



# Procurement

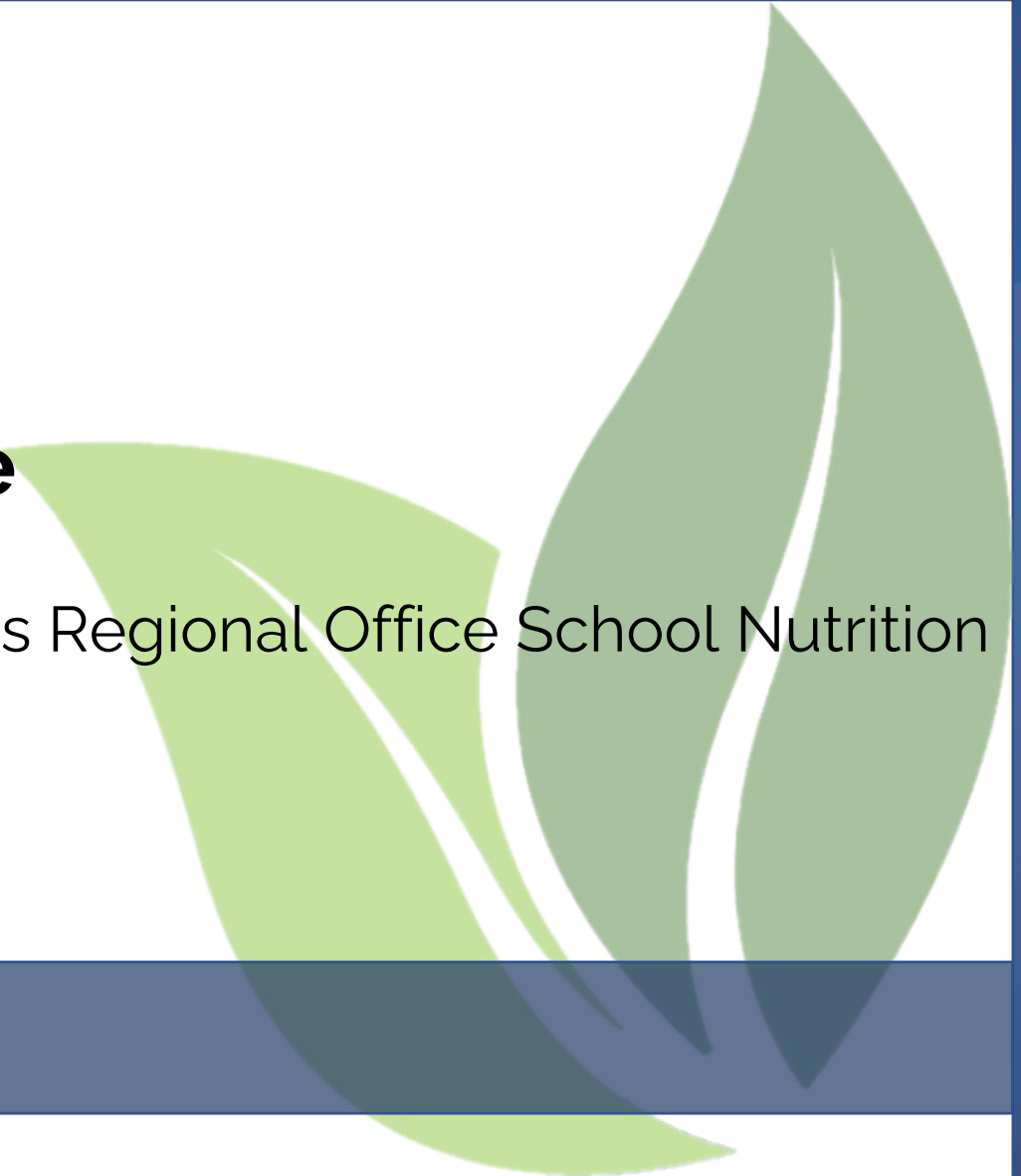
How State Agencies Can Support School Nutrition Programs



