

## Overview of Child Nutrition Director Position: What are the expectations of the position?

The child nutrition director is responsible for ensuring all aspects of the child nutrition program are met and in compliance with the applicable federal and state regulations. The child nutrition director is also an advocate for the child nutrition programs and its valued purpose in our communities. A successful director manages a centralized operation by having knowledge and understanding of the program in its entirety.

Below is a high-level overview of the basic program areas. It the responsibility of the leadership within the District/SFA to determine if the duties below can be accomplished solely by the Food Service Director, or if additional staff (Assistant Director or other supporting positions) are necessary.

- **Meal Pattern and Menu Compliance**

The child nutrition director is responsible for overseeing and ensuring that all program meals served to students meet the meal pattern as required by USDA, are of high quality and are accepted by students.

<p><b>The child nutrition director (or menu planner designee):</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans the menu and any necessary accommodations for special dietary needs.</li> <li>• Checks for meal pattern and Smart Snack compliance.</li> <li>• Provides inventory ordering instructions to site managers.</li> <li>• Provides training on meal preparation and monitors to ensure food is prepared and served as directed and high-quality standards are met.</li> </ul>
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- **Operations**

The child nutrition director is responsible for managing and monitoring food service operations.

<p><b>Operations often includes:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hiring, training (professional standards) and supervising of staff.</li> <li>• Ensuring all food safety requirements are met.</li> <li>• Ensuring the accuracy and efficiency of meal counting and claiming,</li> <li>• Ensuring program awareness to households and establishing benefits for students who qualify.</li> <li>• Ensuring requirements are met for a healthy nutrition environment.</li> <li>• Ensuring all USDA and SCN required reporting is completed throughout the year.</li> </ul>
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- **Financial Management**

The child nutrition director is responsible for all funds received and expended by the non-profit school food service account.

<b>Financial management includes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitoring of the fund balance.</li><li>• Monitoring for allowable costs.</li><li>• Filing for claim reimbursement and ensuring reimbursements are received.</li><li>• Monitoring and addressing un-paid meal charges,</li><li>• Ensuring meal prices follow regulations.</li></ul>
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- **Procurement**

The child nutrition director is responsible for ensuring that all funds spent from the non-profit school food service account follow federal and state procurement regulations.

### Professional Standards Requirements for the Child Nutrition Director

Due to the complexity and scope of knowledge required to be a child nutrition director, the USDA issued 7 CFR 210.30 which set education and experience requirements for hiring of child nutrition directors. This regulation also requires that food service directors have food safety training and receive a specific number of hours of annual training.

The state of Kentucky also requires directors (or the certified menu planner), through KRS 158.852, to achieve a Level 2 Certification through the School Nutrition Association within three years of hire.

### **Best Practices for Child Nutrition Director Success**

A successful and supported child nutrition director will have a positive impact on students, staff, and the overall success of a school.

- Ensure that all individuals in a position of leadership directly communicate with the child nutrition director at the building level.
  - Child nutrition directors may email program participation rates to building principals on a weekly basis.
  - Child nutrition directors regularly check in with building principals and administrators to help foster positive working relationships.
  - Building principals and administrators share schedule changes and include the food service director in scheduling, field trips or other important decisions that involve meal service.
- Ensure that the child nutrition director's work does not occur in isolation.
  - Finance staff should be in constant contact with the child nutrition director. It is important to share financials on a regular basis.
  - Custodians or other operations staff should share concerns or ideas for improvement with the child nutrition director.
- The child nutrition director should have all procedures written and easily available to administration or other food service staff. Electronic sharing systems such as Google Drive provide access and transparency.
- The child nutrition director should be in each school on a regular basis.
- The child nutrition director should participate in professional development and provide professional development to other food service staff members.
- Encourage the child nutrition director to work with School and Community Nutrition staff to receive guidance and training.