



CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**School Meals Assistance Revenue for
Transition (SMART) Funds**

August 4, 2022

Background

- Public Act No. 22-118 (House Bill 5506)
- \$30 million of federal American Rescue Plan Act (2021) funds
 - Food Assistance to Households
- “Free School Meals for Children” grant



Background

- The intent of this appropriation is for these funds to assist households, through school food authorities' (SFAs) continued provision of school meals at no cost to students for as long as possible in school year (SY) 2022-23, as SFAs transition back to operating the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP).



Background

- The funds will be referred to as School Meals Assistance Revenue for Transition (SMART) funds.
- Operational Memorandum No. 14-22: *School Meals Assistance Revenue for Transition (SMART) Funds*



Purpose

SMART funds will:

- require participating SFAs to provide free breakfast and/or lunch meals to all students in schools that are approved to participate in the NSLP and SBP in SY 2022-23 subject to the availability of funds.
- reimburse SFAs the difference between the federal reimbursement rate for free meals and the federal reimbursement rate for reduced-price and paid meals.



Who is Eligible?

SFAs in good standing are eligible to receive SMART funds if they:

- 1) participated in the SSO of the NSLP during SY 2021-22 (including all sites operating under interschool agreements)
- 2) are participating in NSLP and/or the SBP during SY 2022-23



Who is Eligible?

Eligible SFAs include:

- Public Schools
- Private schools
- Endowed Academies
- Residential Child Care Institutions (RCCIs) with Day students



Who is NOT Eligible?

SFAs that are NOT eligible to receive SMART funds are:

- sites participating in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) for SY 2022-23
- new NSLP sponsors in SY 2022-23
- SFAs that operated the NSLP (not the SSO) in SY 2021-22
- SFAs that operated under their own state agency agreement prior to March of 2020, but have not operated under their own agreement during the public health emergency



What is the Process for Requesting Funds?

- CSDE requested these funds on behalf of SFAs
- SFAs do not have to request payment or calculate their reimbursement



Funding Formula

CSDE determined the amount of funding provided to eligible SFAs using a predetermined formula. The allocation includes:

- \$3,000 per approved site operating the SBP under SSO in SY 2021-22
- proportional amount of funding based on each SFA's total SY 2018-19 reduced-price and paid lunch counts



Funding Awarded to the CSDE

- CSDE awarded \$30,000,000 to distribute to 124 eligible SFAs
- SFA distributions range from \$2,452.55 to \$1,173,476.19



List of Estimated Payments

The CSDE issued Operational Memorandum 14-22, School Meals Assistance Revenue for Transition Funds, which includes the total calculated amount of funding that eligible SFAs will receive.

Attachment 2

School Meals Assistance Revenue for Transition (SMART) Funds List of Eligible School Food Authorities (SFAs) for School Year 2022-23

Attachment 2

This list includes the estimated formula-calculated allocations for SFAs eligible to receive SMART funds for school year (SY) 2022-23. For more information, refer to Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [Operational Memorandum No. 14-22: School Meals Assistance Revenue for Transition \(SMART\) Funds](#).

Sponsor ID	Sponsor Name	SFA Consolidated SMART Funds Allocation
00300	Ashford Board of Education	\$ 41,215.50
00400	Avon Board of Education	\$ 383,219.44
00700	Berlin Board of Education	\$ 257,041.12
00800	Bethany Board of Education	\$ 45,880.07
00900	Bethel Board of Education	\$ 449,015.59
01100	Bloomfield Board of Education	\$ 192,970.71
01200	Bolton Board of Education	\$ 75,888.69
01300	Bozrah Board of Education	\$ 21,696.46



Payments

- SFA's formula-calculated allocation will be loaded into the CSDE's Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs (CNP System) Distribution of Funds (DOF) module as a starting balance
- After the SFA's monthly claims for reimbursement are processed, a report of the number of meals eligible for SMART funds will be generated to determine each SFA's SMART funds monthly reimbursement payment



Payments

- The SFA's SMART funds reimbursement payment will be paid utilizing the same process already in place to pay the SFA's monthly claims for reimbursement.
- Once the SMART funds payment is made, the amount will be deducted from the SFA's SMART funds balance in the DOF module.



