

Overview of Offer Versus Serve (OVS) in the National School Lunch Program

The requirements for implementing OVS at lunch are defined in [7 CFR 210.10\(e\)](#) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) regulations for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). OVS is a concept that applies to menu planning and the determination of reimbursable meals for grades K-12 in the NSLP, School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP. It allows students to decline a certain number of food components in the meal and select the foods they prefer to eat, while reducing food cost and waste. OVS must be implemented at lunch in senior high schools but is optional for all other grades. OVS is not allowed for preschoolers (ages 1-4) or the Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) of the NSLP.

Detailed guidance on OVS is available in the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [Offer versus Serve Guide for School Meals](#). For additional resources, visit the CSDE's [Offer versus Serve for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Overview of OVS at Lunch

All lunch menus must meet the daily and weekly [NSLP meal pattern requirements](#). The daily requirements are the minimum amount of the five food components. The weekly requirements include the juice limit (no more than 50 percent), minimum ounce equivalents (oz eq) of grains and meat/meat alternates (MMA), minimum vegetable subgroups, whole grain-rich (WGR) requirement (at least 80 percent of weekly grains must be WGR), and dietary specifications for calories, saturated fat, sodium and trans fat.

OVS applies to the daily meal pattern requirements. School food authorities (SFAs) must offer all five food components in at least the full serving (minimum daily amount) for each grade group in the NSLP meal pattern. For a reimbursable lunch under OVS, students must select at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables and the full serving of at least two other food components.




- A **food component** is one of the five food groups that comprise the reimbursable lunch, including milk, fruits, vegetables, grains, and meat/meat alternates (MMA).
- A **food item** is a specific food offered within the five food components. It may contain one or more food components. For example, a hamburger patty (MMA component) on a whole-grain bun (grains component) is one food item that contains two food components. A selection of three different $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings of fruit (such as peaches, applesauce, and pears) includes three food items from one food component (fruits). **Note:** This definition applies only to lunch. Food items credit differently for OVS at breakfast.

Table 1 summarizes the OVS requirements for lunch.

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Table 1. Summary of OVS requirements for lunch

SFA must offer 5 components ¹	Student must select
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MMA ² 2. Grains (at least 80 percent must be WGR) ³ 3. Vegetables ^{4,5,6} 4. Fruits ^{6,7} 5. Milk ⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables • Full serving of at least 2 other food components 
<p>¹ Each component must be at least the full serving (minimum daily amount) for each grade group.</p> <p>² The MMA component must be served in a main dish, or in a main dish and only one other food item.</p> <p>³ Grains that are not WGR must be enriched. For more information, refer to the CSDE’s resources, Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12, Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP, and Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP, and visit the “Grains Component for Grades K-12” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage.</p> <p>⁴ The vegetables component includes fresh vegetables, frozen vegetables, canned vegetables, rehydrated dried vegetables, and pasteurized 100 percent full-strength vegetable juice. Vegetables credit based on volume (cups), except raw leafy greens credit as half the volume served, e.g., 1 cup credits as ½ cup of vegetables. A serving of cooked vegetables must be drained. Dried vegetables (such as potato flakes and dried soup mix) credit based on their rehydrated volume and require a product formulation statement (PFS). Pureed vegetables in smoothies credit only as juice. For more information, visit the “Vegetables Component for Grades K-12” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage.</p> <p>⁵ The NSLP meal pattern requires minimum weekly servings of five vegetable subgroups (dark green, red/orange, starchy, legumes, and other). Students are not required to select each subgroup, but SFAs must provide the opportunity for students to select each subgroup. For more information, refer to the CSDE’s resource, Vegetable Subgroups in the NSLP.</p> <p>⁶ Vegetable juice cannot exceed half of the weekly vegetable offerings and fruit juice cannot exceed half of the weekly fruit offerings. The juice limit includes juice that is fresh, frozen, or made from concentrate; frozen juice pops made from 100 percent juice; pureed fruits or vegetables in fruit or vegetable smoothies; and juice from canned fruit served in 100 percent juice, unless the canned fruit is drained or served as an extra food. For more information, refer to the CSDE’s resources, Crediting Juice for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP and Crediting Smoothies for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP, and section 4 of the CSDE’s Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12.</p> <p>⁷ The fruits component includes fresh, frozen, canned (in juice, water, or light syrup), and dried fruits; and pasteurized full-strength fruit juice. Fruits credit based on volume (cups) except dried fruits credit as twice the volume served, e.g., ¼ cup of raisins credits as ½ cup of the fruits component. For more information, visit the “Fruits Component for Grades K-12” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage.</p> <p>⁸ SFAs must offer at least two different choices of low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk. At least one choice must be unflavored milk.</p>	

