

School Nutrition Certificate Program




Director Series Handbook

A Program Developed by
Indiana School Nutrition Association
& Indiana Department of Education

Fifth edition: December 2025

This Indiana School Nutrition Association (ISNA) Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) School Nutrition Certificate Program Handbook is designed to provide information to association members, school districts, interested agencies, and individuals about the training program.

ISNA and IDOE have established a voluntary certificate program. This program is designed to provide current and prospective school nutrition directors practical information to assist the graduate to succeed and excel in their profession. The program is designed to assure school corporations that graduates have a base of knowledge and professional standards necessary to lead a successful school nutrition program.

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Mission Statement

The mission of the Indiana School Nutrition Association is to provide education, programs and services for members which promote quality child nutrition.

ISNA and IDOE have furthered the education mission by developing this extensive professional development program.

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Goals

Started in 2019, the ISNA/IDOE School Nutrition Certificate Program is designed to teach the skills necessary for school nutrition professionals to be able to meet the responsibilities of the School Nutrition Director position. The curriculum has been developed to address core key competency areas for a director. Classes are offered throughout the year, enabling participants to complete their certificate in as few as two years. School districts in Indiana should feel confident that program graduates have the knowledge base to lead and operate a successful nutrition program.

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Overview

The ISNA/IDOE School Nutrition Certificate Program is designed to prepare School Nutrition Directors and those wanting to become Directors in all major responsibilities of the position.

The curriculum includes the following:

- Menu Planning and Nutrition
- Food Production and Operation Management
- Food Safety, Security and Employee Safety
- Financial Management
- Program Management and Accountability
- Human Resource Management
- Procurement and Inventory Management
- Facilities and Equipment Management
- Technology and Information Systems
- Marketing and Communication

The curriculum is comprised of custom designed courses from the Four Key areas as defined by USDA to meet the required professional standards learning codes:



NUTRITION



OPERATIONS



ADMINISTRATION



**COMMUNICATION
& MARKETING**

To attain the certificate an applicant must complete 17 required in-person courses. All in-person courses will be 3 hours in-length. Anyone with less than five years' experience as a food service director is also required to attend the Introduction to School Nutrition Leadership offered by the Indiana Department of Education. Whenever possible multiple in-person required courses are given on the same day or in conjunction with

other ISNA events to maximize time efficiency and access to members. The program has been designed to be completed within two years if member desires.

The ISNA/IDOE School Nutrition Certificate Program will meet the USDA Professional Standards requirement for a “State-recognized certificate” as mandated by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 and outlined in USDA Final Rule 7CFR 210.30.

Program Requirements

There are two requirements to enroll in the program:

Be an ISNA member

Enroll online and pay the administrative fee

You may enroll in the ISNA/IDOE School Nutrition Certificate Program at any time. While courses will be open to all, those enrolled in the certificate program will be given priority during course registration. You must remain an ISNA member throughout the time you are completing the program.

To become a member of the Indiana School Nutrition Association, one must become a member of the School Nutrition Association (national level). Dues and membership information is processed at the national level. Detailed information on membership levels can be found at www.schoolnutrition.org/membership.

Enrollment

To enroll in the certificate program please complete the application located on the ISNA website (www.indianasna.org). Click [HERE](#) for a link to the page.

When you have finished your coursework, you will receive a certificate verifying your completion of the ISNA/IDOE School Nutrition Certificate Program. You will also be able

to use the program logo (in an email signature for instance) to show you are a graduate. A letter will be sent to your school board president and superintendent announcing that you have completed the requirements for the ISNA/IDOE School Nutrition Certificate Program. ISNA will maintain a list on the ISNA website of program graduates.

Responsibilities

Member Responsibilities:

- It is the member's responsibility to enroll on the ISNA website for the program.
- It is the member's responsibility to make certain they complete all the required courses.
- It is the member's responsibility to receive and keep documentation of the courses he/she completed.
- The member is responsible for logging course completion within his/her profile on the ISNA website. Once all courses are completed, the member must contact the Executive Director to verify program completion.

ISNA Responsibilities:

- ISNA will offer all required courses at least every other year if not annually provided that minimum registration is met.
- ISNA will ensure that all course content is accurate.
- ISNA will update courses as necessary.
- ISNA will maintain a list on the website of all program graduates.
- Once course completion has been verified by ISNA a letter will be sent to the member's school board and Superintendent.

Courses Outline

Complete the following:

Course Name	CEU Hours	In-Person or Online	Key Area	USDA Learning Code
Menu Planning Regulations & Concepts	3	In Person	Nutrition	2220, 2310
Advanced Menu Planning & Production Strategies	3	In Person	Nutrition	1100
Food Production & Operation Management	3	In Person	Operations	2100
School Nutrition Program Expense Basics	3	In Person	Administration	3300
School Nutrition Program Revenue Basics	3	In Person	Administration	3300
Financial Planning & Reporting	3	In Person	Administration	3300
Human Resource Management	3	In Person	Administration	3400
School Nutrition Policies & Procedures	3	In Person	Administration	3200
Program Accountability & Ethics	3	In Person	Administration	3200
Visionary Leadership	3	In Person	Communication & Marketing	4130
Procurement – Beyond the Basics	3	In Person	Operations	2400
USDA Commodities	3	In Person	Operations	2400
Creating & Implementing your HACCP Plan	3	In Person	Operations	2600
Product & Inventory Management	3	In Person	Operations	2400
Planning for the Next Crisis – Keeping Your Staff & Space Safe	3	In Person	Operations	2600
Facilities Planning & Management	3	In Person	Administration	3500
Marketing Your School Nutrition Program	3	In Person	Communication & Marketing	4130

*These courses have been custom designed for Indiana and reviewed by IDOE and current School Foodservice Professionals.

Special Note:

Anyone with less than five years' experience as a food service director is also required to attend the **Introduction to School Nutrition Leadership** course offered by the Indiana Department of Education.



Completion

Submitting Completion Documentation:

Your ISNA membership and enrolling in the certificate program will give you access to a tracking program on the ISNA website. Once you have completed all the requirements, email the Professional Development Coordinator. The PD Coordinator will verify and send you program completion documentation. ISNA will add your name to our graduate list on ISNA's website and a letter will be sent to your School Board and Superintendent.

Maintaining Certificate Status:

To maintain your certificate program status you must do the following:

- Keep ISNA membership current.
- Maintain educational requirements to meet USDA Professional Standards.
- Must attend at least one ISNA sponsored professional development event each year.
- Every year renew your Certificate by completing the renewal application on the ISNA website and paying the renewal fee by clicking [HERE](#).