

Funding Opportunity

Applications Due: Friday, December 17, 2021, by 11:59 pm

Application information and resources are available [CDE’s School Nutrition Grants webpage](https://www.cde.state.co.us/nutrition/nutrigrantsandawards) and the

[School Nutrition Moodle Training Portal](https://sitesed.cde.state.co.us/course/index.php?categoryid=71).

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| Colorado Health Foundation Mini-Grant Pilot |



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**Table of Contents**

[Introduction and Purpose 3](#_Toc87452006)

[Eligible Applicants 3](#_Toc87452007)

[Definitions 4](#_Toc87452008)

[Available Funds 4](#_Toc87452009)

[Allowable Use of Funds 4](#_Toc87452010)

[Duration of Grant 4](#_Toc87452011)

[Reporting and Evaluation 4](#_Toc87452012)

[Data Privacy 5](#_Toc87452013)

[Technical Assistance 5](#_Toc87452014)

[Review Process and Timeline 5](#_Toc87452015)

[Submission Process and Deadline 5](#_Toc87452016)

[Application Format 6](#_Toc87452017)

[Required Elements 6](#_Toc87452018)

[Part IA: Applicant Information 7](#_Toc87452019)

[Part IB: Program Assurances Form 8](#_Toc87452020)

[Application Scoring 9](#_Toc87452021)

[Selection Criteria and Evaluation Rubric 10](#_Toc87452022)

[Attachment A: CHF Mini-Grant Budget 11](#_Toc87452023)

**Note:** The following version of the application is intended as a reference document for instructions and grant application planning purposes.

**Applications for the Colorado Health Foundation Mini-Grant program must be submitted online** [**via** **smartsheet**](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/6fbb876dd7f741eba8b1957e0de620fb)**.**

Submission of application materials either in hard copy or via  
e-mail will not be accepted.

**Colorado Health Foundation Mini-Grant Pilot**

Applications Due: Friday, December 17, 2021, by 11:59 pm

# Introduction and Purpose

The Colorado Department of Education School Nutrition Unit (School Nutrition) will award mini-grants to program sponsors who wish to improve access to and participation in Child Nutrition Programs. The purpose of this grant program is to provide funding to program sponsors to implement strategies to improve the quality of school meals, increase communications to students and families, remove barriers, and improve access to federal child nutrition programs.

School Nutrition hired Corona Insights to conduct a survey of Colorado parent and caregiver attitudes towards school and summer meals. The survey was administered in June 2021 and 728 individuals responded. This survey resulted in the following key findings:

* Not liking the meal options offered/bringing a lunch from home was the main reason students didn’t eat school lunch more often;
* Parents mostly disagree that meals are high quality, made from scratch with fresh, healthy ingredients, and similar to what their family eats at home;
* Roughly 20% of parents in the lowest income tier had not applied for free/reduced price (FRP) meals;
* For low-income respondents, the largest barriers to applying for FRP meals were not knowing how to apply, and being embarrassed to apply;
* A common response for not participation in SFSP was that families didn’t need it or wanted to save it for others who needed it more; and
* Improvement of communication to students and families is needed.

Awarded program sponsors will be required to complete School Nutrition’s technical assistance program, MasterClass by the end of the grant (June 2023). First, program sponsors will complete MasterClass Foundations, where program sponsors will receive training on financial management, community engagement, and how to use data to drive decision-making in programs. After MasterClass Foundations, awarded program sponsors will complete MasterClass Specialized to learn focused strategies to implement mini-grant plans. Successful awardees can work with CDE program staff around flexibilities with MasterClass and technical assistance needs. Awardees will participate in reporting and evaluation activities as described later in the application.

Mini-grant funds can be used to support a wide range of access/participation promotion activities from training, planning, and developing partnerships, to menu/recipe development, shifts to scratch cooking, student engagement, purchasing equipment, planting school gardens, etc. A full list of allowable and unallowable costs is listed later in the application.

# Eligible Applicants

Program sponsors who participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) are eligible to apply for this opportunity. Eligible organizations include:

* School Districts
* Board of Cooperative Services (BOCES) that operates a public school
* Charter Schools (must be SFA or apply through SFA)
* Residential Child Care Institutions
* SFSP Sponsors
* Non-profit organizations

Eligible program sponsors will be required to complete School Nutrition’s technical assistance program, MasterClass by the end of the grant (June 2023). Priority will be given to program sponsors that have completed or are currently enrolled in MasterClass.