Example of Smart Funds Payment

ABC School District:

- ✓ SFA is in good standing
- ✓ SFA has six sites that will be operating SBP and NSLP in SY 2022-23
- ✓ All six sites operated under the SSO of the NSLP in SY 2021-22 offering breakfast and lunch
- ✓ All six sites have NSLP lunch counts from SY 2018-19
- ✓ Three sites are participating in the CEP in SY 2022-23 and are not eligible to receive SMART funds.



Example of Smart Funds Payment

Based on the funding formula, ABC School District will be allocated \$139,000 in SMART funds:

1. \$3,000 per 3 eligible SBP sites (\$9,000); and
2. \$130,000 allocation based on reduced-price and paid reimbursement in SY 2018-19 at the eligible sites.



Example of Smart Funds Payment

ABC School District places their September claim for reimbursement.

SMART FUNDS LUNCH REIMBURSEMENT:

Lunch meal category	Federal per meal reimbursement regular rate for lunch (SY 2022-23)	SMART funds lunch reimbursement rate	Number of lunch meals served in September	SMART funds reimbursement per lunch meal
Free meals	\$4.33	\$0.00	2,750	\$0.00
Reduced-price meals	\$3.93	\$0.40	800	\$320.00
Paid meals	\$0.77	\$3.56	6,500	\$23,140.00
Total lunch reimbursement				\$23,460.00



Example of Smart Funds Payment

ABC School District places their September claim for reimbursement.

SMART FUNDS BREAKFAST REIMBURSEMENT:

Breakfast meal category	Federal per meal reimbursement regular rate for breakfast (SY 2022-23)	SMART funds breakfast reimbursement rate	Number of breakfast meals served in September	SMART funds reimbursement per lunch meal
Free meals	\$2.26	\$0.00	800	\$0.00
Reduced-price meals	\$1.96	\$0.30	125	\$37.50
Paid meals	\$0.50	\$1.76	350	\$616.00
Total breakfast reimbursement				\$653.50



Example of Smart Funds Payment

ABC School District starting allocation	\$139,000.00
September total lunch reimbursement	- \$23,460.00
September total breakfast reimbursement	-\$653.50
Total balance remaining	\$114,886.50

- ABC School District will receive \$24,113.50 in SMART funds for September 2022
- Remaining balance in the DOF module will be \$114,886.50



Example of Smart Funds Payment

- ABC School District is on trend to provide meals at no cost to all students for approximately five more months or through February 2023
($24,113.50 \times 5 = \$120,000$)



How will Payments be Sent to SFAs?

- Eligible SFAs will receive reimbursement payments monthly
- Payments will be sent to SFAs using the same process for payment of monthly claims for reimbursement
- CFDA # 21.027
- CSDE coding description – Free Meals for Students (SID 28105)
- Treat awarded funds as fiscal year (FY) 2023 funds



What Child Nutrition Programs can be SMART funds be used for?

- SMART funds can only be used to support serving NSLP and SBP meals at no cost to students
- SMART funds cannot be used at schools that do not participate in the NSLP
- Attachment 1: Questions and Answers: School Meals Assistance Revenue for Transition funds for School Year 2022-23



What Child Nutrition Programs can be supported by these funds?

SMART funds CANNOT be used in support of:

- A la Carte items or meals
- Seamless Summer Option of the NSLP
- Afterschool Snack Program
- Special Milk Program
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program
- Summer Food Service Program
- Child and Adult Care Food Programs
- Student Debt



How do SFAs accept the SMART funds?

