

# **MODEL LANGUAGE FOR HEALTHIER SCHOOL FOOD**

**FOR INCLUSION IN A  
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL  
FOR  
SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE  
MANAGEMENT COMPANY SERVICES**

## TOPICS

1. **Meals:**
  - 1.1. **Compliance with Program Regulations**
  - 1.2. **Menu Criteria for Breakfast & Lunch**
  - 1.3. **Fresh Fruits & Vegetables**
  - 1.4. **Nutrition Standards & Exclusions**
  - 1.5. **Allergies & Special Diets**
2. **Customer Service and Experience**
  - 2.1. **Dining Experience**
  - 2.2. **Nutrition Education**
  - 2.3. **Customer Engagement & Satisfaction**
3. **Program Management:**
  - 3.1. **Planning & Reporting**
  - 3.2. **Monitoring & Compliance**
  - 3.3. **Staff Education & Training**

## Evaluation Criteria

Proposals that meet the Minimum Requirements will be evaluated according to the following comparative evaluation criteria.

### 1. Meals:

#### 1.1. Compliance with Program Regulations

Highly Advantageous: Demonstrates capacity to provide school meals with nutritional standards above the USDA minimum requirements

Advantageous: Demonstrates capacity to provide school meals with nutritional standards that meet the USDA minimum requirements

Not Advantageous: Does not demonstrate compliance with the USDA minimum requirements for nutrition

#### 1.2. Menu Criteria for Breakfast & Lunch

Highly Advantageous: Sample menus submitted meet 100 percent of criteria for breakfast and lunch, including criteria related to variety, meal composition and balance, and culturally preferred foods

Advantageous: Sample menus submitted meet more than 75 percent of criteria for breakfast and lunch, including criteria related to variety, meal composition and balance, and culturally preferred foods

Not Advantageous: Sample menus submitted meet less than 75 percent of criteria for breakfast and lunch, including criteria related to variety, meal composition and balance, and culturally preferred foods

#### 1.3. Fresh Fruits & Vegetables

Highly Advantageous: Demonstrates significant capacity and interest in providing fresh fruits and vegetables to students through salad bars, local produce purchasing targets, and/or participation in Farm to School programming

Advantageous: Demonstrates moderate capacity and interest in providing fresh fruits and vegetables to students through salad bars, local produce purchasing targets, and/or participation in Farm to School programming

Not Advantageous: Demonstrates limited capacity and interest in providing fresh fruits and vegetables to students through salad bars, local produce purchasing targets, and/or participation in Farm to School programming

#### 1.4. Nutrition Standards & Exclusions

Highly Advantageous: Demonstrates capacity to fully implement the Food Service Program including meeting all it's the nutrition standards & exclusions

Advantageous: Demonstrates capacity to partially implement the Food Service Program including meeting all it's the nutrition standards & exclusions

Not Advantageous: Does not demonstrate capacity to limitedly implement the Food Service Program meals including meeting all it's the nutrition standards & exclusions

#### 1.5. Allergies & Special Diets

Highly Advantageous: Demonstrates capacity and commits to provide tailored meals to students with dietary allergies or special diets

Not Advantageous: Does not demonstrate capacity or commitment to provide tailored meals to students with dietary allergies or special diets

## 2. Customer Service and Experience

### 2.1. Dining Experience

Highly Advantageous: Provides a clear plan and ability to provide minimum time for meals and appealing meals, and a pleasant dining environment and experience

Advantageous: Provides a limited information and ability to provide minimum time for meals and appealing meals, and a pleasant dining environment and experience

Not Advantageous: Provides no plan or ability to provide minimum time for meals and appealing meals, and a pleasant dining environment and experience

### 2.2. Nutrition Education

Highly Advantageous: Provides a clear plan and ability to provide nutrition education through menu distribution, meal site signage, attractive displays, “Smarter Lunchroom” practices and/or other nutrition education initiatives, independently or in collaboration with partners

Advantageous: Provides a limited plan and ability to provide nutrition education through menu distribution, meal site signage, attractive displays, “Smarter Lunchroom” practices and/or other nutrition education initiatives, independently or in collaboration with partners

Not Advantageous: Provides no plan or ability to provide nutrition education through menu distribution, meal site signage, attractive displays, “Smarter Lunchroom” practices and/or other nutrition education initiatives, independently or in collaboration with partners

