



SECTION 2

Introduction

10 Cents a Meal for Michigan’s Kids and Farms (10 Cents), administered by the Michigan Department of Education, matches what participating schools, districts, and early care and education centers spend on Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and dry beans with grants of up to 10 cents per meal.

This brief is part of *10 Cents a Meal 2020–2021 Evaluation Results: Expanded Eligibility Increased Impacts*.

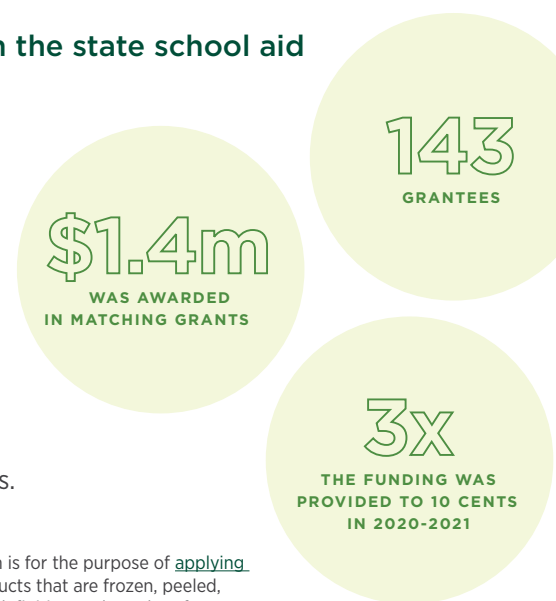
10 Cents a Meal for Michigan’s Kids and Farms (10 Cents) is a state-funded program that matches what participating schools and childcare centers spend on fresh or minimally processed¹ Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and dry beans with grants of up to 10 cents per meal.

The goals of the 10 Cents program are to:

- improve daily nutrition and eating habits for Michigan children; and
- invest in Michigan’s agriculture and local food business economy.

Since the start of the pilot program in 2016, funding through the state school aid budget has increased every year.

The Michigan Legislature provided \$2 million for the program to operate across the state in 2020–2021, more than triple the funding amount (\$575,000) from the previous program year. After setting aside funds for program administration, approximately \$1,410,700 was awarded in matching grants to 143 grantees. The final amount of grant funds did not match the original legislative budget for the program because of pandemic-related administrative adjustments, such as grantees that dropped out, the addition of new grantees, and requests for additional funds. These administrative adjustments demonstrate the need for flexible program funding that is responsive to needs of individual grantees and the overall integrity of the program. The chart below shows the distribution of grant funds over the years.



¹ The 10 Cents definition of minimally processed is derived from the USDA definition of unprocessed, which is for the purpose of [applying geographic procurement preference](#). For 10 Cents, this includes Michigan-grown fruit and vegetable products that are frozen, peeled, sliced, diced, cut, chopped, bagged, or dried (including dry beans). Products that are excluded from this definition and are therefore ineligible for 10 Cents are those that are cooked, heated, canned, or contain additives or fillers.

Table 2.1. Distribution of 10 Cents Grants, 2016–2021

Pilot year	Total grants awarded	Eligible MASA Regions	Participating counties	Participating schools/districts	Participating early care and education (ECE) sites	Estimated students enrolled*	Estimated ECE children served**
2020–2021	\$1,410,700	Statewide	48	129	14	423,879	11,683
2018–2019	\$493,500	2, 4, 6, 8, 9	27	57	—	134,000	—
2017–2018	\$315,000	2, 4, 9	18	32	—	95,000	—
2016–2017	\$210,000	2, 4	8	16	—	48,000	—

Note: The program year 2019–2020 is not included in the chart above. Due to legislative and pandemic-related delays, state funding was not available to grantees until August, when the traditional school year was complete. Grantees were the same as the previous year (2018–2019), and grant funds were awarded retroactively for local food purchases made earlier in the year.

*Data supplied by the Michigan Department of Education. These data do not include Residential Child Care Institutions enrollment, which is not publicly available. K–12 enrollment data may be undercounted because numbers from some grantees were missing.

**Data supplied by Michigan Department of Education. License capacity estimates an ECE site's maximum number of children the site can serve, although actual number may vary at any given time throughout the year, and it includes all possible sites under each grantee.