## **Sadie Mele**

Team Lead

Mountain Plains Regional Office School Nutrition  
Branch

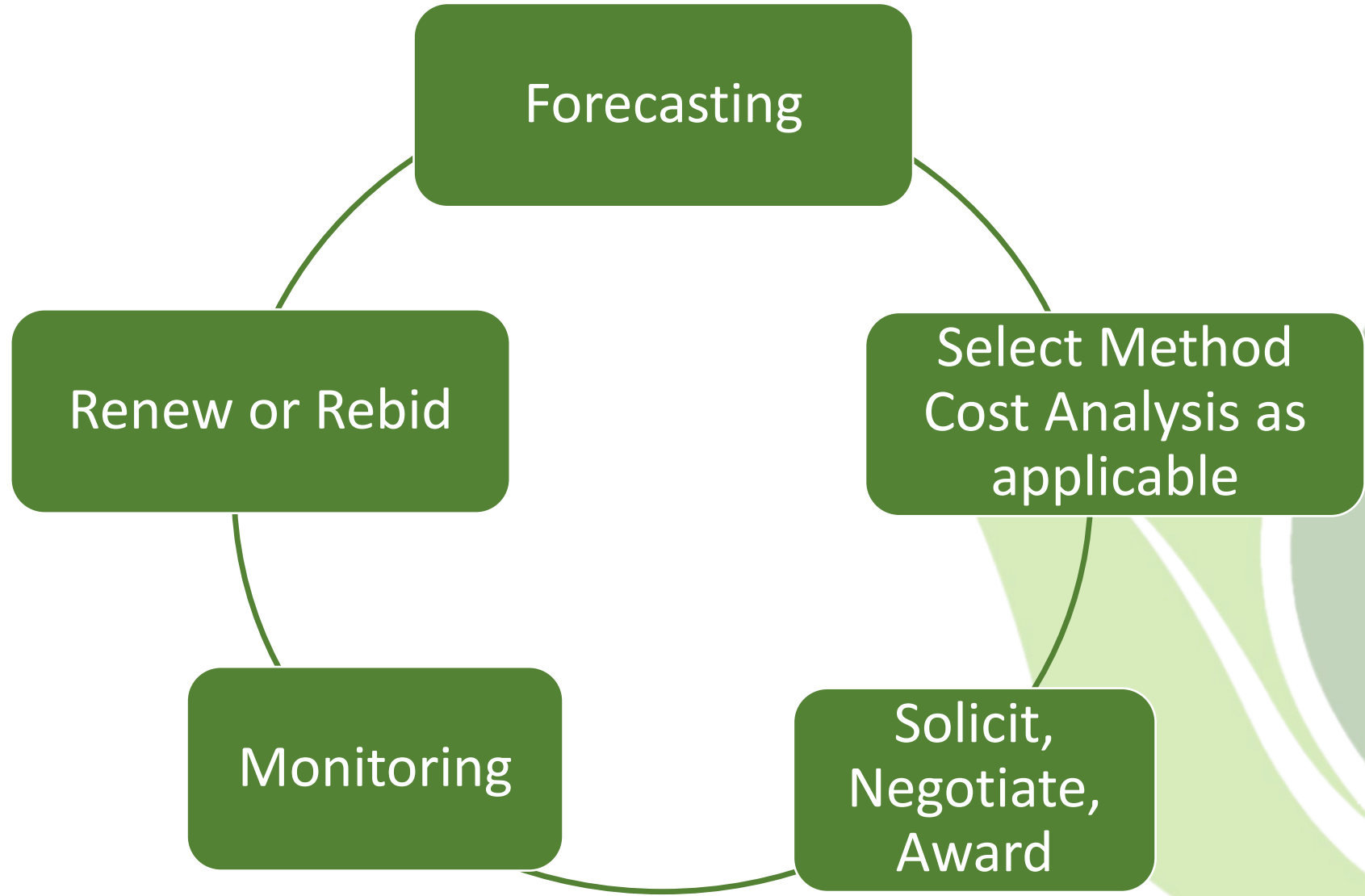


# Uniform Procurement Standards for Grants 2 CFR 200's

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- Written Procurement procedures
- Code of Ethics
- Procurement Methods & Competition
- Cost Analysis
- Restrictions - % of Cost
- Contract Monitoring







