



Food and
Nutrition
Service

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Center

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SUBJECT: Team Up for School Nutrition Success (Team Up) – Phase III

TO: Regional Directors
Special Nutrition Programs
All Regions

State Directors
Child Nutrition Programs
All States

This memorandum provides important information regarding Phase III of the *Team Up for School Nutrition Success (Team Up)* initiative, and presents several options to Regional Offices and State agencies for continuing the momentum of *Team Up*. Regional Offices and State agencies are encouraged to build *Team Up* into their annual training plans and continue considering ways to adapt the *Team Up* model to meet their specific needs.

The Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) along with its Applied Research Division (ARD) collaborated with USDA to develop, pilot, and manage the *Team Up for School Nutrition Success* workshops across the country. *Team Up* is a face-to-face peer mentoring program that brings school nutrition professionals to share solutions using a research-based model to create an environment encouraging participants to identify their strengths and explore new ideas as solutions to challenges.

In 2016, USDA expanded the *Team Up* initiative to all State agencies (Phase II). This expansion empowered State agencies, nationwide, to facilitate their own *Team Up* workshop in order to provide tailored training and technical assistance for their school food authorities (SFAs) in enhancing schools' food service operations and maintaining strong student meal program participation. The goal of the expansion was to bring customized *Team Up* trainings to all states and territories. To date, USDA and ICN have provided *Team Up* workshops in all 7 USDA Regions, 47 states and territories.

Team Up for School Nutrition Success – Next Steps (Phase III)

In preparation for Phase III, ICN will continue to provide *Team Up* workshops to several target audiences through various options. *Team Up* workshops will be added to ICN's extensive training catalog allowing Regions, States, and even school food authorities to request *Team Up* workshops as needed at the following Web site:

<http://teamup.theicn.org/request/>.

ICN will provide the following two options:

1. ICN will continue to provide ***Team Up for School Nutrition Success for Directors***. *Team Up* will be transitioned to a State-led model in which ICN will continue to work with State agencies to support *Team Up* workshops within their respective state by identifying mentors and consultants to assist in carrying out the training. Seven (7) existing training topics for Directors include: Menu Planning, Increasing Participation, Financial Management, Food Safety, Special Food and Nutrition Needs, Smart Snacks, and Plate Waste. States will need to click on the following link <http://teamup.theicn.org/request/> and complete a *Team Up for School Nutrition Success* request form.

In 2017-2018, at least two additional topics will be added for Directors' Training: Leadership and Human Resources. As always, States will have the option to customize topics based on the needs of their SFAs.

2. ICN will pilot ***Team Up for School Nutrition Success for Managers***. ICN will pilot the *Team Up for School Nutrition Success* workshop for Managers. ICN will utilize a cascade approach to reach Managers working in districts of the Directors who previously participated in a *Team Up* workshop. This cascade concept will help to provide a level of support and buy-in from the Directors of the respective Manager's districts as well as leverage the momentum and effectiveness of *Team Up* within the district.

Team Up for School Nutrition Success - Phase III Continuation Plan

ICN will proactively work with State agencies and organizations to promote and continue offering *Team Up* workshops. ICN will develop a fourfold marketing plan to promote *Team Up* to:

1. State Agencies
 - a. ICN will continue to work with State agencies to support *Team Up* workshops within their respective state by identifying mentors and consultants to assist in conducting the workshop(s).

- b. *Team Up* workshop tracks will include Directors and Managers.
2. Regional Offices
 - a. ICN will continue to work with Regional Offices to offer Regional *Team Up* workshops for multiples states within their regions, if requested.
 - b. *Team Up* workshop tracks will include Directors and Managers.
 3. State School Nutrition Association (SNA) Affiliates
 - a. ICN will work with State SNA Affiliates to offer a 1-day *Team Up* workshop as a pre-conference session at State SNA conferences.
 - b. ICN plans to work closely with SNA’s national office to continue to promote *Team Up*.
 4. SNA Annual National Conference (ANC)
 - a. ICN and USDA will work with SNA to provide a 1-day *Team Up* workshop as a pre-conference session at SNA’s Annual National Conference.
 - b. ICN will work with SNA to support the attendance of 45 participants. Conference attendees will self-select to participate in this workshop since attendance at the National SNA meeting requires travel and registration fees.
 - c. Initially, we will attempt this concept with only Directors, with the potential to expand the preconference session to other target audiences in future years.

Adapting the *Team Up* Model: State Agencies and Allied Organizations

State agencies may continue to conduct their own *Team Up* training without requesting assistance from ICN. Regional Offices have shared with the National Office how several State agencies have planned on their own to incorporate the *Team Up* model into their training programs.

- **Wisconsin**, as part of their Professional Standards Training Grant, will use the *Team Up* model to create a training called “Small Victories” for smaller rural school districts.
- **Ohio** is modifying the *Team Up* model for their Farm to School and local food procurement trainings.
- **Oregon** will hold *Team Up* preconference workshops at their annual Oregon School Nutrition Association conferences.

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- **Georgia** has planned several *Team Up* trainings this year that will be held in different regions across the State and continues to promote these additional workshops at their annual Director's Conference. During the conference, the State agency has also hosted follow-up meetings with mentors and participants to provide a venue for past attendees to share progress made on action plans goals and brainstorm opportunities for future training and support.

FNS will continue to collaborate with ICN and partners to support *Team Up for School Nutrition Success*. State agencies should direct any questions concerning this guidance to the appropriate FNS Regional Office.



Cheryl Jackson Lewis
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