

The Food for Thought Act: One-Pager

Department Activities

The Administrator of the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) within USDA shall carry out a pilot program making grants available to community colleges, so they may provide free meals, including snacks, to eligible students.

In administering the program, FNS must consult with community colleges, State educational agencies, and State boards of higher education.

FNS must provide technical assistance to grantees, which includes general program administration, training college employees to manage the program, developing student outreach materials, and, as applicable, developing prepared food infrastructure.

FNS shall develop dietary requirements for meals served under this program that are consistent with the goals of the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans developed by HHS and USDA.

Authorizes \$6 million for fiscal years 2020-23, to carry out the program.

Awarding Grants

Grants shall be awarded to an assortment of community colleges, reflecting varying: student body size; full-time student enrollment; geographic location, including urban, rural, or suburban campuses; minority serving institutions; and residential character, including race/ethnicity make-up and socioeconomic status.

Grant awards are maxed out at \$200,000. No more than 20% of funding may be used to purchase equipment.

The Secretary may give priority to colleges: with prepared food infrastructure, or those that can identify outside sources of support to help develop such infrastructure; that serve more than 300 students who are eligible for Federal Pell Grants; or that are located within proximity to a K-12 school eligible to elect the Community Eligibility Provision within the National School Lunch Act.

Grantee Activities

Grant applicants must include an estimate of how many students they expect to serve under the program.

Grant funds must be used to provide free meals and snacks to students, conduct campus outreach, prepare and/or purchase meals from vendors, and provide information to participating students on eligibility for Federal food assistance programs.

Study

Within 18 months of receiving a grant, grantees must submit a report to the Secretary of Education on the prevalence of food insecurity among enrolled students and an evaluation of the use of grant funding in addressing such food insecurity.

Within two years of program enactment, FNS must submit a report to Congress evaluating the results of the pilot program, including recommendations to expand the program nation-wide.