# Forecasting

## \*Annual Process

New contract – Cost Analysis

Renewal - Material Change:

- (+/-) Products
- (+/-) Programs
- (+/-) Sites

# Contract Monitoring

- Contract Performance
  - Cost, Quality
- Cost Reimbursable
  - Discounts, Rebates, Credits, USDA Foods
- Fixed Price
  - Value of USDA Foods



# FSMC Solicitation Season

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## State Resources and Practices:

- Mandatory training for SFAs
- State prototype RFPs
- State developed monitoring forms



# Integrity Rule Updates - NSLP

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Annual Procurement Training Required for:

- State directors of school nutrition programs
- State directors of distributing agencies
- School nutrition program directors
- management, and staff who work on NSLP procurement activities



# Integrity Rule Updates - NSLP



SA approval of  
FSMC contracts  
and renewals –  
No change

The Food Service  
Management  
Company (FSMC)  
review cycle may  
align with ARs. 5-  
year cycle.

# Integrity Rule Updates - NSLP

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Cost Reimbursable contracts  
are not going away

\*\*Contract Monitoring



# CN Integrity Rule Update - CACFP

Micro  
Purchase  
threshold

Simplified  
Acquisition  
threshold

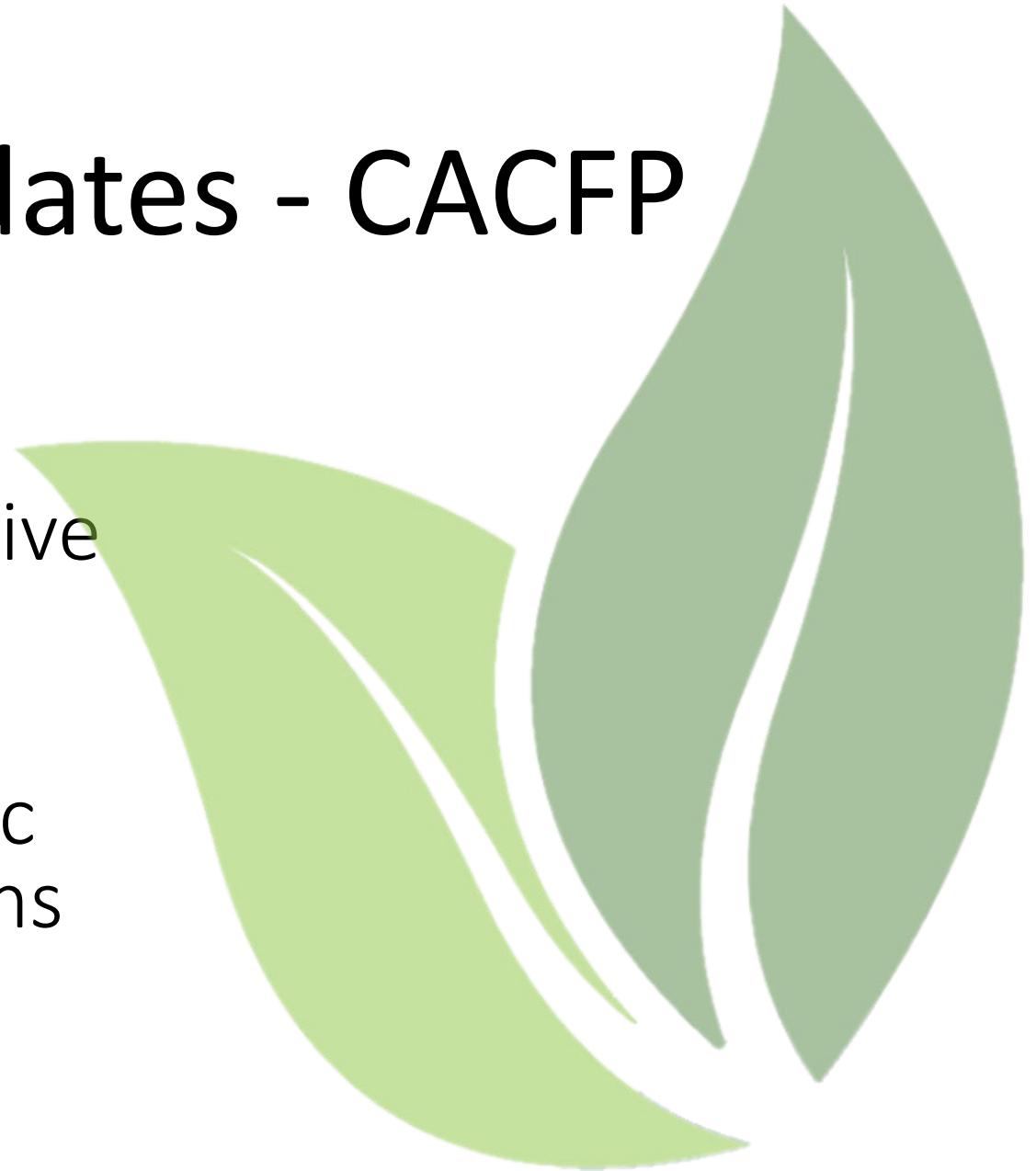
Linked to 2  
CFR 200



# CN Integrity Rule Updates - CACFP

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- Remove outdated and duplicative provisions of 7 CFR 226.22
- Affirms procurements by public or private non-profit institutions comply with 2 CFR part 200.



# Oversight / Monitoring



**Questions?**





## **Kate Wheeler, MPH**

Farm to School/FFVP/Procurement Specialist  
Utah State Board of Education



## Why “Beyond Compliance”?

- As a state agency, it’s our job to help our child nutrition programs be the best they can be