To accept the funds, the SFA must check the **Accept** box and all fourteen **Yes** criterion check boxes



Attachment 3: School Meals Assistance Revenue for Transition (SMART) Funds ATTESTATION STATEMENT

Instructions: Complete all information below. All school food authorities (SFAs) must complete section 3. This form must be signed by the SFA's authorized signer 1 or 2, as approved on the ED-099 Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs. Return this form to CNPermanentAgreement@ct.gov by **August 19, 2022**.

Sponsor name: _____

Sponsor agreement number: _____ Unique Entity Identifier (UEI): _____

Part 1: Accept Funds

Complete part 1 only if the SFA is **accepting** the SMART funds. The SMART funds are federal funds received by the State of Connecticut through the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. The SFA must also complete parts 2 and 4.

As the local educational agency's (LEA) duly authorized representative of the Child Nutrition Programs (CNP), I do hereby:

- Accept** the SMART funds and attest that the aforementioned SFA and all eligible schools under its jurisdiction operating the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP), will comply with the criteria below. **Note:** Check the applicable box to indicate if the SFA meets each criterion. A **"No"** answer to any criterion will **disqualify** the SFA from receipt of SMART funds.
- The SFA will offer at no cost reimbursable lunch and/or breakfast meals to all students at all eligible sites participating under their CNP sponsor agreement for the duration of the availability of the SMART funds allocation and notify parents, guardians, and students as such. Yes No
 - The SFA will not charge students for reimbursable lunch and/or breakfast meals regardless of their individual student eligibility. Yes No
 - The SFA will utilize the Direct Certification list to identify individual student eligibility. Yes No
 - The SFA will collect free and reduced-price meal applications to determine individual student eligibility. Yes No
 - The SFA will collect proper point of service counts based on individual student eligibility. Yes No
 - The SFA will claim reimbursable meals by individual student eligibility. Yes No
 - The SFA will submit monthly claims for reimbursement to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) in accordance with the current schedule for submitting online reimbursement claim data. Yes No
 - The SFA will use SMART funds only to support providing the NSLP and SBP at no cost to all students under their CNP sponsor agreement. Yes No

How do SFAs accept the SMART funds?

SFAs must attach a list of all sites that will be participating in SBP for the entirety of SY 2022-23

Part 2: School Breakfast Program Participation for School Year (SY) 2022-23:

LEAs that accept SMART funds must attach a list of all sites under the sponsor agreement that will be participating in the SBP for the entirety of SY 2022-23.



How do SFAs accept the SMART funds?

To accept the funds, an Authorized Signer certifying the attestation is true and correct must sign the form

Part 4: Signature of Authorized Representative

I certify that the information provided in Part 1 or Part 2 is true and correct.

Signature of authorized representative (Signer #1 or #2 on ED-099 Agreement)

Title of authorized representative

Printed name of authorized representative

Date



How do SFAs accept the SMART funds?

SFAs accepting the SMART funds must attest to the following:

- will offer no cost reimbursable lunch and/or breakfast meals to all students at all eligible sites participating under their CNP sponsor agreement for the duration of the availability of the SMART funds and notify parents, guardians, and students
- will not charge students for reimbursable lunch and/or breakfast meals regardless of their individual student eligibility



How do SFAs accept the SMART funds?

SFAs accepting the SMART funds must attest to the following:

- will utilize the Direct Certification list to identify individual student eligibility
- will collect free and reduced-price meal applications to determine individual student eligibility.
- will collect proper point of service counts based on individual student eligibility.
- will claim reimbursable meals by individual student eligibility



How do SFAs accept the SMART funds?

SFAs accepting the SMART funds must attest to the following:

- will submit monthly claims for reimbursement to the CSDE in accordance with the current schedule for submitting online reimbursement claim data
- will use SMART funds only to support providing the NSLP and SBP at no cost to all students under their CNP sponsor agreement



How do SFAs accept the SMART funds?