### 2.3. Customer Engagement & Satisfaction

Highly Advantageous: Provides a clear plan and ability to solicit student feedback on meal satisfaction and preferences, through surveys or other mechanisms, and modify meals to increase student satisfaction

Advantageous: Provides a limited plan and ability to solicit student feedback on meal satisfaction and preferences, through surveys or other mechanisms, and modify meals to increase student satisfaction

Not Advantageous: Provides no plan or ability to solicit student feedback on meal satisfaction and preferences, through surveys or other mechanisms, and modify meals to increase student satisfaction

### 3. Program Management:

#### 3.1. Planning & Reporting

Highly Advantageous: Provides a clear plan and ability to provide proposed menus and performance reports in compliance with the schedule and using tools described herein

Advantageous: Provides a limited plan and ability to provide proposed menus and performance reports in compliance with the schedule and using tools described herein

Not Advantageous: Provides no plan or ability to provide proposed menus and performance reports in compliance with the schedule and using tools described herein

#### 3.2. Monitoring & Compliance

Highly Advantageous: Provides a clear plan and ability to monitor Food Service Program implementation and ensure compliance with requirements and standards, through regular self-evaluation, performance review meetings with and site-visits from SFA representatives, and corrective action and program improvement initiatives

Advantageous: Provides a limited plan and ability to monitor Food Service Program implementation and ensure compliance with requirements and standards, through regular self-evaluation, performance review meetings with and site-visits from SFA representatives, and corrective action and program improvement initiatives

Not Advantageous: Provides no plan or ability to monitor Food Service Program implementation and ensure compliance with requirements and standards, through regular self-evaluation, performance review meetings with and site-visits from SFA representatives, and corrective action and program improvement initiatives

#### 3.3. Staff Education & Training

Highly Advantageous: Provides a clear plan and ability to regularly train school meals program staff in USDA Professional Standards as well as “Smarter Lunchroom” and other capacity-building trainings.

Advantageous: Provides a limited plan and ability to regularly train school meals program staff in USDA Professional Standards as well as “Smarter Lunchroom” and other capacity-building trainings.

Not Advantageous: Provides no plan or ability to regularly train school meals program staff in USDA Professional Standards as well as “Smarter Lunchroom” and other capacity-building trainings.

# Scope of Work

## 1. Meals:

### 1.1. Compliance with Program Regulations

**1.1.1.** In providing management services for the [NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT] Food Service Program, the Food Service Management Company (FSMC) shall comply with the applicable provisions of the National School Lunch Act, as amended, and the United States Department of Agriculture (“USDA”) Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act (HFFKA) regulations set forth in 7 CFR parts 210, 215, 220, 245 and 250, and the Massachusetts Department of Health regulations, the [NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT] Wellness Policy, Dietary Guidelines for Americans and any future amendments thereto. The School Food Authority (SFA) requires meeting and encourages exceeding these regulations in an effort toward providing more nutritious meals to students.

### 1.2. Menu Criteria for Breakfast & Lunch

#### General Criteria

- 1.2.1.** Menus will offer a variety of choices daily and throughout the [21] day menu cycle that include culturally preferred ingredients and recipes to accommodate the nationalities represented by [NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT] school students. The FSMC will work with the [NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT] designee to design menu options that offer foods that low in fat, nutritious, have limited processing, and adhere to ingredients standards and exclusions. Offerings should promote participation in the school lunch program. If menu recipes or components are to repeat during the cycle, the SFA must give prior approval.
- 1.2.2.** Breakfast and Lunch served must follow the minimum requirements of the K-12 Meal Patterns and Dietary Specifications of the USDA Food and Nutrition Service Final Rule 7 CFR Parts 210 and 220.
- 1.2.3.** See **Planning & Reporting** for additional related requirements for menu development
- 1.2.4.** FSMC will distribute a monthly menu to students, families, teachers and administrators
- Menus will be provided in English and Spanish at minimum, and additional languages as possible.
  - Menus will be distributed and posted [10] days in advance of meal service, and only after approval by the SFA
  - Menus will be printed in sufficient quantities for each student to receive one menu each month.
  - Menus will be posted in electronic form on the school website and appropriate webpages.
- 1.2.5.** At meal sites, FSMC will display attractive and informative signage, including a menu board displaying the menu for the current and following day and meal options signs displayed along the meal service line