  - Compliance is a minimum
- From a compliance perspective, “special” types of procurement (tribal, local, etc.) are the same
  - What makes them different is your approach





# Values-Based Procurement

- Food is not just a bottom line
- We want to buy *the best possible product* at the lowest possible price
- Encourage your programs to identify their values related to food
  - E.g., environmental sustainability, nutritional quality, fair labor
- Provide resources and trainings (internal and external) so that program operators know you actively support this



# Relationship Building

- Relationship building is essential to doing more with procurement
- Relationships come first, not as a consequence
  - Don't start with a difficult transactional experience and automatically expect that to result in a strong relationship
- Build relationships based on alignment with common values and embrace complex reciprocity

# How We Implemented LFS Funding in Utah

- Started by asking our schools what they needed
- We handled the procurement at the state level, they are still in charge of ordering/delivery timelines
- We leveraged the relationships we had built around shared values
  - Within USBE: everyone cares about child well-being and education
  - Used our network to identify producers with shared values

# Ute Tribal Enterprises

- One of our contracts is for bison from Ute Tribal Enterprises
- From a compliance perspective:
  - We posted the solicitation
  - They submitted a proposal
  - We evaluated all the responses
  - They were awarded the contract
- From a relationship perspective:
  - We started talking to Ute Tribal Enterprises in 2017
  - Lots of institutional distrust to overcome
  - Intertribal Agriculture Council provided valuable support through their AIF program



