

## 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)
  - 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
<b>Improves Food Safety/Sanitation</b>	3
<b>Improves Nutrition and Food Quality</b>	4
<b>Improves Plate Appeal and Acceptability</b>	4
<b>Improves Availability of Healthier Choices</b>	4
<b>Improves/Expands NSLP or SBP Participation</b>	3
<b>Improves Overall Student Convenience</b>	5
<b>Improves Overall Appeal of Service</b>	5
<b>Highlights Healthier Choices</b>	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.