## **Breakfast Criteria**

- 1.2.6. Following the USDA-required Meal Patterns, breakfast will include at minimum, one cup of whole grain component(s), one cup of fresh fruit, and one cup of milk.
- 1.2.7. Protein (e.g. egg, yogurt, cheese) will be served at minimum, **[two]** days a week.
- 1.2.8. Fresh fruit will include pre-washed Ready-To-Eat (RTE) whole fruits and labeled RTE.
- 1.2.9. **[Two]** different fresh fruit options will be offered, each as 1/2 cup servings.
- 1.2.10. Hot menu options will be available, at minimum **[three]** days a week.
- 1.2.11. Grab n Go options will be available daily.

## **Lunch Criteria**

- 1.2.12. Following the USDA-required Meal Patterns, lunch will include at minimum, the whole grain component(s), meat/meat alternatives component(s), vegetable component(s), fresh fruit, and one cup of milk. See the Meal Pattern for specified serving size minimums by school grade.
- 1.2.13. Daily, there will be a minimum of **[three]** different meat/meat alternatives options.
- 1.2.14. Daily, there will be a vegetarian choice, and the district may consider a school- or district-wide Meatless Monday campaign
- 1.2.15. At minimum **[one]** time during the **[21]** day menu cycle, a fish entrée will be offered.
- 1.2.16. Daily, there will be an option for an entrée salad that satisfies the meat/meat alternatives and whole grain requirements
- 1.2.17. Daily, there will be a minimum of **[three]** different steamed or cooked fresh vegetable options.
- 1.2.18. Daily, there will be a minimum of **[two]** fresh fruit options
- 1.2.19. Fresh fruit and raw vegetables will include pre-washed Ready-To-Eat (RTE) whole fruits and vegetables, labeled RTE

## **1.3. Fresh Fruits & Vegetables**

**[NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT]** seeks to increase the amount of fresh fruits and vegetables served. The FSMC is expected to support implementation and expansion of initiatives, including but not limited to:

### **1.3.1. Provide Salad Bars**

- Entrée salad bar must offer a variety of fruits/vegetables, at least 4 different vegetables/fruit, 2 meat/meat alternatives, and a whole grain that is, or can be, 2-grain equivalents, and must qualify as a reimbursable meal.
- The salad bar option is in addition to the green salads that are to be offered within the menu cycle, as noted in the sample menus, at no additional cost.
- Salad bars must hold food at safe temperature.
- FSMC must provide and wash ingredients and utensils.

### **1.3.2. Increase Procurement of Local Produce**

- Increase procurement and provision of Massachusetts and New England fruits and vegetables
- Maintain records of locally-grown produce, including farm name, location, product type, and quantities, and supply monthly reports to the **[NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT]**.
- Meet progressive targets for increasing procurement of local produce and dairy products, such that there is a minimum 5% increase for local produce annually

### **1.3.3. Collaborate on Farm to School Programs**

Farm to School programs provide educational opportunities, and through initiatives like “Harvest of the Month,” encourages consumption of local produce and supports the local agriculture economy. “Local” is defined by producers located within the Massachusetts and New England states.

- Market and promote Farm to School programs through educational programming, in collaboration with [NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT] and other partners (See Nutrition Education for more)

## **1.4. Nutrition Standards & Exclusions**

### **1.4.1. Standards** Foods served **must** include:

- Fresh vegetables with every lunch
- Fresh fruit with every breakfast and lunch
- Only [50-100] % whole grains
- Only low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk or nutritionally equivalent non-dairy alternatives
- Only whole muscle meat

### **1.4.2. Limitations** Foods served **may** contain:

- Foods containing sodium levels as regulated by the USDA
- Foods with sugar levels as regulated by the USDA

### **1.4.3. Exclusions.** Food served **may not** contain:

- Peanuts and tree nuts
- Frozen processed foods
- Canned foods
- Deep fried foods
- Highly processed foods
- High-fructose corn syrup
- Partially or fully hydrogenated oils
- Trans saturated fats
- Artificial flavors, colors and sweeteners
- Artificial Preservatives: Monosodium Glutamate (MSG), Sodium nitrates and sodium nitrites, Butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA) and Butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT)
- Recumbent bovine somatotropin (rBST)
- Animal by-products
- Mechanically separated meats (MSM)

## **1.5. Allergies & Special Diets**

**1.5.1.**FSMC will provide tailored meals to students with dietary allergies or special diets formally requested for breakfast and lunch. These will include: 1) soy free; 2) wheat free; 3) egg free; 4) gluten free; 5) dairy free; 6) meals with any combination of the aforementioned allergens or 7) any other allergen-free meal formally requested. Special diets are to be labeled with the student's name, the excluded allergens or special diet.

