



memo

To: The Board of Education and Dr. Patrick Broncato, Superintendent
From: Curt Saindon, Assistant Superintendent for Business Services/CSBO
Date: February 24, 2025
Subject: Food Services RFP Update

Just a quick update on the Food Service RFP process and progress made to date. We have been working with ISBE to update and finalize the RFP so that it can be released to the public, and we can begin working toward concluding the review process and preparing a Board recommendation. We sent ISBE our initial draft in early January, and they got back to us in late January with several requested/required changes (despite the fact that many of the things they asked to change were actually in last year's RFP). We made the suggested changes right away and sent the revised draft back to ISBE on February 3rd. We are waiting to hear back from them if those changes were sufficient or if we need to make further edits to satisfy the ISBE staff. We hope to have a finalized RFP in place and released by the end of February at the latest.

Once we receive the ok to release the RFP we will do so immediately and work through the Preliminary RFP Meeting, the creation of any Addenda needed to clarify items or answer questions, the opening and scoring of the proposals by the Review Committee, the selection of finalists for taste testing and follow up, the scoring of the taste testing and determination of a recommended Food Service Management Company (FSMC), a final review and sign off by ISBE of our selected FSMC, a recommendation to the Board (hopefully in April or May) and then final contracting with the recommended and approved FSMC, so that we can begin planning in preparation for the 2025-26 school year. We will most likely need to coordinate with Open Kitchens (unless they are selected as the recommended FSMC for next year) regarding the removal of their equipment and supplies in June, the setup for the new FSMC in July, and then the initiation of service in August. This is a pretty tight timeline, but we are confident that we can have an FSMC in place by the end of this school year and ready to go in August. Our goal has always been to offer an enhanced program that provides better food quality, improved menu options, increased participation and greater student and parent satisfaction. As always, if you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know. Thanks!