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School districts can earn trip to Las Vegas by improving school meals,   
sharing best practices   
*Action for Healthy Kids Announces Awards Program to Improve School Meals*

CHICAGO, IL [Dec. 14, 2023] – Action for Healthy Kids (AFHK) encourages school districts nationwide who have made significant nutritional improvements to the quality of their school meals to apply to the Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Awards, sponsored by the USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). The Recognition Awards application can be found at: [www.healthymealsincentives.org](http://www.healthymealsincentives.org).

Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Award winners – which will include all school districts who meet award criteria – will receive a travel stipend to attend an exclusive national Healthy Meals Summit in the heart of Las Vegas, NV. Winners will also receive national and local recognition through traditional and social media and have access to an awardee toolkit with promotional resources that help them publicize their success to local media and the school community. FNS and AFHK will share best practices from Recognition Awardees nationwide through traditional and social media, stakeholder engagement, training and technical assistance activities, and Healthy Meals Summits.

The Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Awards will spotlight innovative strategies that school districts have used to serve meals that meet the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. School districts can apply for one or more of the following Recognition Awards categories:

* Breakfast Trailblazer
* Small and/or Rural School Food Authority Breakfast Trailblazer
* Lunch Trailblazer
* Small and/or Rural School Food Authority Lunch Trailblazer
* Innovative School Lunch Makeover
* Innovation in the Cultural Diversity of School Meals
* Innovation in the Preparation of School Meals
* Innovation in Nutrition Education

School districts in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands are eligible to apply for the Recognition Awards if they participate in the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis over a two-year application period ending June 30, 2025.

“Action for Healthy Kids is excited to partner with USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service to showcase innovative school nutrition practices that provide children with access to nutritious school meals,” said Rob Bisceglie, CEO of AFHK. “School meals are a powerful tool to help kids get the nutrition they need. We are committed to working with the USDA and school nutrition professionals to ensure that school meals continue to provide the very best for our nation’s children.”

USDA’s Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative is part of the Biden-Harris Administration’s [National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health](https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/White-House-National-Strategy-on-Hunger-Nutrition-and-Health-FINAL.pdf) and provides a roadmap of federal government actions to end hunger and reduce diet-related diseases by 2030 – all while reducing disparities. 

**ABOUT ACTION FOR HEALTHY KIDS**

[Action for Healthy Kids](https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/) is dedicated to improving children’s health and well-being by bringing together and mobilizing educators, families, and other key stakeholders to help children lead healthy lives. Through its core programming and family-school partnerships, Action for Healthy Kids has impacted more than 20 million children in 55,000 schools nationwide to address systemic challenges in underserved communities. To learn more about its growing network of volunteers and champions, visit: actionforhealthykids.org

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