender	AddressLine1	AddressLine2	City	State	Zip	PlantPupilID	DirectCertEnrollmentDate	CaseNumber	DHSSourceSystem	EligibleDate	EnrollmentStartDate	EnrollmentEndDate	DHSSourceSystemDate
2	51-004-6005	2027	5337452786	Abbott	Don	Anthony	8/10/2018	M	125 1st St E		Minot	ND	58701	5256	8/22/2026	856662	DHS-FS	8/22/2026	8/27/2025	6/4/2026	8/22/2025
3	51-004-6005	2027	4882568858	Claire	Trisson	Mae	8/2/2017	F	844 Corner St		Minot	ND	58701	5256	8/22/2026	785623	DHS-FS	8/22/2026	8/18/2025	5/22/2026	8/22/2025
4	51-004-6005	2027	3943255273	Zena	Smith	Sue	5/18/2016	F	4752 117th St N		Minot	ND	58701	5256	8/22/2026	125885	DHS-AF	8/22/2026	8/20/2025	5/21/2026	8/22/2025
5	51-004-6005	2027	3525296732	Colton	Grosky	William	1/14/2012	M	100 Sunny Rd		Minot	ND	58701	5256	8/22/2026	522256	DHS-MR	8/22/2026	8/18/2025	5/22/2026	8/22/2025
6	51-004-6005	2027	4145526424	Zayn	Perru	Ruthal	4/16/2018	M	872 Fort Loop		Mi										8/22/2025
7	51-004-6005	2027	5425521392	Grettal	Pattern	Rae	11/19/2019	F	875 Long Ave		Mi										8/22/2025
8	51-004-6005	2027	3425522385	Cam	Hoffer	L	7/14/2010	M	855 Birch St		Mi										9/14/2025

O	P	Q	R
DirectCertEnrollmentDate	CaseNumber	DHSSourceSystem	EligibleDate
8/22/2026	856662	DHS-FS	8/22/2026
8/22/2026	785623	DHS-FS	8/22/2026
8/22/2026	125885	DHS-AF	8/22/2026
8/22/2026	522256	DHS-MR	8/22/2026
8/22/2026	452256	DHS-MF	8/22/2026
9/7/2026	522256	DHS-FS	9/7/2026
9/7/2026	522225	DHS-MR	8/22/2026

Rank	Certified Type	Source	Eligibility
1	SNAP (DHS-FS)	Direct	Free
2	TANF or FDPIR (DHS-AF)	Direct	Free
3	Medicaid (DHS-MF)	Direct	Free
4	Foster, Homeless, Migrant, Runaway	Direct	Free
5	Income (Free)	Non-Direct	Free
6	Medicaid (DHS-MR)	Direct	Reduced
7	Income (Reduced)	Non-Direct	Reduced
8	Income (State)	Non Direct	State 225
9	Income (Paid)	Non Direct	Paid

Applications and fill them into the corresponding blanks on the School Food Authority (SFA) Verification Collection Report

Section 3: Students Approved as Free eligible Not subject to verification

*Check the box only if all schools and/or RCCIs in the SFA were not required to perform direct certification with SNAP (i.e. NON BASE year Provision 2/3 for all schools)

Total number of students who were directly certified through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Include children who are extended free eligibility because they are living within a household that is receiving SNAP:

 # DC SNAP Students

Total number of students directly certified through other programs (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, foster, homeless, migrant, runaway, Head Start or even star, or non-applicant but approved by local officials). Do not include SNAP students already reported in previous question:

 # DC TANF, FDPIR + Students

Students directly certified FREE through Medicaid:

 # DC Medicaid Free Students

Students directly certified REDUCED PRICE through Medicaid:

 # DC Medicaid Reduced Students

Total number of applications approved as State Free 225 based on household size and State Income Eligibility Guidelines:

 # State 225 Applications

Total number of students approved as State Free 225 based on household size and State Income Eligibility Guidelines:

 # State 225 Students

Section 4: Household applications and students approved as Free or Reduced Price eligible through an application

Please enter the number of approved application forms on file for the following eligibility determinations:

