

GOOD FOOD PURCHASING

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

In support of thriving students in our schools, the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board (EBRPSB) recognizes that access to good food is essential to students' health, wellness, and achievement. As a school district that provides each student with one free school breakfast, lunch, and snack via United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), and in some schools, supper and fresh fruits and vegetables under the Child and Adult Food Care Program (CACFP) and the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP). The Board and the East Baton Rouge Parish Schools (EBRPS) have an important opportunity to ensure dollars spent on food support student wellbeing as well as the local economy and environment.

SECTION II: GOOD FOOD VALUES

This Good Food Purchasing policy encompasses five distinct and interrelated values, which collectively define "good food" as local, sustainable, humane, fair, and nutritious, and shall be incorporated into all EBRPSB food procurement practices. [The Good Food Values](#) are:

1. **Local Economies** - Support small and mid-sized agricultural and food processing operations within the local area or region.
2. **Environmental Sustainability** - Source from producers that employ sustainable production systems that reduce or eliminate synthetic pesticides and fertilizers; avoid the use of hormones, antibiotics, and genetic engineering; conserve soil and water; protect and enhance wildlife habitats and biodiversity; and reduce on-farm energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.
3. **Valued Workforce** - Provide safe and healthy working conditions and fair compensation for all food chain workers and producers from production to consumption.
4. **Animal Welfare** - Provide healthy and humane care for livestock.
5. **Nutrition** - Promote health and well-being by offering generous portions of vegetables, fruit, and whole grains; reducing salt, added sugars, fats, and oils; and by eliminating artificial additives.

Through this *Good Food Purchasing* policy and related policies, the School Board seeks to ensure that foods procured and served as part of the EBRPSB school meal programs (including programs impacting in-school and out-of-school meal service):

- Participate in the National School Lunch (Snack) Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), the Fresh Fruits and Vegetable Program (FFVP) and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and will provide meals that meet or exceed the nutrition standards for school meals as per USDA, the LA Department of Health, and the LA Department of Education.
- Are nutritious and support student health and wellness;
- Ensure all participants in the food supply chain receive fair compensation, fair treatment, and are free of exploitation;
- Are equitably accessible and culturally diverse; and
- Are produced, processed, distributed, and recycled locally using the principles of environmental stewardship (in terms of water, soil, and pesticide management) and the humane treatment of animals.

SECTION III: DIRECTOR OF CHILD NUTRITION

The Director of Child Nutrition or designee shall be responsible for the oversight, implementation, and evaluation of this policy.

SECTION IV: SCHOOL NUTRITION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SNAC)

The Superintendent will establish the School Nutrition Advisory Committee (SNAC) to be comprised of community representatives and stakeholders. The initial committee will consist of seven members. The members will be recommended to the Superintendent by the Director of Child Nutrition for appointment. The School Nutrition Advisory committee, comprised of the appointed community representatives and stakeholders, shall serve as an advisory group to oversee implementation of this Policy. This advisory group shall commit to supporting EBRPSB Child Nutrition and identified district staff as needed as well as contributing to the annual report efforts to inform continued implementation of Good Food Purchasing district wide.

SECTION V: IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Using the 2022-2023 school year as a baseline, EBRPSB will annually increase procurement of Good Food through strategic menu planning and procurement, to meet multi-year benchmarks for the five good food values. EBRPSB Child Nutrition Department is partnered with [The Center for Good Food Purchasing](#) and Three O'clock Project to have national and local support for the effort of strategic implementation year-over-year and successful roll-out of data-driven, community informed Good Food procurement practices. The Good Food Purchasing Benchmarks for success and Standards Criteria will be defined during the 2023-2024 school year and included in an annual report to stakeholder groups and the School Board.