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For lunches to be reimbursable under OVS, SFAs must meet the criteria below. SFAs should plan lunch menus to make it easy for students to select (and food service staff to identify) reimbursable meals.

- **Menu planning:** Lunch menus must include the minimum daily serving of the five food components for each grade group. The grains, fruits, and vegetables components may be offered in more than one food item. The MMA component must be offered as a main dish, or a main dish and one other food item. Milk must be offered as a full 1-cup serving. For information on the NSLP meal patterns, visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage and refer to section 1 of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#).
- **Offering a component as two different servings:** If the lunch menu offers the component's minimum daily serving as two separate foods, students must take both foods to count as one component for OVS. For example, if the lunch menu for grades 9-12 provides the required 2 ounce equivalents (oz eq) of MMA from $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of low-fat yogurt (1 oz eq) and 1 ounce of low-fat cheese (1 oz eq), students must select both foods to count as the MMA component for OVS. The yogurt or cheese stick alone does not credit because each serving is less than 2 oz eq.
- **Larger amounts:** SFAs may serve larger amounts of any component if the weekly lunch menu does not exceed the USDA's dietary specifications (nutrition standards) for calories, saturated fat, trans fat, and sodium (refer to the dietary specifications, refer to section 6 of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#). **Note:** SFAs must serve additional grains on some days to meet the NSLP meal pattern's minimum weekly requirements for grades K-5 and 6-8. For more information, refer to section 4 of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#).
- **Unit pricing:** Meals must be priced as a unit, i.e., students pay the same price regardless of whether they select three, four, or five food components. SFAs must establish one price for a complete reimbursable lunch in the paid meal category and one price for a complete reimbursable lunch in the reduced-price meal category. SFAs may set different unit prices (tiered pricing) for various combinations of foods offered as a reimbursable lunch. However, all students, including those eligible for free and reduced-price meals, must be allowed to select any reimbursable lunch. Lunches with a higher unit price must be available at no cost for all free-eligible students, and at no more than 40 cents for all reduced-eligible students.