**Questions?**



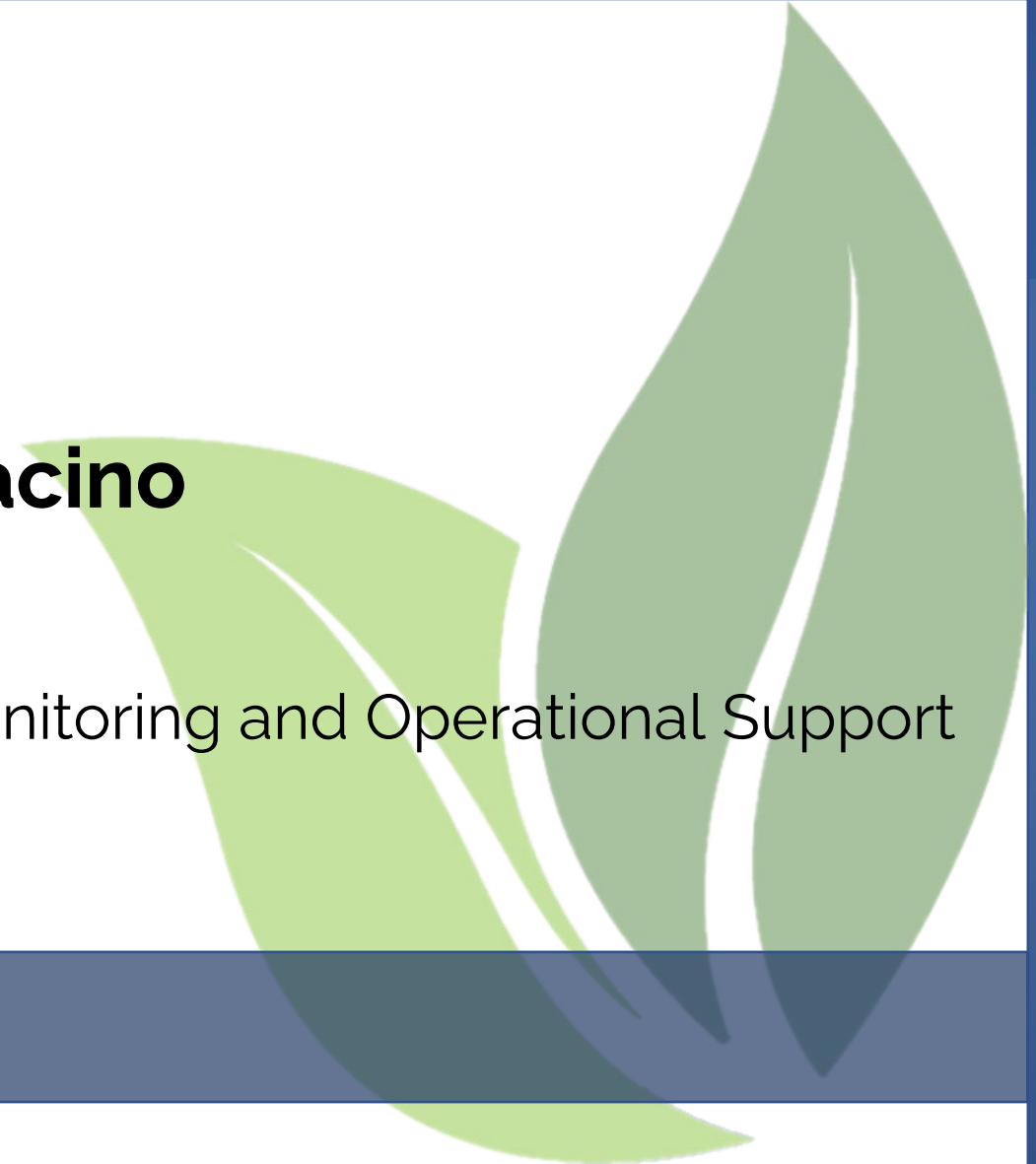


## **Jess Saracino**

Director

USDA FNS

Program Monitoring and Operational Support  
Division



# Latest Procurement Resources

## SP 13-2023 Best Practices for Contracting with Food Service Management Companies

- Before going out to bid assess needs, use required forms, and conduct market research on the FSMCs that work in the surrounding region
- Considerations for awarding the contract should follow regulations at 2 CFR 200.320(b)(2)
- After award, SFAs should regularly communicate with the FSMC
- Consider building in labor contract provisions





# Child Nutrition Integrity Rule

**Requires State directors, school nutrition directors, management, and staff who work on NSLP procurement activities to complete procurement training annually.**

**Trainings resources will continue to be available thru FNS' Professional Standards Training Database.**

**FNS does not require a specific number of training hours for the annual procurement training.**

**Compliance Date: August 23, 2024**



# Existing Procurement Training


The image shows a browser window displaying the Professional Standards Training Database website. The URL in the address bar is <https://professionalstandards.fns.usda.gov>. The navigation menu includes [HOME](#), [ABOUT](#), [FIND A TRAINING](#), and [EVENTS](#). A search bar is located in the top right corner. The main content area features a large image of two people in a kitchen setting. Overlaid on this image is a dark text box with the following text:

**Welcome to the Professional Standards Training Database**

The Professional Standards Training Database allows school nutrition professionals to search for training that meets their learning needs in one easy-to-use website. Trainings are available in a variety of formats and most trainings are free. Select the title of the training for more information, including the website link where you can access the training resource(s).