# Definitions

The following definitions have been designated as such for the purposes of this program.

* “Child Nutrition Programs” refers to any of the following federally funded meal programs: National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Special Milk Program, Afterschool Snack Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program.
* “School Food Authority” means [the governing body](https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/the-governing-body) that is responsible for [the administration](https://www.lawinsider.com/clause/the-administration) of one or more [schools](https://www.lawinsider.com/clause/schools) and has the legal [authority to operate](https://www.lawinsider.com/clause/authority-to-operate) [the program](https://www.lawinsider.com/clause/the-program) therein or be otherwise [approved](https://www.lawinsider.com/clause/approved) by the [USDA](https://www.lawinsider.com/clause/usda) [Food and Nutrition Service](https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/food-and-nutrition-service) ([FNS](https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/fns)) to operate the program.
* “Program Sponsor” means a school district, charter school, Board of Cooperative Services that operates a public school, or residential childcare center that has been selected by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to participate in the program.

# Available Funds

Program sponsors may request a mini-grant amount up to $10,000 within the first year with the option to request additional funding as available. The requested amount must be clearly documented in the mini-grant application budget. See Attachment A for the mini-grant budget template.

Total award amounts are subject to validation of the proposed budget and actual mini-grant allocations may vary based on the number of program sponsors who are awarded funding.

# Allowable Use of Funds

Program sponsors that receive a mini-grant shall use the reimbursement to improve their food service, site, or operation. Allowable expenditures must be allocable, necessary, and reasonable for proper and efficient administration of child nutrition programs and conform to any limitations or exclusions set forth in program regulations. Allowable expenses include, but are not limited to:

* Food purchases and costs directly related to the storage, handling, processing, and transportation of food
  + Up to 20% of funds may be used for food purchases (e.g., taste testing, recipe development, education)
* Labor, which includes payments for labor and other costs directly related to operating child nutrition programs and staff time to support activities.
* Contracts to hire experts in an area related to the project including quality improvement (e.g., surveys, focus groups)
* Communication activities and marketing materials, printing, paid advertising, etc.
* Other supplies, expendable equipment and technology used directly in the operation of the food service.
  + This includes items that must be replaced from time to time, such as pots and pans, serving trays, etc.

All expenses must be allowable within the nonprofit school food service account and/or the SFSP allowable costs.

# Duration of Grant

Program sponsors will be selected and awarded mini-grant funds in the winter of 2021. All grant funds must be fully obligated and MasterClass must be completed by June 30, 2023.

# Reporting and Evaluation

Each program sponsor that receives a mini-grant from School Nutrition is required to submit an annual report. Awarded program sponsors will also be expected to complete evaluation activities for MasterClass. This includes a pre-assessment, training surveys and post-assessment.

CDE is authorized to monitor program sponsors to ensure program integrity and to reallocate funds if program integrity issues are identified. Such monitoring could include budget documentation or requesting detailed lists of purchases and expenditures.

# Data Privacy

CDE takes seriously its obligation to protect the privacy of student and educator personally identifiable information (PII) collected, used, shared, and stored. PII will not be collected through the mini-grant program. All program evaluation data will be collected in the aggregate and will be used, shared, and stored in compliance with CDE’s privacy and security policies and procedures.

**Note:** Applications must not contain any personally identifiable student or educator information including names, identification numbers, or anything that could identify an individual. All data should be referenced/included in the aggregate and the aggregate counts should be redacted to remove small numbers under n=16 for students or n=5 for educators.

# Technical Assistance

Application information and resources are available [CDE’s School Nutrition Grants webpage](https://www.cde.state.co.us/nutrition/nutrigrantsandawards) and the [School Nutrition Moodle Training Portal](https://sitesed.cde.state.co.us/course/index.php?categoryid=71). If you have technical issues accessing the training or other materials, please email Alicia Grove at Grove\_A@cde.state.co.us.

# Review Process and Timeline

Applications will be reviewed by CDE staff and peer reviewers to ensure applications contain all required components. Applicants will be notified of final award status no later than Friday, January 7, 2022.

**Note:** All award decisions are final. Applicants that do not meet the qualifications may reapply for future grant opportunities. The reimbursement amount will be contingent on the total number of awardees, as well as other priority criteria.