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- **Required signage:** SFAs must post two different types of cafeteria signage that clearly communicates the food items for each daily menu choice and indicates what students must select for a reimbursable meal. The first type of signage must identify all planned reimbursable lunches (i.e., all offered full meals), including the food items and portions and any choices or combination of choices available within each component. This signage must be near or at the beginning of each serving line. The second type of signage must indicate what food components and amounts students may select for a reimbursable lunch with OVS, based on the planned daily menu for each grade group. This signage must be posted at all applicable points in the serving line where the food items are available. For example, if the SFA offers all fruit and vegetable choices for grades 9-12 in $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings, the lunch menu and cafeteria signage must indicate that students may select up to two servings of fruits and two servings of vegetables with each meal. For more information and examples of signage, refer to the CSDE's *Signage Requirements for the NSLP and SBP* and section 1 of the CSDE's *Offer versus Serve Guide for School Meals*, and visit the "Signage and Posters" section of the CSDE's OVS webpage.
- **Required student selections:** Students must select at least three of the five food components including at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables and the minimum daily serving of at least two other food components. A student's selection of less than $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables does not count as a food item for OVS. A best practice to encourage students' selections of reimbursable meals is offering all fruits and vegetables in $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings.
- **Declining foods:** Students may decline any one or two of the required food components, except for at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables. Students may take smaller portions of the declined food components. However, selections of less than the full serving do not count toward the OVS requirements. For example, if a lunch menu for grades K-5 provides the required 1 oz eq of grains from $\frac{1}{2}$ oz eq of brown rice and $\frac{1}{2}$ oz eq whole-grain roll, students must select both items to credit as the full grains component for OVS. The brown rice or roll alone do not credit because each serving is less than 1 oz eq.
- **Selecting more than the full serving:** SFAs may allow students to select more than the full serving of any component. However, selections of additional servings from the same component count as only one component for OVS. For example, a lunch menu for grades 9-12 provides 3 oz eq of grains from 1 cup of brown rice (2 oz eq) and a 1-ounce whole-grain roll (1 oz eq). If a student selects both food items, they credit as only one component (grains) for OVS. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables and the full serving of at least one other component.

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Table 2. Offering the full component as two food items for grades K-5 and 6-8

Planned menu items (meal component and minimum daily amount)	Required student selection for full component (minimum daily amount)
Fruits (F): ½ cup ¼ cup of peaches ¼ cup of grapes	Students must take both food items to credit as the full serving of F. Students could select ¼ cup of F if they also select at least ½ cup of V and the full serving of at least two components.
Vegetables (V): ¾ cup ½ cup of carrots ¼ cup of tomatoes	Students must take both food items to credit as the full serving of V. The carrots meet the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables. Students could select ½ cup of carrots if they also select the full serving of at least two other components, one of which could be ½ cup of F. Students could select ¼ cup of tomatoes if they also select at least ¼ cup of F and the full serving of at least two other components.
Meat/meat alternates (MMA): 1 oz eq 1 tablespoon of peanut butter (½ oz eq) ¼ cup of yogurt (½ oz eq)	Students must take both food items to credit as the full serving of MMA. Students could select either the peanut butter or yogurt alone if they also select at least ½ cup of F or V and the full serving of at least two other components.
Grains (G): 1 oz eq Two packages of whole-grain crackers (½ oz eq each)	Students must take both food items to credit as the full serving of G. Students could select one package of crackers if they also select at least ½ cup of F or V and the full serving of at least two other components.



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Table 3. Offering the full component as two food items for grades 9-12

Planned menu items (meal component and minimum daily amount)	Required student selection for full component (minimum daily amount)
F: 1 cup ½ cup of peaches ½ cup of grapes	Students must take both food items to credit as the full serving of F. However, each ½-cup serving meets the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables. Students could select ½ cup of F if they also select the full serving of at least two components, one of which could be 1 cup of V. ¹
V: 1 cup ½ cup of green peppers ½ cup of tomatoes	Students must take both food items to credit as the full serving of V. However, each ½-cup serving meets the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables. Students could select ½ cup of V if they also select the full serving of at least two components, one of which could be 1 cup of F. ¹
MMA: 2 oz eq ½ cup of low-fat yogurt (1 oz eq) 1 ounce low-fat cheese stick (1 oz eq)	Students must take both food items to credit as the full serving of MMA. Students could select either the yogurt or cheese alone if they also select at least ½ cup of F or V and the full serving of at least two components.
G: 2 oz eq ½ cup of whole grain-rich pasta (1 oz eq) 1 ounce whole-grain roll (1 oz eq)	Students must take both food items to credit as the full serving of G. Students could select either the pasta or roll alone if they also select at least ½ cup of F or V and the full serving of at least two components.
¹ SFAs must provide clear signage informing students that they may select one or two fruit servings and one or two vegetable servings (refer to the CSDE’s <i>Signage Requirements for the NSLP and SBP</i>).	

