

Detailed Description of E-STAR Training Grant Components

The *Enhanced School Nutrition Strategies, Training, Action Plans, and Resources* (E-STAR) Training Grant is designed to provide School nutrition managers (SNMs) with:

- 1) innovative school food service training
- 2) technical assistance from experienced mentors
- 3) funding to improve school meals, and
- 4) increased capacity to provide skills-based trainings for frontline staff to enhance school meal quality.

Managers who participate in the grant program will:

- Earn up to **40 hours of professional development**
- Be eligible for a **technology stipend** to purchase an electronic device to use for grant activities, and
- Receive an **evaluation summary report** for each school building implementing E-STAR.

BEFORE THE VIRTUAL E-STAR TRAINING:

School nutrition managers will complete the following prior to attending the virtual E-STAR Training:

- (1) 2-hour webinar (*E-STAR Orientation*)
- (2) 1-hour online courses (*Effective Facilitation Techniques* and *Action Plan Development*)

The webinars and online courses will be available at no cost through the Institute of Child Nutrition's (ICN) E-Learning Portal and the Michigan Department of Education (MDE).

DURING THE VIRTUAL E-STAR TRAINING:

1) Manager Workshops

School nutrition managers will attend 3, 4-hour days of virtual training during July or August of 2021. During the training, an ICN trainer will deliver a standardized curriculum that includes content focused on specific meal quality topics. The workshop will include culinary training for managers regarding the preparation and presentation of school meals. *Costs for a substitute to cover the SNMs time away from work will be covered.*

Managers will work in small groups with their mentors to review meal quality and student perception goals, identify strategies and activities, and create two action plans (one for meal quality and one for student perception) to implement at one school building.

SNMs will also refine their skills in training frontline staff by teaching a 15-minute lesson and receiving feedback from their peers and the trainers.

2) Action Plan Development and Implementation

School nutrition managers will implement their action plans in one school building (with a minimum of 1 frontline staff) to enhance meal quality and student perception of meal quality. The action plans must include goals for conducting frontline staff trainings in the same school building using ICN's *Manager's Corner* curriculum focused on meal quality. *Action plans must be approved by the SNM's immediate supervisor (e.g., school nutrition director).*

AFTER THE VIRTUAL E-STAR TRAINING:

NOTE: All grant activities must be tracked in an online data collection site (REDCap) and completed within the 2-year grant period. SNMs will receive training on how to use REDCap.

1) Mentoring Sessions

School nutrition managers will meet with their assigned mentor at least 8 times (virtually or in person) over a 2-year period to receive technical assistance. During these meetings SNMs will provide progress updates on their action plan goals and activities, work through any challenges, strategize on delivering frontline staff trainings, and share successes.

2) Virtual Instructor Led Trainings (VILTs)

SNMs and mentors will participate in 6, 1-hour interactive webinars developed and facilitated by the ICN. Webinar topics include marketing and communication strategies to improve students' perception of school meal quality and "refresher" instruction on key curriculum topics. The webinars will allow SNMs to learn from instructors and engage in discussions with the instructor and other participants. These webinars will also provide a forum for sharing ideas, educational resources, and best practices among SNMs and mentors.

3) Manager's Corner Trainings for Frontline Staff

School nutrition managers will train frontline staff at the same school building where they are doing their action plan. SNMs who oversee multiple school buildings can train frontline staff at only one of their buildings, with a minimum of one frontline staff. Managers will provide 16, 15-minute trainings over the 2-year grant period. ICN will provide the training materials for managers to use in delivering their trainings. Managers will learn how to use the materials and provide effective frontline staff training during the virtual E-STAR Training. Examples of frontline staff training topics are listed below.

4) E-STAR Manager Meetings and Celebratory Events

SNMs will participate in monthly *Manager Meetings* to discuss grant related questions, progress on action plan goals, and troubleshoot problems. *Celebratory Events* with SNMs, mentors, MDE staff and partners will take place quarterly and include presentations by SNMs highlighting grant related success stories.

5) Sub-Grants

Sub-grants will be awarded to school districts participating in E-STAR. Sub-grant funds may be used to purchase eligible equipment or other supplies that support the improvement of meal quality outlined in the SNM's action plan.

6) Evaluation Activities

School nutrition managers will be asked to participate in evaluation activities such as surveys, interviews, and focus groups during the 2-year grant period. An evaluation summary report will be shared with the SNM at each school building implementing E-STAR.

E-STAR Frontline Staff Meal Quality Training Topics

Meal Quality training topics may include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Food production and use of equipment
2. Knife skills
3. Appetizing and varied preparation and presentation of food
4. Meal service options
5. Cycle menus
6. Buying, proper food handling, ordering, rotation, and turnover of meal components
7. Menu Substitutions
8. Meal Pattern Flexibilities
9. Techniques to maintain quality on food and salad bars
10. Food Production Records/specifically for use with E-STAR
11. Getting buy-in from school administration
12. Communication and customer service
13. Meal quality and acceptability
14. Strategies for student engagement in school nutrition
15. Knowing your customers
16. Student feedback and food promotion