SECTION VI: REQUIREMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The EBRPS Child Nutrition Department shall take the following steps in support of Good Food Purchasing:

1. Upon the passage of this policy, the next procurement cycle must communicate the Good Food Purchasing Standards to appropriate and selected suppliers, including distributors and food service companies, and request them to share data that will help the Child Nutrition Department complete a baseline Good Food Purchasing assessment of food procurement practices;
2. Within 6 months after the baseline assessment has been completed, develop, and adopt a multi-year action plan with benchmarks to measure success towards Good Food Purchasing Standards, including accountability systems with appropriate vendors or distributors to verify sourcing commitments and assess current food procurement practices;
3. To the extent permitted by law, within one year after the baseline assessment has been completed, incorporate Good Food Purchasing Standards into new procurement requests and contracts; and
4. Commit to reasonable public review, robust analysis and full transparency during implementation of the Good Food Purchasing Standards, which shall include but not be limited to:
 - A. The release of the baseline assessment by the Child Nutrition Department, and any collaborating entities, for public comment at least 30-days prior to the public hearing provided for in following subsection; and
 - B. Hold a public hearing to receive public testimony on the baseline no later than 90 days after completion of the assessment.

SECTION VII: TRANSPARENCY

Good Food Purchasing policy reflects multiple values of diverse stakeholders. Therefore, maximum transparency, along with adequate time for public review and comments, are essential to ensure the best possible outcomes for the Child Nutrition Department procurement decisions to reflect Good Food Purchasing values to the greatest degree possible, and to charter an ever-improving path towards greater sustainability in food procurement across the region. The Child Nutrition Department must therefore balance the legitimate confidentiality needed for maintaining the integrity of a fair, competitive process with the right of the public to have adequate time with and access to all relevant information, in order to provide meaningful comments to key decision makers for the purpose of improving the implementation of the Good Food Purchasing policy in the

future.

Therefore, within sixty (60) days of final approval and acceptance of proposals, the Child Nutrition Department shall hold a public hearing on the proposal recommendations. At least thirty (30) days prior to the public hearing, the agency shall make available for public comment on a District approved website:

1. The evaluations and recommendations of proposals that were recommended over all other proposals with a clear rationale; and
2. Any additional supporting information related to all proposals (both successful and unsuccessful) including but not limited to Good Food Purchasing Policy scoring methods.

The public comments shall be compiled, along with public hearing records, to the School Nutrition Advisory Committee (created in Section IV). One member of the School Nutrition Advisory Committee shall be a part of the evaluation review for all proposals submitted in response to all Requests for Proposals alongside identified Child Nutrition Department staff.

SECTION VIII: PROCUREMENT AND VENDOR MANAGEMENT

Good Food Procurement refers to the sourcing and purchasing of food to supply Child Nutrition departmental operations, including school meals, catering, and grant programs.

EBRPSB will expand and establish supply chain accountability and traceability systems with vendors and distributors to verify sourcing commitments and incorporate Good Food Guidelines into bids, Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and contracts for food products, where available.

SECTION IX: EVALUATION AND ANNUAL REPORTING

EBRPSB Child Nutrition Director and/or identified district staff will evaluate progress and report annually, on or before June 30th, on good food purchasing to stakeholder groups and the Board. The Center for Good Food Purchasing will continue to provide evaluation support to measure progress toward Good Food Purchasing Program benchmarks using the Good Food Purchasing Standards criteria. These reporting requirements shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Progress reports informed by the baseline assessment data in partnership with Center for Good Food Purchasing;
2. Compliance data related to procurement practices; and
3. Scoring rubric data informed by place-based growth year-over-year in best

practices as guided by the Center for Good Food Purchasing, the School Nutrition Advisory Committee, and Three O'clock Project.

Within two years of completion of the baseline assessment, the Child Nutrition Department will have a standing agenda item with the EBRPSB School Board in the Spring to present the annual Good Food Purchasing assessment data and implementation goals for the coming year.

New policy: September 28, 2023

Ref: 42 USC 1751 et seq. (Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act), 42 USC 1771 et seq. (Child Nutrition Act of 1966), 7 CFR 210 (National School Lunch Program), 7 CFR 210.31 (Local School Wellness Policy). 7 CFR 220 (School Breakfast Program) Center for Good Food Purchasing and Three O'Clock Project MOU, dated March __, 2023; La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:192, 17:194, 17:195, 17:196, 17:197.1; Board minutes, 9-28-23.