Examples of OVS at Lunch

Tables 4 and 5 show examples of OVS at lunch. For additional guidance and more OVS examples, refer to the CSDE’s *Offer versus Serve Guide for School Meals*.



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Table 4. OVS examples at lunch for grades K-5 and 6-8

Planned lunch menu		Meal pattern components		
Turkey (1 ounce) and low-fat cheese (1 ounce)		MMA, 2 oz eq		
Whole-wheat bread, 2 slices (1 ounce each)		G, 2 oz eq		
Broccoli florets, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup		V, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup		
Cantaloupe wedges, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup		F, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup		
Choice of low-fat or fat-free milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup		
<p>Students must select at least 3 of the 5 food components offered, including at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least 2 other components.</p>				
Student selects	Food items	Full food components <i>Must be at least 2</i>	At least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of F or V <i>Must be "Yes"</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Turkey and cheese sandwich (MMA, G) Milk (M)	2	3	No	No. The meal contains three full components (MMA, G, and M) but is missing at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of F or V.
Turkey and cheese sandwich (MMA, G) Cantaloupe (F)	2	3	Yes	Yes. The meal contains three full components (MMA, G, and F).
Turkey and cheese sandwich (MMA, G) Broccoli (V)	2	3	Yes	Yes. The meal contains three full components (MMA, G, and V).
Broccoli (V) Cantaloupe (F) Milk (M)	3	3	Yes	Yes. The meal contains three full components (V, F, and M).
Turkey and cheese sandwich (MMA, G) Broccoli (V) Milk (M)	3	4	Yes	Yes. The meal contains four full components (MMA, G, V, and M).
Turkey and cheese sandwich (MMA, G) Cantaloupe (F) Milk (M)	3	4	Yes	Yes. The meal contains four full components (MMA, G, F, and M).

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Table 5. OVS examples at lunch for grades 9-12

Planned lunch menu		Meal pattern components		
Turkey (1 ounce) and low-fat cheese (1 ounce)		MMA, 2 oz eq		
Whole-wheat bread, 2 ounces		G, 2 oz eq		
Broccoli florets, 1 cup		V, 1 cup		
Cantaloupe wedges, 1 cup		F, 1 cup		
Choice of low-fat or fat-free milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup		
Students must select at least 3 of the 5 food components offered, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least 2 other components.				
Student selects	Food items	Full food components <i>Must be at least 2</i>	At least ½ cup of F or V <i>Must be "Yes"</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Turkey and cheese sandwich (MMA, G) Milk (M)	2	3	No	No. The meal contains three full components (MMA, G, and M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F or V.
Turkey and cheese sandwich (MMA, G) Cantaloupe (F)	2	3	Yes	Yes. The meal contains three full components (MMA, G, and F).
Turkey and cheese sandwich (MMA, G) Broccoli (V)	2	3	Yes	Yes. The meal contains three full components (MMA, G, and V).
Broccoli (V) Cantaloupe (F) Milk (M)	3	3	Yes	Yes. The meal contains three full components (V, F, and M).
Turkey and cheese sandwich (MMA, G) Broccoli (V) Milk (M)	3	4	Yes	Yes. The meal contains four full components (MMA, G, V, and M).
Turkey and cheese sandwich (MMA, G) Cantaloupe (F) Milk (M)	3	4	Yes	Yes. The meal contains four full components (MMA, G, F, and M).

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Strategies for OVS Implementation

The three critical elements for successful OVS implementation include strategic menu planning, clear communication, and staff training. The following guidelines help SFAs incorporate these elements for successful OVS implementation.

Menu planning

SFAs decide how to offer the required food components for OVS at lunch. These decisions are important because they determine the foods and amounts that students must take for a reimbursable meal with OVS. SFAs can increase the likelihood that students will select reimbursable meals by using menu planning strategies that encourage students to take at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables and the full serving (minimum daily amount) of at least two other components.

