Administrative Review Organizational Tool (AROT) for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

School Year 2026-27

District: _____

Review Month: _____

Sponsors must use this organizational tool to provide the **required** documentation for completion of the Administrative Review (AR) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Child Nutrition Programs operated by the sponsor.

How to Use this Tool

Each section of the AROT has a cover page that includes a list of the required documents. Please note the information below.

- **REVIEW ATTACHMENT:** The sponsor will upload these documents into the compliance module. The state agency (SA) may review these documents off site.
- **REVIEW:** The SA will review these documents on site.

Place all documents listed under **REVIEW** with the corresponding cover page in a folder, clipped together, or otherwise organized. Have all documents available for the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) review team on the first day of the scheduled review.

If a document is listed, it is required. If you do not know what the document is, please check with the Lead Reviewer to clarify at least two weeks prior to the start of the on-site portion of the AR.

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District Information

Upload as REVIEW ATTACHMENT

- ☐ The district's charge policy and documentation of the methods used to communicate the policy to households and school or school food authority (SFA)-level staff responsible for policy enforcement as well as the procedure for collecting outstanding balances at the end of the school year.
    - Guide to Required Policy for Unpaid Meal Charges in the School Nutrition Programs
    - Checklist for Reviewing the Local Educational Agency's Unpaid Meal Charge Policy and Procedures for the School Nutrition Programs

- ☐ District procedure for provision of field trip meals. The procedure should include the following:
    - Food safety measures, i.e., Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
    - Compliance with USDA meal pattern requirements
    - Method used to properly count meals at the point of service (POS)

- ☐ 2026-27 waivers or preapprovals, as applicable:
    - Lunch time waiver
    - Paid lunch Equity Exemption Request
    - Residential childcare institution (RCCI) exception for safety if serving multiple age/grade groups
    - Weekend or vacation meals
    - Separation by gender (USDA Memo SP 31-2015, CACFP 12-2015, and SFSP 14-2015: Guidance on Prohibition of Separation by Gender during Child Nutrition Program Meal Service)
    - Preschool family-style meal service preapproval
    - Other waivers or preapprovals not listed above

Have these documents available on site

- ☐ Names and titles of staff **at the selected schools**. Do not include staff at schools that are not selected.

- ☐ **For selected schools:** Mealtimes for the days of the on-site portion of the review. Include the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), and Afterschool Snack Program (ASP).
    - If the schools being visited for the SBP serve breakfast and/or lunch in the classroom, specify the number of locations where meals are counted.

- ☐ Names and phone numbers for key staff, e.g., food service director, business official, determining officials, and claims preparer.

- ☐ Completed *Administrative Review Onsite Meal Service Checklist for the School Nutrition Programs* for each site selected for an onsite meal service observation.

Section II: Meal Access and Reimbursement – Certification and Benefit Issuance

Not applicable to districts with all CEP sites.

Section II: Meal Access and Reimbursement – Verification

Not applicable to applicable to districts with all CEP sites.

Section II: Meal Access and Reimbursement – Meal Counting and Claiming

Upload as REVIEW ATTACHMENT

- ☐ Edit Check Worksheets for **all sites** and **all programs** (including the Afterschool Snack program if applicable) and **all schools** in the district in support of the claim for reimbursement for the **review month**. Edit Checks must have the attendance factor applied and include paid students.

Have available for SA to REVIEW (may be asked to Upload as REVIEW ATTACHMENT)

- ☐ All supporting documentation from the point-of-service for the claim submitted for the **review month** for the NSLP and SBP at all schools, including the point-of-service daily meal count sheets for the Special Milk Program (SMP) if applicable. These are the specific documents the claims preparer uses in the placement of the monthly claim for reimbursement.
- ☐ Individual site claims submitted for all schools for the **review month**.

Reminder: If rosters, tallied sheets, etc. are used, they must be totaled, maintained, and available for review showing that they support the edit check worksheet.

Section III: Nutritional Quality and Meal Pattern – Meal Components and Quantities

Upload as REVIEW ATTACHMENT

- ☐ Completed Menu Worksheet portion of a USDA-approved Menu Planning Tool for Certification (Menu Worksheet) for the first week of the **review month**, **for the selected breakfast school and all selected schools** for **lunch**, for each grade group (e.g. K-5, 6-8, K-8, 9-12) in that school. Include main menu items and all alternate menu choices. **Do not print the USDA menu worksheets**.

