

## The School Lunch Tray: May 18, 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.

### **Action Items**

- Request to Extend the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or School Breakfast Program (SBP) into the Summer Months (July and August): Due June 10, 2022
- Reminder: School Year 2022-23 Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Statement due July 1, 2022
- Reminder: Full-service Interschool Agreements for School Year 2022-23 due July 1, 2022

### **Need to Know**

- Notifying CSDE about Unanticipated School Closures
- Reminder: Allowable Beverages in Connecticut Public Schools
- New CSDE Resource: Summary Chart: Federal and State Laws for Beverages in Connecticut Public Schools, Private Schools, and Residential Child Care Institutions
- Resource Roundup: Allowable Beverages in Connecticut Public Schools

### **Good to Know**

- May is Food Allergy Awareness Month
- Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) S.T.A.R. Webinar, May 26, 2022: Strategies for Managing Food Allergies in Schools

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.



# The School Lunch Tray: May 18, 2022

## Action Items

### **Request to Extend the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or School Breakfast Program (SBP) into the Summer Months (July and August): Due June 10, 2022**

Local educational agencies (LEAs) may serve reimbursable lunches and/or breakfasts through an extension of the NSLP and/or SBP during the summer months (beyond June 30, 2022) if one of the following two criteria apply: 1) the school year is extended; or 2) an official required academic summer school program is in place.

**Note:** The USDA Nationwide waiver allowing LEAs to operate the Seamless Summer Option of the NSLP when school is open during the regular school year ends on June 30, 2022. Therefore, beginning on July 1, 2022, LEAs requesting an extension of the NSLP and/or SBP during summer 2022 must consider the following:

- only students enrolled in the academic summer school program can receive meals;
- for students not directly certified, free and reduced-price meal applications must be approved to determine student eligibility;
- meals are claimed as free, reduced price, or paid based on student eligibility;
- meals must be charged at the correct price (reduced price \$.30 breakfast or \$.40 lunch, district established paid lunch price);
- multiple meal distribution and non-congregate meals are **not** allowed;
- proper point-of-service meal counts are required (based on student eligibility); and
- sites approved to operate the Community Eligibility Provision are eligible to request an extension and can utilize their approved claiming percentages to claim meals.

To be eligible to serve and claim reimbursable meals during summer due to an extension of the school year or a required academic summer school, **interested LEAs must submit an email requesting an extension of their NSLP and/or SBP** to Susan Alston at [susan.alston@ct.gov](mailto:susan.alston@ct.gov) by **June 10, 2022**. The e-mail must include: 1) the schools requesting the extension; 2) the reason for the extension, e.g., academic summer school; and 3) the start and end date of the program.

**Note:** To submit July and/or August claims for reimbursement for the approved sites and dates, the LEA must first have an **approved** school year (SY) 2022-23 Sponsor Agreement. The CSDE will be providing a future e-mail with instructions on updating the SY 2022-23 Sponsor Agreement. **The LEA must submit the online agreement for CSDE approval by July 30, 2022, to submit the July claim for reimbursement.**

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

### **Reminder: School Year 2022-23 Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Statement due July 1, 2022**

As indicated in [Operational Memorandum No. 05-22: Requirements for Submitting the Healthy Food Certification \(HFC\) Statement for School Year 2022-23](#), all public school sponsors of the NSLP must complete the annual HFC Statement and upload the board of education's meeting minutes by **July 1, 2022**, using the CSDE's [Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs](#) (CNP System). The CSDE's [Instructions for Submitting Connecticut's Healthy Food Certification Statement for School Year 2022-23](#) provide important information and specific steps for completing the HFC Statement in the CNP System. For questions about the HFC application process, please visit the "[Apply](#)" section of the HFC webpage or contact Susan Fiore at [susan.fiore@ct.gov](mailto:susan.fiore@ct.gov).

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### **Reminder: Full-service Interschool Agreements for School Year 2022-23 due July 1, 2022**

Sponsors that sell USDA meals or snacks to another district or school during school year 2022-23 must complete and submit an interschool agreement to the CSDE. Email completed interschool agreements to Sean Fogarty at [sean.fogarty@ct.gov](mailto:sean.fogarty@ct.gov).

- The **Full-service Interschool Agreement form** must be submitted to the CSDE by **July 1, 2022**. A public school or district (recipient site) that receives meals under contract from a HFC district (providing sponsor) can choose to certify for HFC through this interschool agreement (section 3). For the sponsoring district to receive HFC payments for any recipient sites, the interschool agreement must be submitted to the CSDE by **July 1, 2022**. If the CSDE receives the interschool agreement after this date, the recipient site's lunch counts will not be included in the total number of reimbursable lunches that are used by the CSDE to determine HFC payments for school year 2022-23.
- The **Recipient Site Vended Interschool Agreements** must be submitted to the CSDE at least two weeks before the start of the school year, but no later than **August 30, 2022**.

The interschool agreement forms are available under "I" on the CSDE's [Forms for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. For more information, review [Operational Memorandum No. 04-22: Interschool Agreements for School Year 2021-22](#).

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## Need to Know

### Notifying CSDE about Unanticipated School Closures

As a reminder, school food authorities (SFAs) must notify their [school nutrition consultant](#) if a school closes due to an unanticipated school closure and the district will provide meals to the students impacted by the school closure. This information was originally posted in the [January 5, 2022, School Lunch Tray](#).

SFAs that offer meal service during unanticipated school closures during the current COVID public health emergency must **maintain documentation** to support claims for reimbursement using the CSDE's form, [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 all forms on file. *Please do not submit this form to the CSDE unless requested.*

SFAs that provide meals to children during unanticipated school closures must be approved for all applicable waivers. The following waivers must be reviewed in the CNP System, to ensure that they are updated and approved by the CSDE, as applicable. Note that the waiver section of the CNP System is closed and cannot be viewed without contacting the SFA's [school nutrition consultant](#). This includes the waivers below.

- Seamless Summer Option (SSO) Allow Non-congregate Meal Service – through 6/30/2022
  - SSO Allow Parents and Guardians to Pick Up Meals for Children – through 6/30/2022
  - SSO Waiver of Meal Service Time Requirements – through 6/30/2022
  - SSO Allow Meal Pattern Flexibility – through 6/30/2022
  - SSO Allow Offer Versus Serve Flexibility for Senior High Schools – through 6/30/22
  - SSO Allow Service of Meals at School Sites during Unanticipated School Closures in School Year 2021-2022 – through 6/30/22 (*needed only if serving from a school*)
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### Reminder: Allowable Beverages in Connecticut Public Schools

Since July 1, 2006, all beverages available for sale to students in Connecticut public schools are required to comply with the state beverage statute ([C.G.S. Section 10-221q](#)). This statute applies to all beverages, including beverages sold *as part of and separately from* reimbursable meals and ASP snacks.

Only five categories of beverages are allowed: 1) milk; 2) 100 percent juice; 3) nondairy milk substitutes; 4) beverages containing only water and juice; and 5) water. Each category must meet specific nutrition requirements. For more information, refer to the CSDE's [Allowable Beverages in Connecticut Public Schools](#) and visit the CSDE's [Beverage Requirements](#) webpage.

**Noncompliant beverages:** Coffee and tea (regular, herbal, decaffeinated, and iced), soda, and any other beverages that do not comply with the state beverage statute **cannot** be sold to students on school premises unless the school meets all conditions below.

1. The local board of education or school governing authority has voted to allow beverage exemptions.
2. The beverage sales meet the three exemption criteria defined by C.G.S section 10-221q:
  - a. the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend;
  - b. the sale is at the location of the event; and
  - c. the beverages are not sold from a vending machine or school store.
3. The event's selling timeframe complies with the state competitive foods regulations ([Sections 10-215b-1 and 10-215b-23 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies](#)), i.e., sales cannot occur from 30 minutes before up through 30 minutes after the operation of any CNPs. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Overview of Connecticut Competitive Foods Regulations](#), and visit the CSDE's [Competitive Foods in Schools](#) webpage.

Remember that noncompliant beverages can **never** be sold to students from vending machines or school stores.

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### New CSDE Resource: Summary Chart: Federal and State Laws for Beverages in Connecticut Public Schools, Private Schools, and Residential Child Care Institutions

Connecticut schools and institutions must ensure that all beverages offered for sale to students comply with the applicable federal and state laws. The CSDE's new resource, [Summary Chart: Federal and State Laws for Beverages in Connecticut Public Schools, Private Schools, and Residential Child Care Institutions](#), summarizes the beverage requirements that apply to each type of Connecticut school and institution. These laws determine what and when beverages may be sold or given to students. They also regulate the accrual of income from beverage sales. Schools can use this summary chart to determine which laws apply, and what and when beverages may be sold or given to students.

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### Resource Roundup: Allowable Beverages in Connecticut Public Schools

The CSDE's resource, [Allowable Beverages in Connecticut Public Schools](#), summarizes the requirements for beverages that are sold to students in public schools. This document includes:

- the nutrition standards for each of the five allowable beverage categories, based on the stricter requirements of the state beverage statute (C.G.S section 10-221q) and the USDA's Smart Snacks beverage standards;
- examples of noncompliant beverages;
- the requirements for beverage exemptions;
- an overview of how the state competitive foods regulations apply to beverages; and
- the requirements for beverage vending machines;

In addition to the direct link above, this document is available on the CSDE's [Beverage Requirements](#) webpage.

## Good to Know

### May is Food Allergy Awareness Month

May is Food Allergy Awareness Month. For information and resources, visit the [Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America's \(AAFA\) webpage](#).

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### Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) S.T.A.R. Webinar, May 26, 2022: Strategies for Managing Food Allergies in Schools

Now more than ever, school nutrition operators and school communities need ongoing support and a well-formed plan on how to manage food allergies in schools. This webinar will highlight current food allergy resources available for operators, as well as provide an overview of food allergies, the top food allergies, how to manage food allergies, and considerations and circumstances for special diets. By applying the information provided, operators can be well equipped to ensure safety procedures are in place to manage food allergy issues that may arise in schools.

- *Date and time:* Thursday, May 26, 2022, 3:00-4:00 p.m.
- *Registration:* [https://theicn.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_DMr8YP1pRNqEKRWnWBur6A](https://theicn.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_DMr8YP1pRNqEKRWnWBur6A)
- *SNA Key Areas:* 2 – Operations
- *USDA Professional Standards Codes:* 2620 – Practice general food safety procedures, 2640– Food Safety Culture
- *Learning Objectives:* Identify current food allergy resources that are available for school nutrition operators. Define food allergy. Identify the top food allergens. Recognize the legal and psychological reasons for accommodating food allergies. Recognize common symptoms of a food allergy reaction and how to respond appropriately.



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\\_05\\_18\\_2022.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SLT/2022/SLT_05_18_2022.pdf).

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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;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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