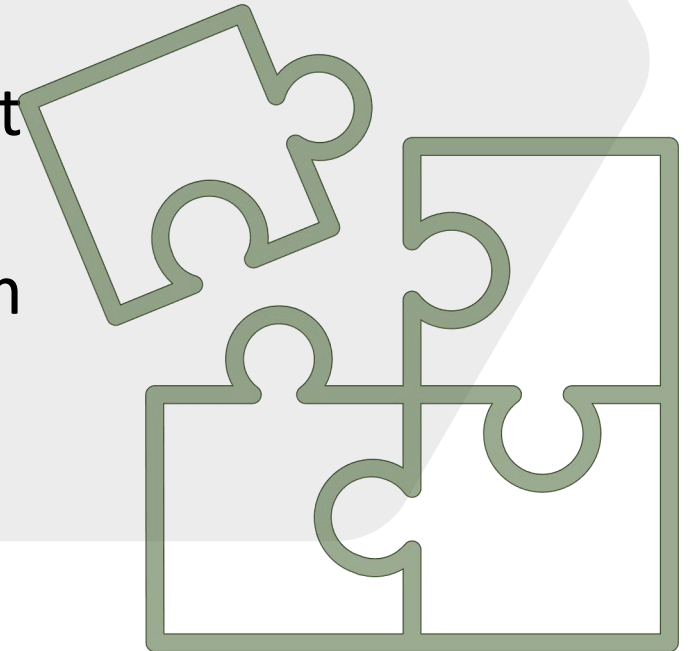
Discover how you can meet your professional standards training requirements by searching the database today!

At the bottom of the page, a search bar contains the text "Procurement" and a search icon.



# A New Procurement Focus

- Pandemic highlighted that while procurement compliance is always important, schools must also be **Good Business Partners**
- Bids that schools put out should not just be compliant but also **attractive** to vendors
- Schools need real-world best practices that help them with solutions to complex procurement challenges



# USDA Cooperative Agreement With Urban School Food Alliance



Through the new agreement with USDA Urban School Food Alliance will:

- Organize an advisory group of school nutrition stakeholders to create an action plan that will address challenges with school food procurement through the development of targeted trainings and resources.
- Develop new tools to educate school districts on best practices for purchasing school foods.
- Develop an interactive bid template that will help standardize procurement processes in school nutrition.