SFAs should be consistent with menu planning and crediting foods to help minimize confusion among students and school food service staff. For example, decide whether to credit chickpeas in a salad as the vegetables component or the MMA component, then credit them the same way for all lunch menus. Consistent crediting makes it easier for students to understand what foods they can choose and helps staff to identify reimbursable meals.

The best practices strategies below for MMA, grains, fruits, and vegetables help simplify the menu planning process and make it easier for students to select (and school food service staff to identify) reimbursable lunches with OVS.

Strategies for MMA and grains

- **Offer combination entrees:** Offer combination entrees (such as pizza and a cheeseburger on a bun) that provide the full serving of the grains component and MMA component. Students who choose the entree have already selected two full components, and only need to select at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables for a reimbursable meal.
- **Offer components as one food item:** Offer the full serving of the grains component and MMA component as one food item instead of two, so any student selection credits as a full component for OVS. For example, offer a 2-oz eq package of WGR crackers for grades 9-12 instead of two packages that are each 1 oz eq.
- **Package foods with less than the full serving together:** When a food item is less than the full serving of the grains or MMA components, package it together with another food items so students must take both. For example, wrap a 1-oz eq yogurt ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) and a 1-oz eq cheese stick together to provide 2 oz eq for grades 9-12, or wrap two $\frac{1}{2}$ -oz eq packages of crackers together to provide 1 oz eq for grades K-5 and 6-8.



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Strategies for fruits and vegetables

- **Offer all vegetable choices in ½-cup servings:** Offer all grades a variety of vegetables in ½-cup servings and allow students to select up to two servings. This makes it easier for students to meet the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables. **Note:** This menu planning approach provides an additional ¼ cup of daily vegetables for grades K-5 and 6-8. SFAs may serve larger amounts of any component if the menu does not exceed the weekly dietary specifications. For information on meeting the dietary specifications, refer to section 6 of the CSDE’s *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12*.
- **Offer all fruits in ½-cup servings:** Offer all grades a variety of fruits in ½-cup servings. Allow students in grades K-5 and 6-8 to select at least one serving. Allow students in grades 9-12 to select at least two servings. This makes it easier for students to meet the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.
- **Plan fruit and vegetable choices to meet the weekly juice limit:** Plan fruit and vegetable choices to meet the weekly juice limit and review lunch menus for compliance. Provide clear information on lunch menus and cafeteria signage that instructs students on the amount of juice they can select with each lunch. **Note:** Serving more fruit than juice provides the best nutrition for students. Juice is more calorie dense than whole fruits and vegetables and does not provide the same nutritional benefits.

Communication

SFAs must clearly communicate the daily menu options to food service staff and students. Lunch menus and cafeteria signage must indicate how much food to select from each component for a reimbursable meal (refer to “[Required signage](#)” in this document). Food service staff must understand the OVS requirements and be able to accurately identify reimbursable meals at the service (refer to “[Staff training](#)” in this document).



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Staff training

OVS training is critical for SFAs to ensure that staff implement correct meal counting and claiming with OVS. School food service staff must understand the OVS requirements, be able to help students select the required quantities of the food components for reimbursable meals, and be able to accurately identify reimbursable meals at the point of service. The point of service is the point in the food service operation where staff can make an accurate determination that a reimbursable free, reduced-price, or paid meal has been served to an eligible child. This is typically at the end of the serving line after the child has had the chance to receive all components of the reimbursable meal.

Training must also ensure that all staff implement correct meal counting and claiming procedures with OVS. For more information, visit the CSDE's [Meal Counting and Claiming for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

SFAs should conduct OVS training at least annually for servers, cashiers, and other applicable food service staff. Training is also important whenever changes occur to the school nutrition programs, such as new staff, new grade configurations, and new menu items. OVS training is most effective when SFAs use actual examples from their own school menus.



