

Core Competencies

FoodCorps has developed Service Member Core Competencies as a way to frame the skills and knowledge needed for an effective, successful term of FoodCorps service. Aligned with the practices within the Healthy School Progress Report, these competencies provide guidance for how service activities develop specific areas of service members' professional development. We believe it is essential that all FoodCorps service members build these competencies during their service term. We strive to provide our service members with experiences and training that will foster these competencies within each area of FoodCorps service during their term and beyond. Service members will learn many of these competencies through day-to-day activities of service and further develop them during state, regional, or national training opportunities.

FoodCorps acknowledges that service members will reach competency within varying time frames. We respect that service members have a variety of backgrounds and familiarity with the skills, knowledge, and experiences included in the Core Competencies. We encourage FoodCorps service members, staff, state partners, and service sites to work together to develop a holistic professional development plan for each service member so that individual learning needs are met. Our goal is to use the Core Competencies to build a foundation of skills and knowledge for successful service and to create continuity for service member training and professional development among all FoodCorps partners.

Core Competencies in Action

Core Competencies are used for three main purposes:

- To inform service member planning, both for success during service and for FoodCorps service members' own professional skills development
- To guide FoodCorps staff and site partners in developing relevant trainings and resources for service members

- To help FoodCorps service members articulate and market the skills they develop during service to align with career tracks related to FoodCorps service

Hands-On Learning Competencies

- Lead students in engaging, fun, and experiential learning.
- Foster student learning in safe, inclusive, and positive social environments.
- Adapt lessons appropriately to reflect student learning needs, local foods, diverse cultural perspectives, and varying growing seasons.
- Collaborate with teachers and administrators to integrate food, nutrition, and garden-based learning into the curriculum.

Healthy School Meals Competencies

- Demonstrate an understanding of how place, race, and class are indicators of health disparities within our food system.
- Demonstrate an understanding of school cafeteria culture to build relationships and work effectively with cafeteria staff.
- Collaborate with food service and school administrators to create a welcoming, inclusive mealtime environment.
- Collaborate with food service and school administrators to implement best practices that promote healthy foods and educate students about them.

Schoolwide Culture of Health Competencies

- Identify and leverage opportunities to support a broad schoolwide culture of health.
- Engage school staff, families, and community members in a variety of activities that support a schoolwide culture of health.
- Confidently convene diverse stakeholders to build strategic partnerships with the community to mobilize change within a school environment.