Total number of applications approved as categorically Free eligible based on those providing information on an application form i.e. SNAP or TANF case number:

 # Free Case Number Provided Applications

Total number of applications approved as Free eligible based on household size and income information:

 # Free Income Applications

Total number of applications approved as Reduced Price eligible based on household size and income information:

 # Reduced Income Applications

Please enter the number of students approved as Free or Reduced Price by the following eligibility determinations

Total number of students approved as categorically Free eligible based on those providing information on an application form i.e. SNAP or TANF case number:

 # Free Case Number Provided Students

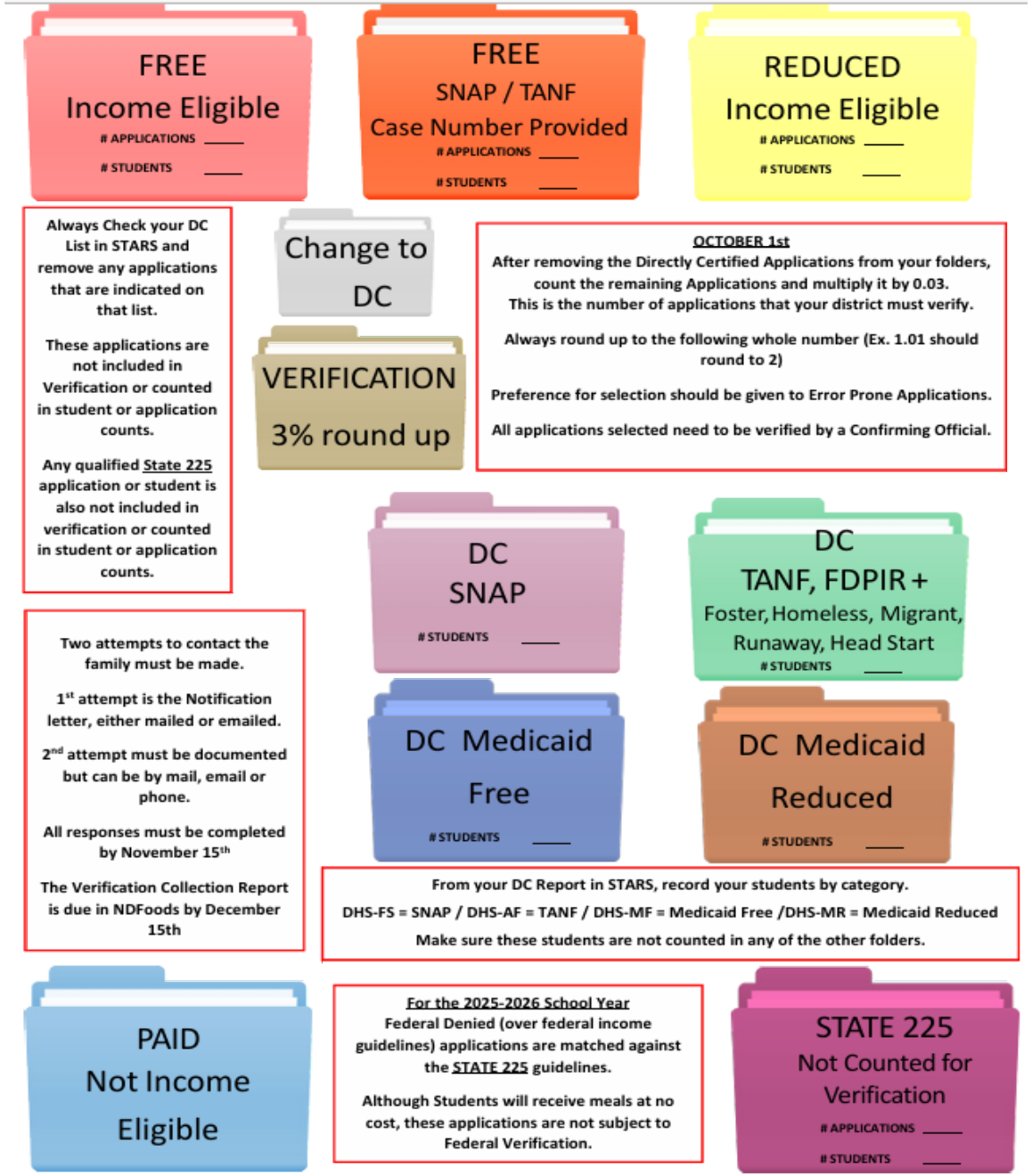
Total number of students approved as Free eligible based on household size and income information:

 # Free Income Students

Total number of students approved as Reduced Price eligible based on household size and income information:

 # Reduced Income Students

Total FREE Eligible Students Reported: **CALCULATED** Total REDUCED PRICE Eligible Students Reported: **CALCULATED**



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NDDPI NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Are you Review Ready?

1. Check ALL Eligible students for documentation of all eligibilities

Application

Direct cert list

- 30-day carryover errors:
- Verify State 225 students

  -Not “Free”

  -They are federally paid, “State Eligible”
- Direct Certification (DC) issues:

  -Some students are not appearing on the DC list in STARS.

  -If students who were typically on your list are missing this year, notify us.

Are you Review Ready?

2. Keep documentation for each month's claim.

- Documentation for claim from Infinite Campus:
  - -Edit check report
  - -State head Count
  - -FRAM State meal Count
  - -Any manual meal counts from Field trips, educational events with visiting students, computer not working…..

Use help sheet on the NDDPI website to determine the correct number of meals to claim.

Are you Review Ready?

3. School Foodservice Account (05 Fund)

Restricted Use Funds

- Does not have a negative balance
-Does not have excess funds
(more than 6 months of operating)
-If Adult Meals are being paid by General Fund
-If Seconds are being paid by General Fund
- Cannot cover bad debt from 05 Fund
-Any purchases over $10,000 need bid documentation

Are you Review Ready?

4. Menu Review

- Documentation for all entrees
  - Commercial products need CN label or Product Formulation Statement (Manufacturer's recipe)
  - In House made = School recipe
- 80% Whole Grain Rich offered over the week
- Added Sugar limits
- Whole & 2% milk is allowed

Are you Review Ready?

5. General Areas

- Civil Rights
- On site Monitoring for multi-site districts
- Local Wellness policy – Triennial assessment
- Smart Snacks
- Professional Development
- Food Safety
- Breakfast & Summer Food Outreach

Tray of the Month

Two themes in October's:

- Farm to School
- Cafeteria Circus

Submit photo of full lunch tray; **due October 30**

- all components + milk
- amolson@nd.gov





SUBMIT PHOTOS TO AMOLSON@ND.GOV

Tray of the Month

CAFETERIA CIRCUS
NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK
OCT 12TH-16TH *2026

Tray of the Month is a fun, optional activity to highlight the delicious meals you serve every day.

- Submit a high-resolution photo of a full lunch tray (all components + milk).
- Make sure the photo is well-lit and focused.
- Students and staff may be included—just ensure photo release forms are handled through your district's process.

September - Corn: Kernels, cobs, popped, roasted or in your favorite casserole or menu item. Snap a pic of your corn creation by September 30.

October - Farm to School Month & NSLP Week: "Cafeteria Circus" is the theme for NSLP week. Celebrate Farm to School Month with local foods—2 submissions allowed for the two themes. Pictures are due October 30.

November - Tomatoes: Serve them your way! Fresh, roasted, or in salsas, soups, and sauces. Pictures due November 25.

December - Potatoes: America's favorite food! Show us how you serve potatoes in your school. Submit by December 18.

January - Salad Bar: Showcase your salad bar. Can be on the tray or of your whole salad bar. Pictures due January 29.

February - It's Soup and Stew Month! Share your favorite soup or stew, and bonus points for recipes! Pictures due February 26.

March - Celebrate National School Breakfast Week: Encourage staff to join the photo and showcase your favorite breakfast meal. Theme to be announced soon. Pictures due March 31.

April - Bowls! Capture your trendy bowl creations! Ramen, grain, taco, chicken, salad, breakfast, and more ways to create this trendy and delicious menu item. Pictures due April 30.

