



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Sponsors of the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs

FROM: John D. Frassinelli, Division Director
School Health, Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education

DATE: November 9, 2021, **Revised December 8, 2021**

SUBJECT: Operational Memorandum No. 03-22
Updated Requirements for Lunch Periods in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)

This memorandum supersedes the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) Operational Memorandum No. 10-19, *Requirements for Lunch Periods in the National School Lunch Program*, issued on June 12, 2019. This memorandum outlines the federal and state requirements for lunch periods in public schools, private schools, and residential child care institutions (RCCIs) that participate in the NSLP and the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP during school year (SY) 2021-2022.

Federal Requirements

The National School Lunch Act requires public schools, private schools, and RCCIs to serve nutritious lunches to children each school day. See 42 U.S.C. § 1751 et seq., 7 C.F.R. § 210.1. This law also applies to the SSO authorized to operate during SY 2021-2022. Half-days and early dismissal days are considered a school day.

Federal law, [7 C.F.R. § 210.10 \(1\)\(1\)](#), requires that all public schools, private schools, and RCCIs participating in the NSLP must offer lunches between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., unless the local educational agency (LEA) requests a waiver for alternate times and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) approves the LEA's waiver request. **Note:** For SY 2021-22, sponsors may submit a waiver for mealtime requirements to the CSDE to request approval to serve meals outside of the specified times outlined in the federal regulations.

State Requirements

[Section 10-221o](#) of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that all public school districts must provide a daily lunch period of at least 20 minutes for all full-day students. Section 10-221o applies only to the full school day. If a school schedules a half-day or has early dismissal due to weather or other unexpected reasons, a 20-minute lunch period is not required since the school is not operating for a full day. However, federal law still

requires public schools participating in NSLP (and SSO in SY 2021-2022) to serve nutritious lunches to children each school day. **Note:** This state statute does not apply to private schools and RCCIs.

Please share this memorandum with district administrators to ensure compliance with the federal and state regulations.

Questions may be directed to your [school nutrition consultant](#).

JDF:sky

Important: This is a numbered Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) operational memorandum that contains important program information. Please read carefully and retain for future reference. All CSDE operational memoranda are posted on the CSDE's [Operational Memoranda for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.