IOWA | Department of Education

Nutrition and Operations: Set Up for Success SY 2026-27

Learning Objectives:

- Review the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) 2025-2030 and consider how guidance can be applied to school nutrition programs.
- Gain inspiration by keynote speaker, Chef Sharon Schaefer on building balanced, kid-approved trays that will market the school nutrition program and influence nutrition of students for a lifetime.
- Explore Team Nutrition resources developed to assist Iowa schools in meeting dietary specifications for school meals.
- Improve understanding of food allergies. Hear an accredited and standardized food allergy training to build confidence in providing accommodations.

Agenda, Tues. Aug. 11:		Presenters:
8 a.m.	Welcome and Introductions	Kala Shipley, Bureau of Nutrition and Health Services
8:15 a.m.	Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2025-2030 – Eat Real Food	Janelle Winter, MS, RDN USDA, Midwest Regional Office
9 a.m.	Making Nutrition What You Are Dishing	Chef Sharon Schaefer, SNS Culinary Institute of America
10:15 a.m.	Break	
10:30 a.m.	Meal Patterns and Nutrition Standards Iowa Session	Christine Crow, Iowa Team Nutrition Bureau Consultants
11 a.m.	Making Nutrition What You Are Dishing - Discussion, activities and table talk - Hear from your peers	Chef Sharon Schaefer, SNS
Noon	Morning Wrap-up and Lunch	Jean Easley, Bureau Consultant
12:45 p.m.	Team Nutrition Resources	Jenn Schultz, Iowa Team Nutrition
1:15 p.m.	Feeding Preschoolers in School	Jean Easley, Bureau Consultant
1:45 p.m.	Food Allergies 101	Amanda Foreman, Registered Dietitian Cedar Rapids Community School District
2:50 p.m.	Discussion, Questions and Evaluation	

Post conference opportunity: In-person, optional 30-minute FARECheck* Assessment, certificate valid for one year

* Iowa Department of Education is not affiliated with the FARECheck nonprofit organization.

Preliminary

Sharon Schaefer, SNS, joined The Culinary Institute of America's (CIA) Consulting division as Assistant Director, School Foodservice Programming in 2025. Sharon is a visionary leader with more than 20 years of progressive leadership experience across school nutrition, culinary education and operational leadership.

- Prior to CIA, Sharon served as Associate Director of Strategic Initiatives and Outreach at the Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN). Sharon's career highlights from Nebraska include serving as Executive Director at Evolution of the Lunch Lady, Executive Chef at Westside Community Schools, K–12 Specialist at Hiland Dairy and Director of Food and Nutrition Services at Gretna Public Schools.
- Passionate about empowering the people who nourish students every day, Sharon believes that great food and great education begin with well-supported professionals. Outside of work, Sharon enjoys spending time with her family, she loves time at the beach and in recent years has begun exploring gluten-free baking.

Amanda Foreman is a registered and licensed dietitian with 15 years of experience in school nutrition at the Cedar Rapids Community School District.

- A FARECheck Instructor, she is passionate about managing food allergies and creating safe, inclusive meal environments.
- Outside of work, Amanda is a mom to four lively children and enjoys playing in her kitchen and spending time outdoors, where she has recently begun exploring ultramarathon trail running.

Janelle Winter, MS, RDN is a registered dietitian with over a decade of experience in school nutrition.

- As a Nutritionist with the USDA Food and Nutrition Services/ Midwest Regional Office (MWRO), Janelle specializes in meal patterns for National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP); Team Nutrition; Local Wellness Policies; Smart Snacks and Professional Standards.
- Prior to USDA, Janelle was a Public Health Nutritionist in Wisconsin conducting Administrative Reviews of the NSLP/SBP.