- SFAs accepting the SMART funds must attest to the following:
- will notify the CSDE at least 30 days prior to the conclusion of offering meals at no cost and will utilize remaining funds in accordance with 7 CFR 210 and 7 CFR 220
- will notify the parents/guardians of students eligible for reduced-price and paid meals at least 30 days prior to the conclusion of offering meals at no cost



How do SFAs accept the SMART funds?

SFAs accepting the SMART funds must attest to the following:

- SFA will comply with all applicable Federal procurement and financial management requirements per 2 CFR 200
- will comply with all recordkeeping and review requirements per 7 CFR 210.9(b)(17) and 7 CFR 210.18, including maintaining documentation demonstrating appropriate use of SMART funds



How do SFAs accept the SMART funds?

SFAs accepting the SMART funds must also recognize that funds cannot be used for:

- to indirectly or directly offset a reduction in net tax revenue
- to make a deposit to a pension fund
- for debt service or replenishing financial reserves
- to satisfy any obligation of settlements and judgments
- for a project that conflicts with or contravenes the purpose of the American Rescue Plan Act statute
- in violation of the Award Terms and Conditions or conflict of interest requirements under the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200)



How do SFAs decline the SMART funds?

To decline the funds, the SFA must check the **Decline** box, and an Authorized Signer certifying the attestation is true and correct must sign the form.

NOTE: If an SFA declines their allocation, their SMART funds will be available for reallocation by the CSDE.

Part 3: Decline Funds

Complete part 3 only if the SFA is **declining** the SMART funds. The SFA must also complete part 4.

Note: Once SMART funds are declined, they will be immediately reallocated. The SFA will **not** have another opportunity to accept these funds.

As the duly authorized representative of the Child Nutrition Programs, I do hereby:

Decline the SMART funds.

Part 4: Signature of Authorized Representative

I certify that the information provided in Part 1 or Part 2 is true and correct.

Signature of authorized representative (Signer #1 or #2 on ED-099 Agreement)

Title of authorized representative

Printed name of authorized representative

Date



Operating Fund Balances

- SFAs are still eligible for SMART funds if their net cash resources exceed a three month operating balance as described in 7 CFR 210.19(a)(1)
- SFAs that exceed three months' average expenditures must submit a Plan for Reducing Excess Operating Balance to the CSDE to indicate how the excess balance will be spent to maintain the SFA's nonprofit status



Attestation Statements

- Attestation Statements are due to the CSDE on **August 19, 2022**
- Email to: CNPermanentAgreement@ct.gov
 - *Do not submit to your county consultant*



Reporting

- At this time, all reporting requirements are at the State agency level



Monitoring

- SFA's SMART funds reimbursement will be monitored to ensure compliance with the SMART funds requirements pursuant to 2 CFR §200.332
- SMART funds will be reviewed during the Administrative Review process for school nutrition programs
- SMART funds may be subject to future external audit activity under standard auditing practices



Resources

- CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 14-22: School Meals Assistance Revenue for Transition (SMART) Funds
 - Attachment 1: Questions and Answers: School Meals Assistance Revenue for Transition funds for School Year 2022-23
 - Attachment 2: School Meals Assistance Revenue for Transition Funds List of Eligible School Food Authorities for School Year 2022-23
 - Attachment 3: School Meals Assistance Revenue for Transition Funds Attestation Statement



Questions

Email Questions to:

School Nutrition Programs Staff	
County	Consultant
Fairfield County (includes Region 9) Litchfield County (includes Regions 1, 6, 7, 12, and 14) School wellness policies	Fionnuala Brown 860-807-2129 fionnuala.brown@ct.gov
Hartford County (includes Region 10) Middlesex County (includes Regions 4, 13, and 17)	Teri Dandeneau 860-807-2079 teri.dandeneau@ct.gov
New Haven County (includes Regions 5, 15, and 16) New London County Tolland County (includes Regions 8 and 19) Windham County (includes Region 11) Claims processing	Susan Alston 860-807-2081 susan.alston@ct.gov



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1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov

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