**1.5.2.**FSMC will maintain and provide to the [NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT] records of special diet meals with the food components, indicating the allergens excluded.



## 2. Customer Service and Experience

### 2.1. Dining Experience

2.1.1. Students will have at minimum, 25 minutes to eat their lunch, starting from the time they sit down.

2.1.2. Meals served will be appealing and attractive to children and be served in clean, pleasant settings.

### 2.2. Nutrition Education

2.2.1. FSMC will implement “Smarter Lunchroom” strategies to promote students in choosing healthier options, intuitive meal service, and pleasant dining experiences. (see [Section TK](#) for “Smarter Lunchroom” Scorecard resource).

2.2.2. FSMC will expand healthy food programs independently or in collaboration with school partners, such as nutrition and health education programs and school gardening programs. Potential collaborative partners include **[NAMES OF POTENTIAL PARTNERS, SUCH AS FoodCorps, and Massachusetts Farm to School]**.

### 2.3. Customer Engagement & Satisfaction

2.3.1. FSMC will institute and utilize student-focused surveys in collaboration with the **[NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT]** to determine menu satisfaction and preferences for new and current offerings, measure response items, and provide survey results to **[NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT]** accompanied by recommendations to modify meals to increase student satisfaction. Surveys will be conducted at each school once annually, at minimum.

### 3. Program Management:

#### 3.1. Planning & Reporting

- 3.1.1.** In compliance with USDA regulations Section B §210.16(b)(1) the FSMC will submit with the proposal a twenty-one (21) day cycle menu and a Daily Menu Pattern for [all] [NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT] schools. The FSMC must adhere to this cycle for the first [21] days of the meal service; thereafter, changes may be made with the mutual agreement of the [NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT] and the FSMC. However, the menu standard as presented in the first [21] day menu and the Meal Pattern must be maintained as to type and quality of meal services. The Daily Menu Pattern should clearly indicate the number and type of choices and offerings that will be offered at all grade levels.
- 3.1.2.** FSMC will establish and maintain an advisory board composed of parents, teachers, and students to assist in menu planning as per USDA 210.16(a)(8).
- 3.1.3.** FSMC will provide proposed menus to [NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT] three months prior to menu date, with ingredient list, nutrition analysis, meal component breakdown, and confirmed student acceptability. The [NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT] will respond two months before menu date.
- 3.1.4.** FSMC will provide menus to [NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT] with nutrient analysis (using USDA-approved software) accompanied with carbohydrate count, meal component breakdown, and allergens, and all pertinent information needed for state and USDA audits.
- 3.1.5.** FSMC will provide documentation, indicating portion size (by either weight or volume) as prescribed in accordance with U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) requirements, for each food item provided. Portion sizes are to fall into the high end of the USDA range. The [NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT] seeks to move beyond the standards of USDA for the nutrient content of meals, e.g. lowering sodium choices.

#### 3.2. Monitoring & Compliance

- 3.2.1.** Quarterly, the [NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT] Director/designee and FSMC meet to ensure compliance with the nutrition standards
- 3.2.2.** In addition to meeting USDA requirements (see **Compliance with Program Regulations**) the FSMC will also comply with Dietary Guidelines for Americans, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, [NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT] Wellness Policy, and additional relevant policies developed or amended.

#### 3.3. Staff Education & Training

- 3.3.1.** FSMC will comply with at least minimum annual educational and continuing education/training requirements of the USDA Professional Standards (7 CFR § 210.30) for all school nutrition personnel.
- 3.3.2.** FSMC will provide additional continuing education/training to all school nutrition personnel to increase capacity in implementing elective nutrition program, such as the “Smarter Lunchroom” program.