

2019 Equipment Assistance Grant –Scoring Methodology

1. TDA identified equipment that could be purchased with grant funding using the following guidance documents and references:
 - a. [Serving Healthy School Meals](#) – report from The PEW Charitable Trust and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, December 2013; see “essential equipment” as listed on pp. 86-90.
 - b. Various Child Nutrition Directors
 - c. Previous equipment identified in Texas’ equipment assistance award process from funds provided by the 2009 and 2010 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and 2014-2018 National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Equipment Assistance Grant Awards.
 - d. Memo SP 15-2019, dated March 18, 2019 from USDA, which:
 - i. Defines the minimum threshold for the purchase of equipment for this grant at \$1,000, as specified by Congress.
 - ii. Indicates SFAs must follow all Federal, State, and Local Procurement laws when purchasing equipment using these funds.
 - iii. All SFAs must procurement and expenditure activities by the end of ~~Federal Fiscal Year 2022 (September 30, 2021)~~ *USDA granted an extension of the due date until September 30, 2022.
 - e. Memo SP 20-2009, 2009 Equipment Assistance Grants for School Food Authorities Questions and Answers, dated March 20, 2009, which states equipment grant awards may be used to reimburse eligible expenses for:
 - i. New and replacement equipment, including reasonable contracted labor and materials costs for installation of new equipment and removal of existing equipment
 - ii. Equipment renovation, including reasonable contracted labor costs associated with renovation of equipment
Note: Equipment grants may funds may not be used for kitchen renovations, which are considered building construction costs
 - iii. Used equipment, including reasonable contracted labor and materials costs for installation of used equipment and removal of any existing equipment
Note: Used equipment purchases must meet the intent of the focus areas described in Section 2, Scoring categories, below
2. Scoring categories were established based on guidance from:
 - a. USDA Memo SP 14-2014, National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Equipment Assistance Grants – Fiscal Years (FY) 2010 and 2013, dated December 18, 2013
 - b. USDA Memo SP 15-2019, Fiscal Year 2019 National School Lunch Program Equipment Assistance Grants for School Food Authorities, dated March 18, 2018
 - c. USDA Memo from Cynthia Long, Deputy Administrator for Child Nutrition Programs at USDA/FNS to Texas Department of Agriculture and USDA/FNS Southwest Regional Office (SWRO)

- d. SWRO guidance to give preference to sites that did not receive an equipment grant award prior to the 2019 award

8 scoring categories were established and scored as follows:

Category	Point Value
Improves Food Safety/Sanitation	3
Improves Nutrition and Food Quality	4
Improves Plate Appeal and Acceptability	4
Improves Availability of Healthier Choices	4
Improves/Expands NSLP or SBP Participation	3
Improves Overall Student Convenience	5
Improves Overall Appeal of Service	5
Highlights Healthier Choices	10

3. The categories above were defined as follows:

a. Improves Food Safety/Sanitation

- i. Improves food safety in that it directly relates to one or more of the following purposes or functions in a school food service operation or setting:

1. Cooking and preparing food and beverages to the correct and safe temperature;
2. Holding, transporting or storing food and beverages at the correct and safe temperature; and/or
3. Proper sanitizing of items, surfaces, etc. that come into contact with food and beverages

b. Improves Nutrition and Food Quality

- i. Improves nutrition and food quality in that it directly supports one or more of the following purposes or functions in a school food service operation or setting:

1. Quality in the production and preparation of food and beverages
2. Standardization in the production and preparation of food and beverages

c. Improves Plate Appeal and Acceptability

- i. Improves plate appeal and acceptability because equipment that directly supports one or more of the following purposes or functions in a school food service operation or setting also ensures or enhances the visual appeal of the meal and increases the likelihood of its selection and consumption by a student:

1. Quality in the production and preparation of food and beverages
2. Standardization in the production and preparation of food and beverages

- d. Availability of Healthier Choices
 - i. Improves availability of healthier choices in that it directly supports one or more of the following purposes or functions in a school food service operation or setting:
 - 1. Preparation of high nutrition value items including (fresh) fruit and vegetables; reduced fat/baked items/meals; healthier beverages; whole grain rich foods; and items made from scratch
 - 2. Accessibility to more high nutrition value items as listed above.
 - e. Improves/Expands NSLP/SBP Participation
 - i. Improves or expands NSLP/SBP participation in that it directly relates to one or more of the following purposes or functions in a school food service operation or setting:
 - 1. Provides additional options for access to food/reimbursable meal overall
 - 2. Increases the number of students served
 - f. Improves Overall Student Convenience
 - i. Improves overall student convenience because equipment that directly relates to one or more of the following purposes or functions in a school food service operation or setting also increases convenience to the student as they go through the meal service area:
 - 1. Provides additional options for access to food/reimbursable meal overall
 - 2. Increases the number of students served
 - g. Improves Overall Appeal of Service
 - i. Improves overall appeal of service because equipment that directly supports one or more of the following purposes or functions in a school food service operation or setting also ensures or enhances the visual appeal of the meal and increases the likelihood of its selection and consumption by a student during meal service:
 - 1. Quality in the production and preparation of food and beverages
 - 2. Standardization in the production and preparation of food and beverages
 - h. Highlights Healthier Choices
 - i. Highlights healthier choices because equipment that directly supports one or more of the following purposes or functions in a school food service operation or setting also increases the likelihood that the healthier choice food item(s) will be seen and selected by the student since their availability has increased:
 - 1. Preparation of high nutrition value items including (fresh) fruit and vegetables; lower fat/baked items/meals; healthier beverages; whole grain rich foods; and items made from scratch'
 - 2. Accessibility to more high nutrition value items as listed above.
4. Equipment list identified was reviewed and received points based on definitions and point values listed above.