The 2020–2021 year for 10 Cents was notable in a few ways. First, it was the program's first full school year since the start of the coronavirus pandemic in March 2020. Second, ECE sites were eligible to participate for the first time. Lastly, 2020–2021 marked the first year that schools and centers across the state participating in United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Nutrition Programs were eligible for 10 Cents. Grantees were located in more than half (48) of Michigan's 83 counties. Because eligibility for the program is now statewide, we will refer to regions of the state less than we referred to them in prior evaluation

reports. When we do refer to regions, we will use the Michigan Association of Superintendents & Administrators (MASA) Regions, of which there are 10. However, because MASA Region 10 includes only the city of Detroit, we will combine Regions 9 and 10.¹

[Click here to learn more about 10 Cents Grantees Across All Years of the Program.](#)

The expansion of eligibility included four different types of grantees for 2020–2021, as outlined in the chart below. Note that Residential Child Care Institutions (RCCIs) are public or nonprofit institutions that operate primarily for the care of children.

Table 2.2. Distribution of Grants by Grantee Type

Grantee type	Number of Grants
Public schools and districts	119 (83.2%)
Nonpublic schools	5 (3.5%)
ECEs	14 (9.8%)
RCCIs	5 (3%)

83.2%

OF GRANTS WERE AWARDED TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS

Note: n = 143

¹ See the Michigan Association of Superintendents & Administrators (MASA) [Regions page](#) for more details.

In 2020–2021, MDE continued to administer the program with additional staff support from Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, the nonprofit Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities, and Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems.

Through a competitive application process, MDE reviewed applications from eligible entities and selected grantees. Applicants were evaluated on their capacity to purchase, serve, and market Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and dry beans in their food service programs. A variety of characteristics were considered in the grant selection process, such as the ability to provide related educational and promotional activities, free and reduced-price meal rates (when applicable), food service program type (self-operating or contracted food service management company), and urban and rural settings. For the 2020–2021 year, all applicants were accepted. Applicants received grant allotments based on meals claimed in the previous school year.

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10 Cents is a matching reimbursement program that can incentivize food program managers (FPMs)¹ to seek local sources for food they already purchase and use in school meals.

For example, if a grantee is awarded \$5,000, they commit to spending \$10,000 on Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and dry beans. Grantees must submit invoice information to show proof of their purchases for them to count toward their grant award and match amount. As required by legislation, all reported purchases must include the Michigan farm of origin, which is the name and location of the farm that grew the produce.² Eligible Michigan-grown produce can be purchased from any farm and food supplier as chosen by FPMs, whether direct from farms, from local and regional food distributors, or even from federal food programs such as the Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program and USDA Foods. Giving FPMs the flexibility to choose their supplier can help drive demand for local foods

Giving FPMs the flexibility to choose their supplier can help drive demand for local foods across all market channels.

across all market channels as grantees seek and ask for more of them, including from customary food suppliers and food programs used by FPMs operating USDA Child Nutrition Programs.

Grantees were also required to complete quarterly evaluation surveys along with reporting information about food purchases. Results and analyses from these data sources are shared in the summaries that follow. In the 2020–2021 school year, many FPMs purchased food and ran their food operations differently due to ever-changing conditions (e.g., school closures and food shortages) caused by the pandemic. For these reasons, and because of program expansion, comparisons to previous 10 Cents program years and evaluation reports are not appropriate or included here. Most data analyses for 2020–2021 are reported alone in this evaluation report, and we look forward to examining changes, trends, and growth across future program years.

- 1 In previous program years, the term food service director was used. For 2020–2021, the term food program managers is used to be inclusive of the newly added childcare sponsor grantees.
- 2 State of Michigan [Public Act 165 of 2020](#).

Evaluation of 10 Cents is led by the Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems (CRFS). The work presented here is part of *10 Cents a Meal 2020–2021 Evaluation Results: Expanded Eligibility Increased Impacts* by Colleen Matts and Megan McManus of CRFS and was generously funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and 10 Cents administrative funds for partner organizations.

To learn more, visit tencentsmichigan.org, foodsystems.msu.edu/10-cents-a-meal, and mifarmtoschool.msu.edu.

