

# The School Lunch Tray: January 5, 2022

Dear School Sponsors of Child Nutrition Programs:

The School Lunch Tray contains the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) weekly email notifications for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) school nutrition programs. This week's topics are listed below.

- New School Lunch Tray Format

## **Action Items**

- New CSDE Form: Documentation of Meal Service in the School Nutrition Programs during Unanticipated School Closures during School Year 2021-22

## **Need to Know**

- Planning for Instructional Days for School Year (SY) 2021-22
- USDA Foods Update: Foods Available List for School Year 2022-23
- Resource Roundup: Authorized Signatures Change Form and Instructions

## **Good to Know**

- Strategies to Improve School Meal Consumption
- New USDA Infographic: Stepping into the New Year with MyPlate

Please review and share with appropriate staff members. For previous versions of the School Lunch Tray, visit the CSDE's [School Lunch Tray and Table Talk](#) webpage.

## **Happy New Year!**



# The School Lunch Tray: January 5, 2022

## New School Lunch Tray Format

Beginning with this edition, the School Lunch Tray will have a new format to help you quickly find relevant information. Topics will be grouped in the three sections below.

- **Action Items** includes applications, forms, and related items that require school food authorities (SFAs) to act or respond by a certain deadline.
- **Need to Know** includes information about important federal and state requirements and guidance related to operating the school nutrition programs. The weekly Resource Roundup is also located in this section.
- **Good to Know** includes useful information and resources to enhance program operations.

These sections are color-coded for easy reference. Depending on the weekly topics, not all sections will appear in each School Lunch Tray.

## Action Items

### **New CSDE Form: Documentation of Meal Service in the School Nutrition Programs during Unanticipated School Closures during School Year 2021-22**

SFAs that offer meal service during unanticipated school closures during the current COVID public health emergency must maintain documentation to support claims for reimbursement. The CSDE has developed a form to capture the required information: [Documentation of Meal Service in the School Nutrition Programs during Unanticipated School Closures during School Year 2021-22](#). SFAs must complete this form **each time** there is an unanticipated school closure and maintain these forms on file. Please do not submit this form to the CSDE unless requested.

---

## Need to Know

### Planning for Instructional Days for School Year (SY) 2021-22

**Note:** These requirements do **not** apply to meal service during unanticipated school closures during the current COVID public health emergency.

The reminders below provide guidance for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program, and Seamless Summer Option (SSO) regarding how to plan for instructional and non-instructional days for the remainder of school year (SY) 2021-22. These reminders constitute clarifications of normal operations, as well as evolving program flexibilities extended under the current public health emergency. SFAs must be knowledgeable about these topics and ensure program integrity. After reviewing these documents, if you have questions about how to best implement these requirements in your community, please contact your [school nutrition consultant](#).

- The National School Lunch Act requires public schools, private schools, and residential child care institutions (RCCIs) to serve nutritious lunches to children each school day. This law also applies to the SSO authorized to operate during SY 2021-22. Half-days and early dismissal days are considered a school day. Please refer to [Operational Memorandum No. 03-22](#) for additional information.
- Under the 2021-22 SSO, meals may only be provided for instructional days. Meals are not permitted for weekends, holidays, school breaks, professional development days, or any other non-instructional days. Additional information on this topic can be found in [USDA Memo SP 15-2021](#), the CSDE's [Comparison of Operating the NSLP and SSO for School Food Authorities in SY 2021-22 through June 30, 2022](#) chart, and instructions for [Updating the Sponsor Agreement for School Nutrition Programs](#).
- Under the SSO, you may serve meals to any child 18 years and younger at an Open meal site.
- District enrolled students that are quarantined and [learning remotely](#) can be served through any Open or Closed Enrolled district school site. Meals are not required to be picked up at the school at which they are enrolled. Please refer to [USDA Memo SP 12-2021](#) for additional information. For information on non-congregate, meal time restriction, and parent/guardian pick-up waivers, please refer to CSDE's [Operating Child Nutrition Programs during COVID-19 Outbreaks](#) webpage.
- Instructions regarding how to apply for the USDA waivers due to the current public health emergency will be provided in next week's School Lunch Tray.

### USDA Foods Update: Foods Available List for School Year 2022-23

Please review the [USDA's Foods Available List](#) for the upcoming 2022-23 school year. A summary of changes is below. Contact the [Food Distribution Team](#) with any requests to add or remove any direct delivery items from the catalog for next year's orders.

Items Removed (*eliminated due to changes in processor needs*):

- 100100 – Chicken, Small Birds, Chilled – Bulk
- 100421 – Flour, Bakers Soft Wheat, Unbleached – Bulk

---

### Resource Roundup: Authorized Signatures Change Form and Instructions

As a reminder, sponsors of the Child Nutrition Programs must complete the *Authorized Signatures Change Form* and submit to the CSDE **whenever there is a change** to either of the two authorized signers. The direct links to this form and the instructions are below.

- [Authorized Signature Change Form](#)
- [Instructions for Completing the Authorized Signatures Change Form](#)

These documents are located under “A” on the CSDE's [Forms for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

---

### Good to Know

#### **UCONN Rudd Center Research: Strategies to Improve School Meal Consumption**

The school environment plays an important role in children's diets and overall health, and policies for universal free school meals have the potential to contribute to positive child health outcomes. The UCONN Rudd Center and colleagues recently published a systematic review that evaluates studies examining the association between universal free school meals and students' school meal participation rates, diets, attendance, academic performance, and Body Mass Index (BMI), as well as school finances.

- **Article:** [Universal School Meals and Associations with Student Participation, Attendance, Academic Performance, Diet Quality, Food Security, and Body Mass Index: A Systematic Review](#)
- **Infographic:** [7 Strategies to Improve School Meal Consumption](#)

---

#### **New USDA Infographic: Stepping into the New Year with MyPlate**

MyPlate is here to support you in the New Year with more tools than ever. The USDA created a new infographic, highlighting steps you can take to make 2022 your healthiest year yet! You can follow MyPlate's [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) this week as the USDA walks you through these five easy steps to eating healthier with MyPlate. From recipes to shopping, MyPlate has you covered.

To access the MyPlate infographic and other infographics, visit the USDA's [Infographics](#) page.

---



For more information, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [School Lunch Tray and Table Talk](#) webpage, or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SLT/2022/SLT\\_01\\_05\\_2022.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SLT/2022/SLT_01_05_2022.pdf).

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [How to File a Complaint](#), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The Connecticut State Department of Education is committed to a policy of affirmative action/equal opportunity for all qualified persons. The Connecticut Department of Education does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of age, ancestry, color, civil air patrol status, criminal record (in state employment and licensing), gender identity or expression, genetic information, intellectual disability, learning disability, marital status, mental disability (past or present), national origin, physical disability (including blindness), race, religious creed, retaliation for previously opposed discrimination or coercion, sex (pregnancy or sexual harassment), sexual orientation, veteran status or workplace hazards to reproductive systems, unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in any of the aforementioned protected classes.

Inquiries regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to: Levy Gillespie, Equal Employment Opportunity Director/Americans with Disabilities Coordinator (ADA), Connecticut State Department of Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 505, Hartford, CT 06103, 860-807-2071, [levy.gillespie@ct.gov](mailto:levy.gillespie@ct.gov).