Have available for SA to REVIEW (may be asked to Upload as REVIEW ATTACHMENT)

For the review month, provide:

- ☐ Copies of menus for the review month for all selected schools.
- ☐ Production records for breakfast **at the selected schools**, and lunch from **each selected school** for the first week of the review month. Production records must be complete, listing all items offered to students, including milk varieties and condiments.
- ☐ Copies of detailed menus for all child nutrition programs for the first week of the review month for the following selected schools: name of schools. This menu must include all choices available to students. Include all milk varieties and vegetable subgroups.
- ☐ Standardized recipes for foods served at breakfast at the **selected schools**, and lunch from each selected school for the first week of the review month.
- ☐ Food labels and crediting documentation (Child Nutrition (CN) labels, product formulation statements to show crediting information and labels with whole grain-rich (WGR) information) for foods served on the breakfast at the **selected schools**, and lunch menu for the first week of the review month for **each selected school**.

For the week of the on-site review, provide:

- ☐ Copies of menus for the week of the on-site visit for all selected schools.
- ☐ Crediting information for the menu items served during the week of the on-site review if different than the review week.

Reminder: The CSDE strongly recommends that the menu for the onsite review week is the same as the week selected for the review month.

For all students at the selected schools provide:

- ☐ Completed Medical Statement for Meal Modifications in the School Nutrition Programs

Note: The Menu Documentation Organizational Tool (MDOT) is provided by the lead reviewer to organize all documents that support this area. Have these documents available in the order specified by the MDOT for the on-site portion of the review.

Section V: General Areas – Civil Rights

Upload as REVIEW ATTACHMENT

- ☐ Documentation of the most recent civil rights training conducted that pertains to the USDA Child Nutrition Programs for all staff including the agenda and sign-in sheets. The CSDE's civil rights training is available in the "Civil Rights for School Nutrition Programs" section of the CSDE's Civil Rights for Child Nutrition Programs webpage.
    - Food service workers
    - **Hearing officials**
    - Determining officials
    - Verifying officials
    - **Teachers involved with classroom meals**
    - Others involved in child nutrition programs
- ☐ The district's written procedures for handling Child Nutrition Civil Rights complaints. The district must have a written, formal procedure for receiving and processing complaints alleging discrimination within the Child Nutrition programs. All Civil Rights Complaints pertaining to the USDA Child Nutrition Programs **must** be reported to USDA Office of Civil Rights or the CSDE at the time they occur. For an example of a complaint procedure form, refer to the CSDE's document, Civil Rights Complaint Procedures for School Nutrition Programs. **Note:** This is not the same document as the district's human resources civil rights complaint procedures.

Have available for SA to REVIEW

Not applicable.

Section V: General Areas – On-site Monitoring

Upload as REVIEW ATTACHMENT

- ☐ The completed School Food Authority On-site Review Checklists for all schools under the school food authority (SFA). On-site monitoring must occur in all schools, including interschool agreements and alternative high schools, for the NSLP and for **50 percent of all SBP schools**, prior to the first day of the scheduled on-site Administrative Review.
- ☐ Documentation of follow-up and corrective action taken for any deficiencies noted.

Have available for SA to REVIEW

Not applicable.

Section V: General Areas – Local School Wellness Policy

Upload as REVIEW ATTACHMENT

- ☐ A copy of the current local school wellness policy.
- ☐ Wellness Committee minutes for school years 2025-26 and 2026-27.
- ☐ Summary of activities since Triennial Assessment was completed (if not listed in Wellness Committee minutes)

Have available for SA to REVIEW

Not applicable.

Section V: General Areas – Smart Snacks in School

Upload as REVIEW ATTACHMENT

If not Connecticut Healthy Food Certified

- ☐ Documentation for the first week of the **review month** of all foods and beverages sold a la carte at the selected schools. Acceptable documentation may be menus, production records, and related materials.
- ☐ Nutrition documentation for food items sold by the food service department to students in all schools in the district.
- ☐ Nutrition documentation for food items sold by entities outside of the school food service, such as school stores, PTAs, and fundraisers. Any documentation that contains the necessary information is acceptable including the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's Smart Snacks Calculator printouts, recipes, product specifications, highlighted items on the CSDE's List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages webpage, or other documentation.

If Connecticut Healthy Food Certified

All documentation submitted to the CSDE as part of the annual HFC documentation requirement will be reviewed off site. **Note:** This documentation is due by November 30 each year.

