



## News Release

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## Chef Ann Foundation Launches *Starting From Scratch: A School Food Culinary Intensive*

*School districts nationwide can apply for a hands-on, three-day intensive for school food leaders who want to cook more school meals from scratch.*

**Boulder, CO** – The Chef Ann Foundation has opened applications for its inaugural [Starting From Scratch: A School Food Culinary Intensive](#), a first-of-its-kind, hands-on experience designed specifically for school food professionals. Hosted by the Chef Ann Foundation in partnership with Boulder Valley School District, this intensive immerses district teams in production kitchens to master the culinary skills and operational systems essential for transitioning to a scratch-cooking program.

School districts that participate in the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program and run a self-operated food service program are eligible to apply. Districts must be public schools or tuition-free charter schools.

Nearly [30 million children eat school meals](#) five days a week – that’s more than half of all school-aged kids in the U.S. School meals cooked from scratch with fresh ingredients can help tens of millions of kids establish healthy eating habits and succeed in and beyond the classroom. To successfully transition to a scratch-cooked school meal program, school districts need staff training, resources, and support.

“The **Starting From Scratch Intensive** is designed to equip school food professionals with the technical skills needed to bring fresh meals to their students,” said Brandy Dreibelbis, Chef Ann Foundation’s Executive Director of Culinary. “We will dive deep into the actual numbers that drive school food programs, using real budget data to master food and labor cost projections. Participants

will leave not just with culinary skills, but also with a custom strategic plan and the operational skills needed to make scratch cooking a sustainable reality in their districts. Following the Intensive, we'll also provide a year of virtual technical assistance to participants to support their district's scratch cooking journey."

**Districts must [apply](#) by May 15, 2026, to be considered for this inaugural cohort.** For questions, contact [startingfromscratch@chefannfoundation.org](mailto:startingfromscratch@chefannfoundation.org).

*Starting From Scratch is made possible by the Chef Ann Foundation's Catalytic Fund. This strategic fund supports Chef Ann Foundation's mission to ensure school food professionals have the resources and hands-on support they need to transition to whole-ingredient, scratch cooking.*

### **About Chef Ann Foundation**

[Chef Ann Foundation](#) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit working to ensure that school food professionals have the resources, funding, and support they need to provide fresh, delicious, scratch-cooked meals that support the health of children and our planet. To date, the organization has reached more than 19,000 schools and 5.9 million kids in all 50 states with healthy school food programming.