**Questions?**





## **Katie Wilson SNS, PhD**

Executive Director

Urban School Food Alliance



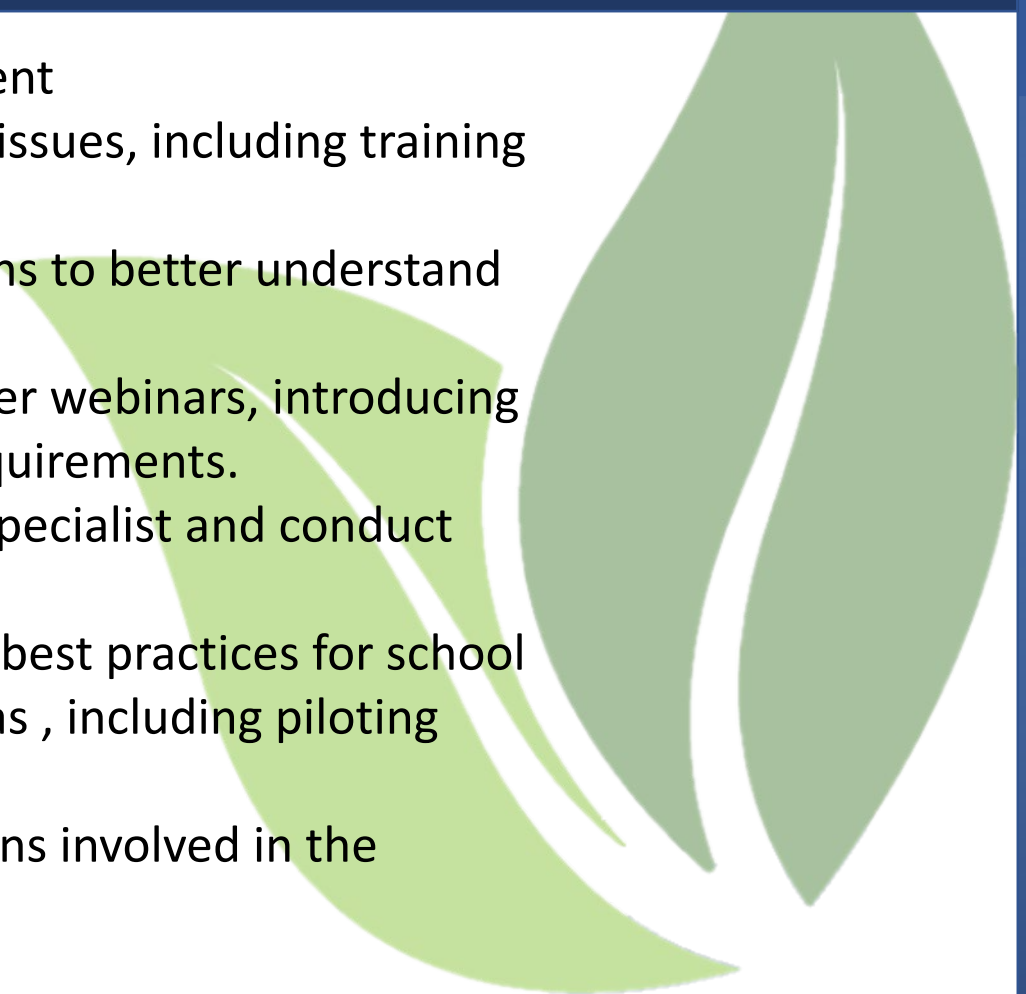
# Preamble

Our core areas of work are driven by 2 factors:

1. First, the information we gather by analyzing actual purchase data from our member districts.
2. The expertise and experiences of our members and professional staff.

These two factors drives our decision making on how we can best contribute meaningfully to the field.

# Areas of Focus

1. Discover core issues in school food procurement
  2. Develop a plan of action based on those core issues, including training materials and regulation changes.
  3. Engage farmer and produce allied organizations to better understand the needs of minority owned, small farmers.
  4. Engage large urban districts in farmer/producer webinars, introducing farmers to the procurement timelines and requirements.
  5. Develop a group of contracted procurement specialist and conduct TeamUp trainings around the country.
  6. Collaborate with outside expertise to identify best practices for school procurement, defining new business plan ideas , including piloting these ideas.
  7. Conduct presentations to national organizations involved in the business of school procurement.
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# The Problem

A Profit Driven  
School Meal  
Marketplace






# The Solution

Giving School  
Nutrition Leaders  
Easy to Use Tools  
and a Voice



# Phase One

## Investigative Phase

1. Create an Advisory/Work Group
  2. Review procurement rules at federal, state, local levels.
  3. Review procurement trainings available and identify gaps.
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# Phase Two


## Development Phase

1. Developing a national bid template.
2. Develop trainings needed.
3. Conduct TeamUp trainings around country.
4. Webinars for local producers.




# Phase Three

## Piloting Change

1. Conducting Pilots
    - finding committed districts, state agencies, and regional offices to try using all information gathered by the work in cooperative agreement to try new ways of procuring school food.
  2. Preparing a proposal for a new school food procurement business plan to USDA/Congress
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# Your Partnership

## We Need You

- 1. Conduct a TeamUp in your state.**
  - 2. Tell us the SFAs that do the best job in procurement.**
  - 3. Give us your ideas for topics for training.**
  - 4. Send me the link to your state procurement training.**
  - 5. Serve on our Advisory Group.**
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**Questions?**