In addition to regular OVS training, a recommended best practice for cafeteria managers is to conduct a daily pre-service meeting with all applicable staff to review each menu choice and what students must select for a reimbursable meal. This helps to ensure that all staff (including substitutes) can identify reimbursable meals.

OVS training meets the USDA's professional standards requirements for annual training. OVS is listed under the subcategory of "Serving Food (2200)" for the key area of "Operations (2000)" in the USDA's list of training topics for professional standards: 2220 Offer versus Serve and 2240 Serving Lines. For more information, refer to the USDA's resources, [Professional Standards Training Topics](#) and [Guide to Professional Standards for School Nutrition Programs](#), and visit the CSDE's [Professional Standards for School Nutrition Professionals](#) webpage.

Job-specific training is also required for non-food service employees whose responsibilities include duties related to the operation of school nutrition programs, such as teachers, teachers' aides, and other applicable staff who conduct in-classroom meal counting and claiming. For guidance on OVS with classroom meals, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Requirements for Classroom Meals in the NSLP and SBP](#).

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Resources

Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Credit_Enriched_Grains_SNP.pdf

Crediting Foods for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Crediting Juice for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Credit_Juice_SNP_grades_K-12.pdf

Crediting Smoothies for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Credit_Smoothies_SNP_grades_K-12.pdf

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs>

Fruits Component for Grades K-12 (CSDE's Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Documents#Fruits>

Grains Component for Grades K-12 (CSDE's Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Documents#Grains>

Meal Counting and Claiming for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Counting-and-Claiming-for-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Meat/Meat Alternates Component for Grades K-12 (CSDE's Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Documents#MMA>

Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/WGR_Requirement_SNP_grades_K-12.pdf

Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Menu-Planning-Guide-for-School-Meals>

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National School Lunch Program (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/National-School-Lunch-Program>

Offer versus Serve for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Offer-versus-Serve-for-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Offer versus Serve Guidance for the NSLP and SBP (USDA):

<https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/cn/SP41-2015av2.pdf>

Offer versus Serve Guide for School Meals (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/OVS/OVS_guide_SNP.pdf

Offer versus Serve Materials (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/offer-versus-serve-national-school-lunch-program-posters>

Offer versus Serve Tip Sheet for School Food Service Managers: National School Lunch Program (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/offer-vs-serve-lunch-program-tip-sheet>

Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Program-Guidance-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Requirements for Classroom Meals in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Forms/MealCount/Requirements_Classroom_Meals_NSLP_SBP.pdf

Signage Requirements for the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/OVS/Signage_Requirements_NSLP_SBP.pdf

USDA Regulations for the NSLP: Offer versus serve for grades K through 12 (7 CFR 210.10(e)):

[https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-II/subchapter-A/part-210#p-210.10\(e\)](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-II/subchapter-A/part-210#p-210.10(e))

Vegetables Component for Grades K-12 (CSDE's Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Documents#Vegetables>

What's in a Meal Module 15: Offer versus Serve (OVS) in the NSLP (CSDE's Training Program, What's in a Meal: National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Pattern-Training-Materials>

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For more information, refer to the CSDE's *Offer versus Serve Guide for School Meals*, and visit the CSDE's **OVS** webpage or contact the **school nutrition programs staff** at the Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/OVS/Overview_OVS_NSLP.pdf.

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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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The Connecticut State Department of Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action 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 race; color; religious creed; age; sex; pregnancy; sexual orientation; workplace hazards to reproductive systems, gender identity or expression; marital status; national origin; ancestry; retaliation for previously opposed discrimination or coercion, intellectual disability; genetic information; learning disability; physical disability (including, but not limited to, blindness); mental disability (past/present history thereof); military or veteran status; status as a victim of domestic violence; or criminal record in state employment, 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: Attorney Louis Todisco, Connecticut State Department of Education, by mail 450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, CT 06103-1841; or by telephone 860-713-6594; or by email louis.todisco@ct.gov.