Have available for SA to REVIEW

Not applicable.

Section V: General Areas – Food Safety/Storage/Buy American

Upload as REVIEW ATTACHMENT

Food Safety and Storage

- ☐ Written food safety plan based on the Process Approach to HACCP Principles and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Include SOPs for in-classroom feeding, field trips, and other alternate points of service.
- ☐ Documentation of annual review of the food safety plan.
- ☐ Copies of the **two most recent food safety inspections** for each selected school being reviewed.
    - If one inspection was completed in the current school year**, provide copies of all inspections at the selected schools conducted during the current and previous (2025-26) school year**.
    - If no inspections were completed in the current school year**, provide copies of all inspections at the selected schools conducted during the previous (2025-26) school year.**
    - In the absence of two inspections, provide documentation of the written request made to the local health department for two inspections.
- ☐ The addresses of any off-site storage facilities.

Buy American

- ☐ If non-domestic products are used, provide documentation of justifications to support exception to the Buy American requirements.
    - Buy American Provisions Related to the Final Rule Titled, Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans
    - Buy American Justification Form
- ☐ If non-domestic products are used, and the item is on the Federal Acquisitions Regulations (FAR) non-available articles list provide documentation.
- ☐ If non-domestic products are used, provide documentation showing tracking the 10% threshold limit for non-domestic food purchases

Have available for SA to REVIEW

Not applicable.

Section V: General Areas – School Breakfast Program (SBP) and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Outreach

Upload as REVIEW ATTACHMENT

- ☐ Documentation of household notification of availability of the SBP prior to or at beginning of school year.
- ☐ Documentation of reminders provided throughout school year of availability of SBP.
- ☐ Documentation of household notification of availability of and location of free summer meals via the SFSP. **Note:** This is required even if your district does not offer Summer Meals. For more information, visit the CSDE's Summer Food Service Program webpage.
- ☐ **If outreach in these areas has not been completed, upload the plan of action for how this outreach will be conducted**.

Have available for SA to REVIEW

Not applicable.

Section V: General Areas – Professional Standards

Upload as REVIEW ATTACHMENT

- ☐ The spreadsheet currently used to track the training of all school nutrition staff members according to USDA Professional Standards. Refer to the CSDE's Professional Standards Tracker Log for School Nutrition Programs.
    - The spreadsheet must contain a complete list of the nutrition program employees and include the information below. **Note:** The list must be current as of the start of the on-site review.
        - Name
        - Date hired
        - Title/position
        - Employee status (full time, part time, acting, substitute, include average hours per week for each employee)
        - USDA professional standards employee category/position (nutrition program director, manager, or staff)
        - Professional development hours completed

Have available for SA to REVIEW (may be asked to Upload as REVIEW ATTACHMENT)

- ☐ For school nutrition program directors hired on or after **July 1, 2015**:
    - Highest level of education achieved.
    - Education achievement certificates (i.e., diplomas).
    - Document demonstrating years of school nutrition program experience.
    - Documentation of most current food safety certificate.
- ☐ Documentation to support the professional standards tracking tool (i.e., CSDE template or other tool or platform used):
    - Previous (school year 2025-26) and current (school year 2026-27) training sign-in sheets, attendance rosters, and agenda.
    - Certificates of completion for any off-site trainings being tracked.
    - Planned/scheduled trainings for the remainder of school year 2026-27.

Remember to track all training including civil rights, charging policy, offer vs serve, etc.

Afterschool Snack Program (ASP)

Upload as REVIEW ATTACHMENT

Not applicable.

Have available for SA to REVIEW

The following items for the **selected schools**:

- ☐ Documentation indicating that the approved afterschool care program offers educational or enrichment activities.
- ☐ Documentation indicating the time of snack service.
- ☐ Snack menu for the **review month**.
- ☐ Production records for snacks served during the first week of the **review month**. Production records are mandatory. ASP production records are available in the "Production Record Forms" section of the CSDE's Production Records for School Nutrition Programs webpage.
- ☐ Description of the procedure used to ensure accurate counting and claiming of snacks.
- ☐ Completed ASP on-site monitoring forms for the two required visits at the selected schools.
- ☐ All documentation available to support the claim for the review month for the selected schools
- ☐ **Programs that are not area eligible:** Roster of students receiving snacks for the first week of the **review month**.