May - Celebrate Beef Month and School Lunch Hero Day: Share your favorite beef dish (extra points for local beef) or your School Lunch Hero Day decor. Staff and students are encouraged in the photos. 2 submissions allowed. Pictures due by May 28.

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North Dakota Crunch Off

It’s Crunch Time! The 2026 North Dakota Crunch Off runs Oct. 1-31. This event celebrates local foods, supports farmers and ranchers, and promotes more fruits and veggies on our plates.

Our goal: 80,000 bites into local foods!



National School Lunch Week: October 12-16



We would love to see pictures of how your school is celebrating!

dpicnfd@nd.gov

Kitchen Counter Conversation

3rd Tuesday of each Month
2 p.m. Central Time

October 20th: School Nutrition Wellness

Registration for each KCC is in our monthly newsletter.

Across the Desk

2nd Tuesday of each Month

2 p.m. Central Time

November 10th: final Verification steps and Buy American tracking

Registration for each Across the Desk is in our monthly newsletter

Registration coming soon!

Reducing Sodium Culinary Trainings

Jamestown, ND

Nov. 4, 2026

Colton, SD

Nov. 6, 2026



Lynelle Johnson
Director
Programs: All CNFD
Email: lynellejohnson@nd.gov
Phone: 701-328-4565



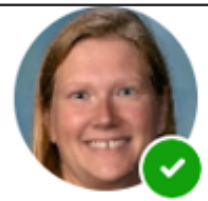
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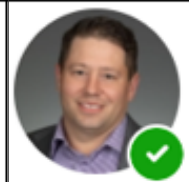
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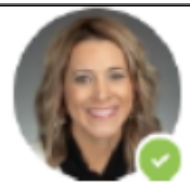
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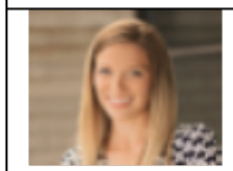
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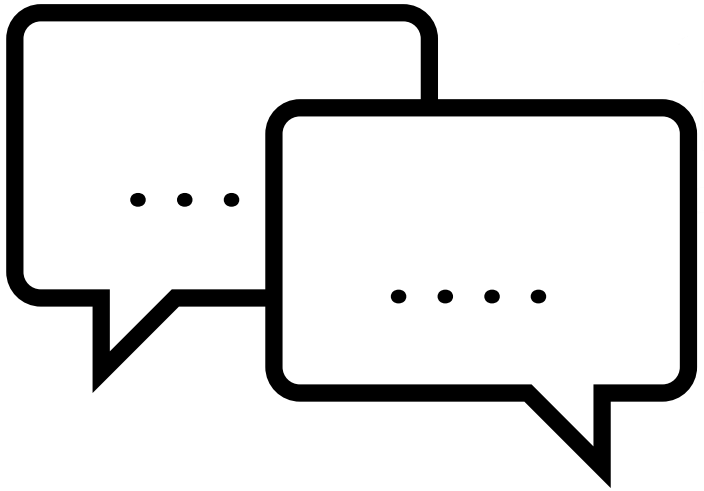
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Website:
www.nd.gov/dpi/SchoolStaff/ChildNutritionFoodDistribution

NDDPI NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION



Questions & Discussion

WWW.ND.GOV/DPI

DPICNFD@ND.GOV

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To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Mail Stop 9410, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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Alternative Sampling Option

-**THE Standard Rule for Verification Sample size:**

- 3% of all applications approved as of October 1st Selected from Error Prone
- or 3,000 error prone applications, whichever is greater

Alternate Sample 1:

- 3% of all applications approved as of October 1st Selected from All
- Or 3,000 randomly selected applications

Alternate Sample 2:

- 1% or 1,000 error prone applications PLUS
- .5% or 500 applications approved by case number

-

Source: Eligibility Manual for School Meals

- Procedure:
  1. District requests alternate Sample by September 1st each year.
     a) Non response rate must be 20% or less in the previous year.
     b) Request through email to dpicnfd@nd.gov
  2. NDDPI will respond by September 15th.
  3. Request must be made annually