

HSFP Pre-Apprenticeship Program Guide

Colorado Healthy School Food Pathway 2025–2026

PROGRAM PURPOSE

The Chef Ann Foundation’s Healthy School Food Pathway Pre-Apprenticeship will open your eyes to the exciting opportunities of a career in school food, as well as some of the unique challenges and complexities of school food service, all with a focus on scratch cooking. This program is designed to give you new insight into the big picture of school food, introduce you to why scratch cooking in schools is so important, and help you determine if advancing into the full School Food Specialist Apprenticeship is the right next step in your career.

Since 2009, the Chef Ann Foundation (CAF) has envisioned a world in which all children have equal access to fresh, healthy, delicious food providing them the foundation to thrive and meet their true potential. Making this vision a reality requires schools to be fully staffed with skilled school food professionals who are respected and valued within their schools, districts, and communities.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of the Pre-Apprenticeship, you should be able to:

- Explain what “scratch cooking” means in the context of school food and why it is important.
- Contribute to cleaning and sanitizing food preparation and service areas, facilities, and equipment according to food safety standards.
- Determine if you want to take the next step in your school food career by applying for a job and/or the Apprenticeship with your host district.

If you choose to continue into the Apprenticeship, you will dive deeper into a wide range of skill and knowledge areas needed for a successful career in scratch-cooked school food, including food, finance, facilities, human resources, and marketing.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

In order to maintain your place in the program, you must keep up with the [weekly schedule](#) to complete all of the following requirements on time:

- **Completion of two School Food Institute (SFI) courses: School Food 101 and Ingredients for Healthier Kids.**
 - SFI courses are completed on the Moodle learning platform (learn more about using Moodle [here](#)). You can move through the courses at your own pace, but you must complete them by the deadline.
 - Most modules will include recommended reading directly in the SFI module. It is expected that you will read the materials and watch the modules to facilitate learning.
 - You will also need to submit two (2) School Food Institute homework assignments with a grade of Satisfactory or higher. If an incomplete grade is received on an assignment it will need to be revised based on feedback and re-submitted.
- **Participation in one virtual learning session.**
 - This session will take place on Zoom (learn more about joining a Zoom meeting [here](#)).
 - If you are absolutely unable to attend live, you must watch the recording and complete a brief reflection assignment before the work-based learning day.
- **Attainment of a ServSafe Food Handler's Certificate (or approved equivalent).**
 - If you already have one, you will submit it on Moodle by the end of week 2.
 - If you don't already have one, CAF will send you a link to take the online course and exam. You must submit your certificate on Moodle by the end of week 2.
- **Full, active participation in five hours of in-person work-based learning in your host district.**
 - Incumbent staff do not participate in the work-based learning day.
 - You must complete the first three virtual learning components before being able to participate in the work-based learning day in your district.
 - Your K-12 supervisor is responsible for determining satisfactory participation in the work-based learning day, which is the final step to program completion.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

<p>Preparation for Pre-Apprenticeship (7/14 - 7/20)</p> <p><u>Orientation Session:</u> Thursday, July 17th, 4-4:30 pm MT.</p> <p>Submission of Required Documents to CAF and The Employment Firm.</p> <p>You must submit your complete I-9 Form to The Employment Firm by Wednesday, July 23rd.</p>
<p>Week One (7/21 - 7/27)</p> <p><u>SFI:</u> Complete School Food 101.</p> <p>Begin ServSafe Food Handlers Course.</p>
<p>Week Two (7/28 - 8/3)</p> <p><u>SFI:</u> Complete Ingredients for Healthier Kids.</p> <p>Complete ServSafe Food Handlers Course.</p>
<p>Week Three (8/4 - 8/8)</p> <p><u>Virtual Learning Session:</u> Tuesday, August 5th, 4-5:30 pm MT.</p> <p>Topic: Why Scratch Cooking is So Important & How to Succeed in a School Food Workplace</p> <p>Must have completed all virtual learning components by 8/5 to participate in the work-based learning day.</p> <p><u>Work-based Learning in Your Host District:</u> Date TBD (August 6th, 7th, or 8th)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to district and school food program: overview of district enrollment, Free/Reduced lunch population, average daily participation (ADP), and food service department mission and operations. • Tour of district kitchen(s) and cafeteria(s) and introduction to key leadership and staff. • General school food service operations support (e.g., meal prep, serving, cleaning, etc.).

HOW WE WILL WORK TOGETHER & KEY CONTACTS

Most of this program takes place virtually, ideally on a computer. Using a tablet or phone is possible but not recommended. Email is the primary communication channel, so please be sure to check the email address you provided at least once daily. We'll also use texts and phone calls as needed, and you should feel free to do the same to get in touch with us.

Contact Type	What to Contact About
Healthy School Food Pathway Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Primary Point of Contact: Natalie Farrell</i> - co.pathway@chefannfoundation.org - Call/text: 651-894-4966 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Onboarding help - Program components & progress - Timesheets - Virtual Learning Session - ServSafe Food Handler's Course/Certification - Any other questions during the program
School Food Institute (SFI) Courses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Primary Point of Contact: Sylvia Ng</i> - sfi@chefannfoundation.org 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moodle access - School Food Institute Course Content & Assignment Questions
School District Director/Supervisor *Varies by host district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - District volunteer requirements (e.g., background check) - Work-based learning day schedule and location(s) - Onsite work expectations - Injuries during work-based learning - Employment opportunities in the district
The Employment Firm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Primary Point of Contact: Denise Trujillo</i> - denise@theemploymentfirm.com or molly@theemploymentfirm.com - Main: 303-889-0000 (weekdays 8 am - 5 pm) - After hours emergency: 303-829-6958 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employee Login - Injuries during work-based learning - Issues with payroll

EXPECTATIONS OF PRE-APPRENTICES

- Maintain an open mind to learning from your coursework, peers, and instructors/supervisors.
- Be curious about school food – the what, why, and how – and don't be afraid to ask questions.
- Keep up with program requirements and communicate in advance if you're going to miss a deadline.
- Reach out if you need support with technical issues, SFI assignments, or anything else.

Be professional during your work-based learning day: arrive on time, wear appropriate clothing and shoes (clean clothes, no tank tops or shorts, and closed-toed, non-slip shoes), and be respectful and prepared to work and learn.

PROGRAM PAY & SUPPORT

To support your learning, you will be paid \$14.81/hour (or county minimum wage, if higher) for your time spent in the Pre-Apprenticeship, up to the following:

- Two (2) School Food Institute courses: 8 hours (2 hours pre-read, 2 hours homework, 4 hours online learning)
- ServSafe Food Handlers Certification: 3 hours
- Virtual Learning Session: 1.5 hours
- Work-Based Learning: 5 hours (non-incumbent staff only)
- **Total hours: 17.5 (or 12.5 for incumbent staff)**

Additional supports (like transportation and childcare stipends) are available for participants enrolled in [Employment First](#) (a program of the Colorado Department of Human Services), which we will facilitate as part of your onboarding.