The SFAs must conduct a documented self-review of each ASP operation twice per school year. The first self-review must be conducted during the first four weeks of ASP service each school year. The second self-review must be conducted prior to the end of each school year. This requirement is distinct from the SFA On-site Monitoring requirements described under "On-site Monitoring" in Section V: General Areas of this document.

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)

Upload as REVIEW ATTACHMENT

- ☐ FFVP claim submitted for the **selected month**.
- ☐ All supporting documentation for the above claim.
  - Invoices (anything claimed on your monthly report)
    - Fresh fruits/vegetables
    - Dips, paper, small equipment
    - Large equipment purchases (must have been approved prior to purchase)
  - Payroll records
    - Frontline staff
    - Administrative staff

Have available for SA to REVIEW

Not applicable.

Preschool Meals in the School Nutrition Programs

Upload as REVIEW ATTACHMENT

- ☐ If preschool children eat separately from other children in grades K-8, a separate preschool menu must be uploaded. For guidance on the preschool meal patterns, refer to the CSDE's Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

Have available for SA to REVIEW

- ☐ Completed *Administrative Review Onsite Infant and Preschool Meal Patterns Checklist for the School Nutrition Programs* for each site selected for an onsite meal service observation.

School Nutrition Special Events (Optional)

This section is an opportunity for you to promote and inform the SA about the great things that you are doing in your school nutrition programs. Attach relevant documents as applicable, such as photos, fliers, and other materials.

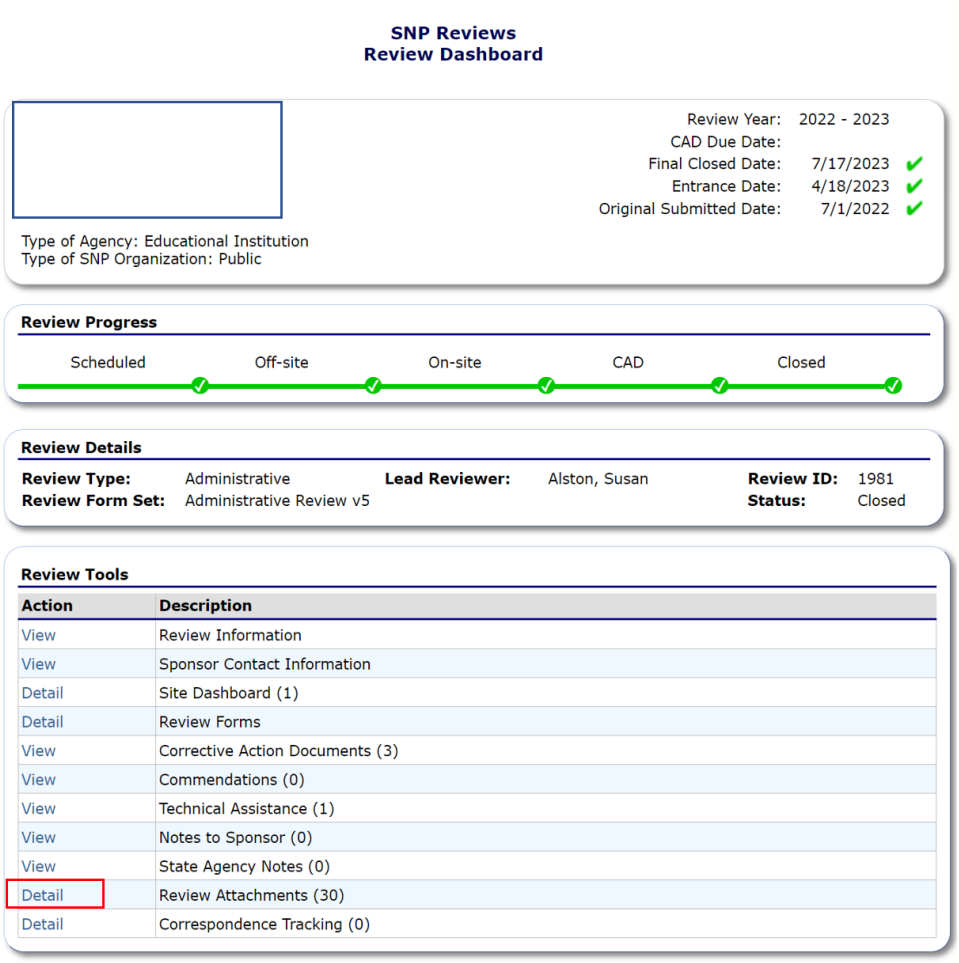
National School Breakfast Week
Describe any National School Breakfast Week activities below.

