

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM STATE WAIVER REQUEST
Waiver Request for Lower Kuskokwim School District, Ayaprun School

1. State agency submitting waiver request and responsible State agency staff contact information:

Alaska Department of Education and Early Development
Gavin Northey, Child Nutrition Programs Manager
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907-465-8709

2. Region: Western Region

3. Eligible service providers participating in waiver and affirmation that they are in good standing:

This waiver request is for the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) specific to administrative review monitoring requirements for Bering Strait School District, a sponsor in good standing.

4. Description of the challenge the State agency is seeking to solve, the goal of the waiver to improve services under the Program, and the expected outcomes if the waiver is granted. [Section 12(l)(2)(A)(iii) and 12(l)(2)(A)(iv) of the NSLA]:

DEED is performing on-site reviews; severe weather has delayed our reviewer's return to Anchorage, AK from Dutch Harbor/Unalaska, AK. As a result, our reviewer is unable to complete all their scheduled reviews for the week of 3 – 7 March 2025. Most school districts begin Spring Break after this week, meaning that it is difficult to rearrange the review schedule to ensure that all schools receive the minimum number of reviews possible. The alternative is costly flights to return to one or more sponsors' sites in a future trip.

Since weather delays are not uncommon, DEED plans an administrative review schedule that is generally flexible for delays. The delay leaving Dutch Harbor/Unalaska exhausted more contingency days than were scheduled.

Therefore, DEED seeks to perform a combination of on-site and remote reviews at Bering Strait School District, a sponsor in good standing with 15 sites. By approving this waiver, the impact to the overall review schedule will be minimized while ensuring program integrity by performing at least one on-site reviews.

5. Specific Program requirements to be waived (include statutory and regulatory citations). [Section 12(I)(2)(A)(i) of the NSLA]:

DEED requests a waiver of the administrative review onsite requirements for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) [7 CFR §210.18].

6. Detailed description of alternative procedures and anticipated impact on Program operations, including technology, State systems, and monitoring:

If approved, DEED will perform an onsite review of lunch at one of Bering Strait School District's 15 schools which all participate in NSLP, SBP, and FFVP. The remaining two lunch reviews, three breakfast reviews, and three FFVP reviews will be performed virtually via a live video and audio stream and desk audit of required documents.

If there are significant findings during the on-site review, if there are significant findings during the virtual reviews, or if the virtual review cannot be completed satisfactorily, the administrative review will be cancelled and rescheduled during the 2025-2026 school year. The sponsor was last reviewed during the 2021-2022 school year. DEED desires to complete the review during the current school year, rather than defer, since the off-site review has already begun.

7. Description of any steps the State has taken to address regulatory barriers at the State level. [Section 12(I)(2)(A)(ii) of the NSLA]:

No barriers exist at the state level.

8. Anticipated challenges State or eligible service providers may face with the waiver implementation:

DEED does not anticipate this waiver will present any challenges; if insurmountable challenges arise, DEED will cancel the administrative review and reschedule it during the 2025-2026 school year as an option of last resort.

9. Description of how the waiver will not increase the overall cost of the Program to the Federal Government. If there are anticipated increases, confirm that the costs will be paid from non-Federal funds. [Section 12(I)(1)(A)(iii) of the NSLA]:

DEED does not anticipate this waiver will increase the overall cost of the program to the federal government; given the unusual situation, this waiver seeks to maintain program accountability without creating additional administrative cost at the state or federal level.

10. Anticipated waiver implementation date and time period:

DEED requests this waiver to be effective immediately and through 30 June 2025.

11. Proposed monitoring and review procedures:

DEED's School Meal Program Coordinator shall monitor implementation waiver and report to the Child Nutrition Program Manager. DEED will communicate with the Western Region Office (WRO) on an as needed basis.

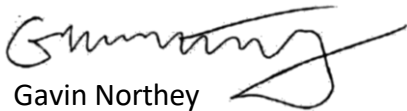
12. Proposed reporting requirements (include type of data and due date(s) to FNS);

DEED will report to FNS the outcome of the administrative review and its success or challenges implementing the waiver by 30 September 2025.

13. Link to or copy of the public notice informing the public about the proposed waiver [Section 12(l)(1)(A)(ii) of the NSLA]:

<https://education.alaska.gov/cnp>

14. Signature and Title of requesting official:



Gavin Northey
Child Nutrition Programs Manager

TO BE COMPLETED BY FNS REGIONAL OFFICE:

FNS Regional Offices are requested to ensure the questions have been adequately addressed by the State agency and formulate an opinion and justification for a response to the waiver request based on their knowledge, experience and work with the State.

Date request was received at Regional Office: 08/17/2023

Check this box to confirm that the State agency has provided public notice in accordance with Section 12(I)(1)(A)(ii) of the NSLA

Regional Office Analysis and Recommendations: