



NEWS RELEASE

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APPLICATION OPEN FOR 5TH COHORT OF GET SCHOOLS COOKING

An assessment and strategic planning grant for school food programs nationwide

BOULDER, Colo. – [Chef Ann Foundation](#) (CAF) is excited to announce that the application for [Get Schools Cooking](#) (GSC) is open August 1 to September 30, 2022. GSC is an intensive 3-year assessment and strategic planning grant that provides school districts with comprehensive support to transition from heat-and-serve to a scratch cook operational model.

The past few years have been exceptionally challenging, especially for school food. School food professionals continue to face immense hardships, like supply chain issues and staffing shortages. GSC supports the ongoing efforts of school food operators feeding a healthier generation of kids.

GSC is a nationally recognized program designed to guide districts through the process of becoming a self-operated scratch-cook meal program, focusing on CAF's five key areas of operations: food, finance, facilities, human resources, and marketing. GSC is open to school districts across the country thanks to generous support from partners, including [Whole Kids Foundation](#) and the [Rachael Ray Foundation](#).

"This is an opportunity for districts to take a 'deep-dive' into all of their processes, programs, finances and management, with the goal of overall improvement of their system," said Chef Ann Cooper, CAF Founder and President of the Board. "Get Schools Cooking can transform a district and set them on the path towards a fully scratch-cook program."

The program kicks off in February 2023 with a workshop in Bellingham, WA where food service directors and key team members from each district will engage in sessions with CAF Senior Director of Research & Assessment, Anneliese Tanner, and CAF Senior Director of School Food Operations, Brandy Dreibelbis, to showcase what change can take place through participating in the GSC program.

GSC participants receive an onsite assessment, strategic planning, and technical assistance. Previous participants report positive menu and ingredient changes, including one district that moved to ~60% scratch-cooked menu items. Districts continue to eliminate highly processed foods and introduce new recipes using whole fruits and vegetables. School kitchens are now equipped with salad bars, food processors, specialty ovens, and more.

“I can’t explain how informative, beneficial, and invigorating this whole experience has been,” said Amber Watson, Marysville Joint Unified School District (CA). “It’s really made me a better director and leader and I can see my staff are happy with the changes I’ve put into place thus far.”

[Click here](#) for more information about GSC.

About the Chef Ann Foundation

The [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, healthy, delicious, scratch cooked meals that support the health of children and our planet. To date, we’ve reached over 13,500 schools and 3.3 million kids with healthy school programming. Learn more at chefannfoundation.org