National School Lunch Week
Describe any National School Lunch Week activities below.

Special Events
Describe or list below any special activities or events involving the school nutrition programs (e.g., special promotions, lucky tray days). Attach relevant documents as desired, e.g., photos and fliers.

Instructions for Attaching Documents

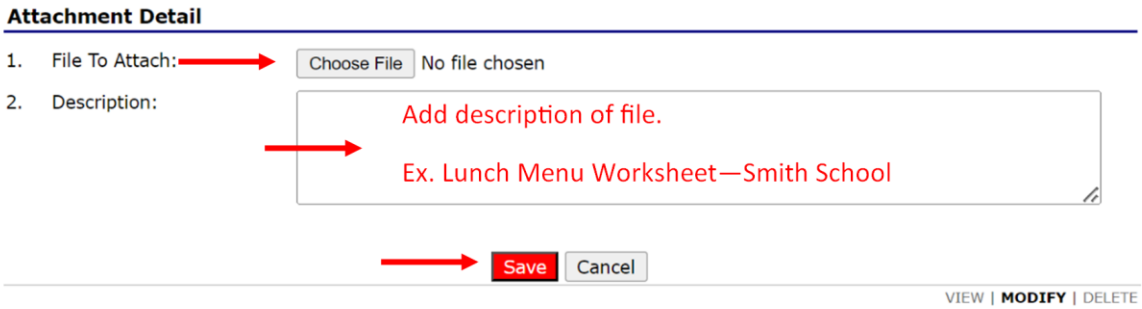
From the Review Dashboard, click on Detail next to Review Attachments.



1. Click on Add Attachment



2. Click on Choose File, add a description of the file, click on Save.



Suggested Trainings and Resources Prior to Administrative Review

Processing Free and Reduced-Price Meal Applications

Determining Eligibility in the School Nutrition Programs, Summer Food Service Program, and S-EBT ("Determining Eligibility Training" section of CSDE's Eligibility for Free and Reduced-price Meals and Free Milk in School Nutrition Programs): https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/eligibility-for-free-and-reduced-price-meals-and-free-milk-in-school-nutrition-programs/determining-eligibility-training

Direct Certification

Module 3: Direct Certification (CSDE's Training Program, Determining Eligibility in the School Nutrition Programs, Summer Food Service Program, and S-EBT): https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/eligibility-for-free-and-reduced-price-meals-and-free-milk-in-school-nutrition-programs/determining-eligibility-training

Verification

Verification Procedures for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE): https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/verification-procedures-for-school-nutrition-programs

Meal Counting and Claiming

Overview of Meal Counting and Claiming Process for Connecticut School Nutrition Programs (CSDE): https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/forms/mealcount/overview_meal_counting_claiming_snp.pdf

Nutritional Quality and Meal Pattern

Preschool Meal Pattern Training for the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE's Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage): https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-patterns-preschoolers-in-school-nutrition-programs/preschool-meal-pattern-training

What's in a Meal: Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE's Meal Pattern Training for School Nutrition Programs webpage): https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-pattern-training-materials

Meal Components and Quantities

Modules 1-15 of What's in a Meal: Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE's Meal Pattern Training for School Nutrition Programs webpage): https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-pattern-training-materials

Offer versus Serve

What's in a Meal Module 17: Offer versus Serve (OVS) in the National School Lunch Program (CSDE's Training Program, What's in a Meal: Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs): https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-pattern-training-materials

What's in a Meal Module 18: Offer versus Serve (OVS) in the School Breakfast Program (CSDE's Training Program, What's in a Meal: Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs): https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-pattern-training-materials

Procurement

Buy American Requirement for the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE training module): https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/procurement-for-school-nutrition-programs/buy-american-requirement#Training

Procurement Training (CSDE's Procurement for School Nutrition Programs webpage): https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/procurement-for-school-nutrition-programs/procurement-training

Financial Resource Management

Guide to Financial Management Requirements for the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE): https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/financialmanagement/guide_financial_management_requirements_snp.pdf

Healthy Food Certification

Complying with Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Training Program (CSDE's HFC webpage): https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/healthy-food-certification/hfc-training-program

AROT for the CEP

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted 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; or
2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov

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