



# USDA Grants Needed to Help Minnesota Serve Healthy School Meals

96% of districts need at least one piece of kitchen equipment

*This fact sheet is one in a 10-part series highlighting the need for more school kitchen equipment grants to help ensure that children receive healthy school meals.*

## Overview

The nutritional quality of school meals has a significant impact on the health of the children who eat them. Each day, the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs serve more than 30 million and 14 million children, respectively, providing healthy food for kids.<sup>1</sup> However, this frequently requires schools to work around equipment and infrastructure challenges in ways that are expensive, inefficient, and unsustainable.

### Minnesota at a Glance

- 96 percent of school districts needed at least one piece of equipment to better serve nutritious foods as of the 2012-13 school year.\*
- The median cost of equipment needs per school was \$47,000 in the 2012-13 school year, compared with approximately \$37,000 nationally.†
- The state received \$465,203 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for school kitchen equipment upgrades in fiscal year 2014.‡

\* The Pew Charitable Trusts, "States Need Updated School Kitchen Equipment," accessed April 14, 2016, <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/reports/2014/03/26/states-need-updated-school-kitchen-equipment-b>.

† Ibid.

‡ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, "Fiscal Year 2014 National School Lunch Program Equipment Assistance Grants for School Food Authorities" (memorandum, April 18, 2014).

Although 25 percent of school districts in Minnesota have at least some budget for kitchen equipment upgrades, U.S. Department of Agriculture grants are critical to helping schools with greater needs. Twenty-eight schools in the state received funding in fiscal 2014 to purchase kitchen equipment.<sup>3</sup> (See Table 1.)

Policymakers have a chance to make a big difference in many school systems by helping them purchase the new and better tools they need to serve healthier foods more efficiently. Congress has provided such support since 2009 in the form of grant funding through annual appropriations, including \$30 million in fiscal 2016, which is distributed to school districts via state agencies.<sup>4</sup> For fiscal 2017, the president's budget includes \$35 million for the grants.<sup>5</sup> Now Congress has the opportunity to match that request and make certain that more schools have access to these much-needed resources.

Additionally, the bipartisan School Food Modernization Act (S. 540/H.R. 3316) would maintain schools' access to modern kitchen equipment and infrastructure, and strengthen workforce training through the child nutrition reauthorization legislation.<sup>6</sup> By co-sponsoring the act, members of Congress can help make upgrading school kitchens and ensuring that students receive the healthy meals they need a national priority.

Table 1

## Congress Should Appropriate Funding to Help More Schools

USDA grants by Minnesota congressional district, school food authority, amount, and items purchased, FY 2014

Congressional district	School food authority	School	Grant	Item purchased
MN-1	Mankato Area Catholic Schools	Loyola High School—Good Counsel Campus	\$23,494.25	Dishwasher, heater, vent hood
MN-1	Springfield Public Schools #85	Springfield Elementary School and Springfield Secondary School	\$10,818.40	Steamer
MN-1	Team Academy	Team Academy	\$6,431.08	Reach-in refrigerator/freezer
MN-1	Winona #861	Winona Senior High School	\$17,816.00	Combination oven <sup>†</sup> /steamer
MN-1	Winona #861	Winona Senior High School	\$17,816.00	Combination oven/steamer
MN-4	Roseville Public Schools	Harambee Elementary School	\$23,810.00	Double gas convection steamer, <sup>‡</sup> convection oven
MN-4	St. Paul Public Schools	Bridge View Elementary School	\$6,500.00	Serving counter <sup>‡</sup>
MN-4	White Bear Lake Public Schools #624	Birch Lake Elementary School	\$13,490.00	Single gas convection/steam oven
MN-4	White Bear Lake Public Schools #624	Golfview Area Learning Center	\$12,700.00	Gas double convection oven

