



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

**Food and
Nutrition
Service**

**3101 Park
Center Drive**

**Alexandria, VA
22302-1500**

DEC 23 2004

Larry D. Yates
Washington Representative
National Environmental Health Association
111 Devil's Backbone Overlook
Stephenson, VA 22656

Dear Mr. Yates,

Given the increased concern over the safety of school meals served to millions of children across the nation, Congress has directed all schools to adopt a more vigilant approach to food safety. The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is writing to inform you of new requirements found in Section 111 of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-265, June 30, 2004) that may have an effect on your members.

Beginning July 1, 2005, by law, each school participating in the National School Lunch or Breakfast Programs must obtain at least two food safety inspections each school year. The inspections must be conducted by a State or local governmental agency responsible for food safety inspections. Jurisdictions may, of course, require more than two inspections. In addition, schools must post, in a publicly visible location, a report on the most recent food safety inspection, and provide a copy of the food safety inspection report to the public upon request. The Reauthorization Act also requires State agencies that administer the Child Nutrition Programs to submit annually a report on food safety inspections to the Secretary of Agriculture.


FNS provided implementation guidance for these new requirements to State agencies that administer the School Meal Programs. Those State agencies will inform schools of the new requirements. We are also encouraging them to contact their counterparts in the State and/or local agencies responsible for food safety inspections.

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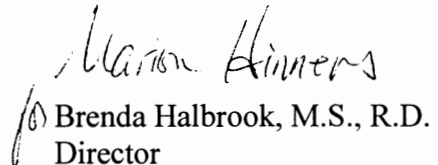
We ask that you disseminate this information to your members. While the requirement for obtaining two inspections is placed on schools, your membership plays a critical role in their success in complying with the law. This Congressional mandate is consistent with our mutual goal to protect the health and well-being of school children, and will help preserve public confidence in the School Meal Programs.

We appreciate your support of our programs, and the cooperation of your members, which will be essential for the successful implementation of this provision.

Sincerely,



Stanley C. Garnett
Director
Child Nutrition Division



Brenda Halbrook, M.S., R.D.
Director
Food Safety Unit