# Submission Process and Deadline

Applications must be completed (including all elements outlined below) and submitted through the online [**Smartsheet form**](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/6fbb876dd7f741eba8b1957e0de620fb) by **Friday, December 17, 2021, by 11:59 pm.** The Program Assurances Form must also be uploaded to the Smartsheet form at the time of submission. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered. If you do not receive an email confirmation of receipt of your application from the Smartsheet system within 24 hours after the deadline, please email [CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us](mailto:CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us).

Application materials are available for download on the [CDE’s School Nutrition Grants webpage](https://www.cde.state.co.us/nutrition/nutrigrantsandawards).

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| Submit the electronic copy of the application via the  [**Smartsheet form**](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/6fbb876dd7f741eba8b1957e0de620fb)  **By: Friday, December 17, 2021, by 11:59 pm** |

# Application Format

* The total narrative (Sections A-D) of the application cannot exceed 2500 words total (approximately five single-spaced pages). Please see below for the required elements of the application. **Note:** Applications that exceed the word count will not be reviewed.
* The Program Assurances Form must include original signatures of the District Food Service Director or SFSP Main Program Contact, Procurement/Purchasing Specialist (if applicable), Business Official/Finance Director, Superintendent (if applicable), and School Board President (if applicable) hereafter referred to as Authorized Representatives.

# Required Elements

The Colorado Health Foundation Mini-Grant [**Smartsheet form**](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/6fbb876dd7f741eba8b1957e0de620fb)includes the following elements, all of which must be completed. See evaluation rubric for specific selection criteria needed in Part II (page 10).

**Part I: Application Introduction** [not scored]

Part IA: Applicant Information

Part IB: Program Assurances Form

Upload the Program Assurances Form (PDF or Word file) within the [**Smartsheet form**](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/6fbb876dd7f741eba8b1957e0de620fb). Funding will not be awarded until all signatures are in place. Applications may be submitted without signatures; however, please attempt to obtain all signatures before submitting the application.

**Part II: Narrative:**

Section A: Requested Funding Amount [not scored]

Section B: Participation/Access Challenges and Barriers [not to exceed 200 words]

Section C: Description of the project [not to exceed 2500 words]

Attachment A: Project Budget

**Colorado Health Foundation Mini-Grant Pilot**

**Applications Due: Friday, December 17, 2021, by 11:59 pm**

# Part IA: Applicant Information

**\*\*Please provide the following information within the** [**Smartsheet form**](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/6fbb876dd7f741eba8b1957e0de620fb)**\*\***

Smartsheet does not save works in progress, so applicants may wish to complete the required information for Part IA and Part II in a separate document and then copy and paste responses into the online application.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Program Sponsor Information** | | | | |
| **Program Sponsor Organization Name:** | |  | | |
| **Mailing Address:** | |  | | |
| **Type of Education Provider**  [check box below that best describes your organization or authorizer] | | | | |
| ☐ School District ☐ BOCES ☐ Charter School ☐ RCCI ☐ SFSP Sponsor | | | | |
| **Region**  [indicate region of Colorado this program will directly impact] | | | | |
| ☐ Metro ☐ Pikes Peak ☐ North Central ☐ Northwest  ☐ West Central ☐ Southwest ☐ Southeast ☐ Northeast | | | | |
| Food Service Director/Program Contact | | | | |
| **Name:** |  | | **Title:** |  |
| **E-mail:** |  | | | |
| **Procurement/Purchasing Specialist** [if applicable] | | | | |
| **Name:** |  | | **Title:** |  |
| **E-mail:** |  | | | |
| **Business Official/Authorized Representative** | | | | |
| **Name:** |  | | **Title:** |  |
| **E-mail:** |  | | | |

# Part IB: Program Assurances Form

The appropriate Authorized Representatives must sign below to indicate their approval of the contents of the application for the **Colorado Health Foundation Mini-Grant Pilot** and the receipt of program funds.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| On | (date) | , 2021, the Authorized Representatives of | (Program Sponsor) |

hereby agree to the following assurances:

1. Each program sponsor that receives a mini-grant from School Nutrition is required to submit an annual report. Awarded program sponsors will also be expected to complete evaluation activities for MasterClass. This includes a pre-assessment, training surveys and post-assessment. CDE is authorized to monitor program sponsors to ensure program integrity and to reallocate funds if program integrity issues are identified. Such monitoring could include budget documentation or requesting detailed lists of purchases and expenditures.
2. The awardee will work with and provide requested data to CDE within the time frames provided.
3. The awardee will not discriminate against anyone regarding race, gender, national origin, color, disability, or age.
4. Funded projects will maintain appropriate fiscal and program records and that fiscal audits of this program may be conducted.
5. If any findings of misuse of these funds are discovered, project funds will be returned to CDE.
6. The grantee will maintain sole responsibility for the project even though subcontractors may be used to perform certain services.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Name of District Food Service Director OR  SFSP Sponsor Executive Director |  | Signature |  | Date |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Name of District Procurement/Purchasing Specialist  (if applicable) |  | Signature |  | Date |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Name of District Business Official/Authorized Representative |  | Signature |  | Date |

**Note:** If application is approved, funding will not be awarded until all signatures are in place. Please try to obtain all signatures before submitting the application.

**Colorado Health Foundation Mini-Grant Pilot**

# Application Scoring

CDE Use Only

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Part I:** | **Application Introduction** | Not Scored |
| **Part II:** | **Narrative** | **/60** |

**GENERAL COMMENTS:** Please indicate support for scoring by including overall strengths and weaknesses. These comments will be provided to applicants with their final scores.

**Strengths:**

**Weaknesses:**

**Required Changes:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **RECOMMENDATION:** | Funded |  |  | Funded with Changes |  |  | Not Funded |  |

# Selection Criteria and Evaluation Rubric

**Part I: Application Introduction** [Not Scored]

Cover Pages and Assurances

Complete applicant information and program assurances and include as the first pages of the application.

**Part II: Narrative [60 Points]**

Template with included narrative responses must not exceed 2500 words (approximately five single-spaced pages). The following criteria will be used by reviewers to evaluate the application. For the application to be considered for funding, it must receive at least 42 points out of the 60 possible points and all required elements must be addressed. An application that receives a score of zero on any required element will not be funded without revisions.

**Scoring Definitions**

Minimally Addressed or Does Not Meet Criteria - Information not provided

Met Some but Not All Identified Criteria - Requires additional clarification or development

Addressed Criteria but Did Not Provide Thorough Detail - Adequate response, but not thoroughly developed or high-quality response

Met All Criteria with High Quality - Clear, concise, and well thought out response

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section A: Requested Funding Amount** | |
| Enter the total dollar amount requested. A full budget will be submitted with the application. | $ |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Section B: Challenges and Barriers** | **Minimally Addressed or Does Not Meet Criteria** | **Met Some but Not All Identified Criteria** | **Addressed Criteria but Did Not Provide Thorough Detail** | **Met All Criteria with High Quality** | | **TOTAL** |
| 1. Briefly describe previous challenges to access to and participation in federal child nutrition programs offered by the program sponsor and how this project will address those challenges. (e.g., lack of information/awareness, perception of low meal quality, stigma, etc.) [200 words or less] | 0 | 1 | 3 | 5 | |  |
| **Total** | | | | | **/5** | |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Section C: Description of Planned Project**  **\*Responses for this section not to exceed 2500 words total.** | **Minimally Addressed or Does Not Meet Criteria** | **Met Some but Not All Identified Criteria** | **Addressed Criteria but Did Not Provide Thorough Detail** | **Met All Criteria with High Quality** | | **TOTAL** |
| 1. Explain how funding will be used to increase access to and participation in Child Nutrition Programs long-term. | 0 | 1 | 3 | 5 | |  |
| 1. Describe how the program sponsor will use funding to provide nutrition outreach. | 0 | 1 | 3 | 5 | |  |
| 1. Describe how the program sponsor will engage the community (student, parents/caregivers, teachers, administration, community members) in the development of this project. | 0 | 1 | 3 | 5 | |  |
| 1. Describe the staffing plan to execute this project. | 0 | 1 | 3 | 5 | |  |
| 1. Explain the overall impact to students from this project. (e.g., % of families reached with marketing, % increase in scratch recipes, etc.) | 0 | 1 | 3 | 5 | |  |
| 1. Describe how these initiatives will be maintained after mini-grant funds are expended. | 0 | 1 | 3 | 5 | |  |
| **Total** | | | | | **/30** | |

# Attachment A: CHF Mini-Grant Budget

Program sponsors must submit a proposed budget with the subgrant application. Applications will be considered incomplete without a budget. The Colorado Health Foundation Mini-Grant budget can be found on [CDE’s School Nutrition Grants webpage](https://www.cde.state.co.us/nutrition/nutrigrantsandawards).