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Congressional district	School food authority	School	Grant	Item purchased
MN-4	White Bear Lake Public Schools #624	Willow Lake Elementary School	\$23,810.00	Double gas convection/steam oven
MN-5	Catholic Charities—St. Joseph's Home for Children	St. Joseph's Home for Children	\$8,259.00	Cold-pan serving counter <sup>s</sup>
MN-5	Hopkins Public Schools #270	Eisenhower Elementary School	\$23,400.00	Combination oven
MN-6	Forest Lake #831	Forest Lake Montessori School	\$10,844.50	Refrigerated salad bar
MN-6	Minnesota Independent School District #4116	Lakes International Language Academy	\$10,844.50	Refrigerated serving cart/salad bar
MN-6	Montevideo Public Schools	Ramsey Elementary School	\$24,194.90	Dishwasher
MN-7	Kelliher Public School #36	Central kitchen—all grades	\$21,240.71	Combination oven
MN-7	Kelliher Public School #36	Central kitchen—all grades	\$21,240.71	Combination oven
MN-7	Lac Qui Parle Valley #378	Stevens Elementary School	\$16,675.00	Walk-in freezer
MN-7	Westbrook-Walnut Grove School #2898	Walnut Grove Elementary School	\$9,675.00	Dishwasher
MN-7	Win-E-Mac Public Schools	Win-E-Mac Secondary School	\$7,079.00	Dishwasher
MN-7	Win-E-Mac Public Schools	Win-E-Mac Elementary School	\$6,929.00	Convection oven
MN-7	Win-E-Mac Public Schools	Win-E-Mac Elementary School	\$7,668.00	Boilerless convection steamer <sup>ll</sup>
MN-7	Win-E-Mac Public Schools	Win-E-Mac Elementary School	\$7,646.00	Kettle electric countertop
MN-7	Win-E-Mac Public Schools	Win-E-Mac Secondary School	\$5,325.00	Range
MN-8	Cass Lake-Bena #115	Cass Lake-Bena High School	\$24,512.14	Combination oven/steamer

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Congressional district	School food authority	School	Grant	Item purchased
MN-8	Duluth Public Schools #709	Laura MacArthur Elementary School	\$5,329.94	Merchandising cart
MN-8	Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe	Nay Ah Shing School	\$8,650.00	Hot food serving counter <sup>#</sup>
MN-8	Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe	Nay Ah Shing School	\$7,475.00	Cold pan serving counter
MN-8	Onamia Public Schools #480	Onamia Elementary School	\$23,947.00	Walk-in freezer
MN-8	Proctor ISD #704	Bay View Elementary School	\$41,768.00	Walk-in cooler
MN-8	Wadena Deer Creek ISD #2155	Wadena Elementary School	\$14,040.00	Convection oven
MN-8	Woodland Hills-St. James Home of Duluth	Woodland Hills Residential Treatment Center	\$8,014.33	Tilting skillet <sup>**</sup>
MN-8	Wrenshall ISD #100	Elementary and secondary school central kitchen	\$5,923.16	Refrigerator

Notes: Total dollars allocated from the USDA to states and from states to schools may be different because of variation between projected and final equipment costs.

- \* Combination (combi) ovens bake, roast, grill, steam, braise, blanch, and poach foods in shorter cooking times. This technique preserves vitamins and nutrients at higher levels than traditional cooking methods.
- † Convection steamers use internal fans to circulate steam and air around food to cook it more quickly than a traditional steaming method.
- ‡ Serving line counters hold foods at safe, warm or cool temperatures.
- § Cold-pan serving line counters hold foods at safe, cold temperatures.
- || Boilerless steamers distribute steam evenly around food, resulting in more even heating and consistent cooking and less consumption of energy and water.
- # Hot-food serving line counters hold foods at safe, warm temperatures.
- \*\* Tilting skillets are used to grill, fry, simmer, or braise a large quantity of food and tilt forward for easier pouring than stationary skillets.

Source: Minnesota Department of Education

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## Endnotes

- 1 U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, "National School Lunch Program: Participation and Lunches Served (Data as of April 8, 2016)"; U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, "School Breakfast Program: Participation and Meals Served (Data as of April 8, 2016)," <http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/child-nutrition-tables>.
- 2 The Pew Charitable Trusts, "States Need Updated School Kitchen Equipment," accessed April 14, 2016, <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/reports/2014/03/26/states-need-updated-school-kitchen-equipment-b>.
- 3 Minnesota Department of Education, pers. comm., April 1, 2016.
- 4 U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, "2016 NSLP Equipment Assistance Grants," last modified Feb. 1, 2016, <http://www.fns.usda.gov/2016-nslp-equipment-assistance-grants>.
- 5 U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, "2017 Explanatory Notes," accessed April 14, 2016, <http://www.obpa.usda.gov/32fns2017notes.pdf>.
- 6 The Pew Charitable Trusts, "Give Schools the Tools to Prepare Healthy, Delicious Meals" (Feb. 20, 2015), <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/fact-sheets/2015/02/give-schools-the-tools-to-prepare-healthy-delicious-meals>.

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## For further information, please visit:

[pewtrusts.org/kitchen-equipment](http://pewtrusts.org/kitchen-equipment)

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**Contact:** Mollie Van Lieu, senior associate

**Email:** [mvanlieu@pewtrusts.org](mailto:mvanlieu@pewtrusts.org)

**Phone:** 202-540-6929

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