




STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Deputy Commissioner of Education 

DATE: February 1, 2021

SUBJECT: School Nutrition Program Grants and Flexibilities

As you know, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), has authorized certain waivers pursuant to Section 2202(a) of the Families First Coronavirus Act (the FFCRA) (P.L. 116-127) to ensure our students continue to have access to federal food and nutrition programs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the authority provided by Governor Ned Lamont's [Executive Order No. 9K](#), this document establishes how the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) will implement school nutrition program-related state grants in line with statutory intent within the context of the pandemic. This guidance also includes additional information regarding the procedures related to Healthy Food Certification (HFC).

School Breakfast Grant Program

Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-266w provides for grants to schools that (1) participate in the Federal School Breakfast Program (SBP) and (2) meet the definition of Severe Need (i.e., 20-percent of the lunches served under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) in the 2nd prior year were served to students eligible for free or reduced-price meals). Under USDA waivers for school Child Nutrition Programs due to COVID-19, many districts have shifted to serving breakfast through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) or Seamless Summer Option (SSO), instead of the traditional SBP. Pursuant to [Executive Order 9K](#), this memo authorizes the provision of school breakfast grants described in C.G.S. Section 10-266w to schools that: (1) participated in the SBP during school year (SY) 2019-20, and/or previously notified the CSDE of their intent to participate in the SBP during SY 2020-21; and/or, (2) are currently serving breakfast under the SBP, SFSP or SSO and will continue to serve breakfast through the 2020-21 school year; and (3) meet the statutory definition of Severe Need for SY 2018-19. For questions about this information, please contact the CSDE's [School Nutrition Program](#) staff.

Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Participation and Funding

C.G.S. Section 10-215b provides for funding of up to 10 cents per lunch served to eligible local education authorities (LEAs) (including local or regional boards of education, the Technical Education and Career System, and governing authorities of state charter schools, interdistrict magnet schools and endowed academies) that participate in the NSLP and certify to meeting the Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS) established by the CSDE. Pursuant to [Executive Order 9K](#), this memo authorizes the provision of such HFC funding to eligible LEAs that: (1) previously notified the CSDE of their intent to participate in the NSLP during SY 2020-21; (2) received local board of education or governing authority approval to participate in HFC for SY 2020-21; and (3) submitted the required HFC application documents to the CSDE by July 1, 2020. Due to the cancellation of classes in March 2020 resulting from COVID-19, the CSDE will determine HFC funding amounts based on the number of NSLP lunches served in SY 2018-19, and based upon available appropriations.

HFC Documentation Requirements

The established procedure for HFC documentation for school year 2020-21 is as follows: For eligible LEAs in good standing with HFC, the CSDE will accept the LEA's approved local board of education or governing authority resolution language certifying CNS compliance (previously submitted by the CSDE) as HFC documentation for school year 2020-21. (See: [Operational Memorandum No. 05-20](#)). Participating LEAs must still meet HFC requirements and maintain HFC compliance documentation, but are not required to submit additional documentation to the CSDE for the current school year. For questions about this information, please contact Susan Fiore at susan.fiore@ct.gov or 860-807-2075.