

The School Lunch Tray: September 14, 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

- Mandatory Training Session for National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Sponsors Whose **Applications are Not Approved**: Thursday, September 15, 2022
- Important Reminder: Updating the School Year (SY) 2022-23 Sponsor Agreement for School Nutrition Programs

Need to Know

- New CSDE Training Program: Complying with Healthy Food Certification (HFC)
- CSDE Verification Webinar: September 23, 2022
- Distribution of Pandemic EBT Food Benefits to More Than 71,650 Schoolchildren
- CT Grown for CT Kids Week October 3-7, 2022
- Resource Roundup: Calendar for Completing Verification

Good to Know

- USDA Webinar: Supply Chain Assistance Best Practices, September 26, 2022
- Meal Talk: Taste-Test Events Webinar: October 12, 2022

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.



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Action Items

Mandatory Training Session for National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Sponsors Whose Applications are Not Approved: Thursday, September 15, 2022

Due to unprecedented challenges with National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Sponsor Applications being completed correctly for approval, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is hosting a **mandatory training session on Thursday, September 15, 2022, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m., for all NSLP Sponsors that have not received approval** for their online application to date.

Prior to the training, please review the CSDE's instruction manual in detail, [Updating the Sponsor Application for School Nutrition Programs](#).

Do not contact your county consultant to see if your application is approved. Check your online application (refer to the screenshot below).



If online application has not been approved, you are required to attend or designate an alternate who is responsible for updating the online system. Join the training by using the link below.

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 292 661 360 022

Passcode: 9SFdpF

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Or call in (audio only)

[+1 860-840-2075,,387004683#](#) United States, Hartford

Phone Conference ID: 387 004 683#

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Important Reminder: Updating the School Year (SY) 2022-23 Sponsor Agreement for School Nutrition Programs

The school year 2022-23 Sponsor Agreements must be completed and submitted by **Friday, September 16, 2022**. For more information, please refer to [School Lunch Tray from August 31, 2022](#).

Note: National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Afterschool Snack Program, and Special Milk Program claims for July and/or August **cannot** be entered or submitted without an approved agreement.

Applications that have been submitted and are ready for approval will have a **Packet Submitted Date** and will show **“The Application Packet is currently under review by the State and is unavailable for changes”** on the 2022-23 Application Packet dashboard. The school nutrition programs staff urge SFAs to review the [Updating the School Year 2022-2023 Sponsor Agreement for School Nutrition Programs](#) to troubleshoot application issues before contacting their county consultant.

School Nutrition Programs Connecticut

Applications | Claims | Compliance | Reports | Security | Search | Programs | Year | Help | Log Out

Applications > Application Packet > School Year: 2022 - 2023

2022 - 2023 Application Packet

Packet Submitted Date: 09/06/2022
Packet Approved Date:
Packet Original Approval Date:
Packet Status: Submitted for Approval

The Application Packet is currently under review by the State and is unavailable for changes.

Packet Assigned To: Susan Alston

Action	Form Name	Latest Version	Status
View Revise	✓ Sponsor Application	Original	Approved
Details	✓ FSMC Contract List		1 Contract
Details	Meal Pattern Compliance Dashboard		Pending Validation
Details	✓ Checklist Summary (13)		
Details	Application Packet Notes		
View Modify	SSO Reimbursement at SFSP Rates Dashboard		Complete

Site Applications	Approved	Pending	Return for Correction	Denied	Withdrawn/ Closed	Error	Total Applications
School Nutrition Program	4	3	0	0	0	0	7
Seamless Summer Option	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

< Back Submit for Approval **Approve** Return Deny Withdraw Packet

Show Packet History

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Need to Know

New CSDE Training Program: Complying with Healthy Food Certification (HFC)

The CSDE is pleased to announce a new training program for HFC public schools, **Complying with Healthy Food Certification**. This training program is a series of recorded modules that provide guidance on how to meet the requirements for HFC under Section 10-215f of the Connecticut General Statutes and the related state laws for competitive foods in schools.

- Module 1: Introduction to Training and Healthy Food Certification (HFC)
- Module 2: HFC Requirements
- Module 3: Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS)
- Module 4: Evaluating Foods for CNS Compliance
- Module 5: Laws for Foods and Beverages in HFC Schools
- Module 6: Fundraisers

This training program is required for the district's designated HFC contact person and is strongly recommended for all individuals who coordinate sales of competitive foods to students on school premises. For more information and to access the training modules, visit the "[Related Resources](#)" section of the CSDE's [HFC](#) webpage.

CSDE Verification Webinar: September 23, 2022

The CSDE is offering a Verification Webinar on **September 23, 2022, from 1:30 to 3:00 pm**. As a reminder, all sponsors that process free and reduced-price meal applications must conduct the formal verification process which begins on October 1 of each year.

- *Target audience:* Verifying officials, new directors and other staff who want a refresher on the topic.
- *Overview:* The training will cover the following areas: a brief overview of the Eligibility Manual for School Meals; an overview of the verification process; the FNS 742 Verification Collection Report including Medicaid; ameliorative action; the CSDE's Verification Calendar; and records retention.

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 264 416 865 977

Passcode: **daZvwA**

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Phone Conference ID: 393 361 196#

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Registration is not required. Please email verification questions in advance of the training to Teri Dandeneau at teri.dandeneau@ct.gov. This webinar will be recorded.

Distribution of Pandemic EBT Food Benefits to More Than 71,650 Schoolchildren

Special food assistance benefits under the [Pandemic EBT \(P-EBT\) program](#) were distributed last week to more than 71,650 schoolchildren who are clients of the Department of Social Services (DSS) and who qualified for P-EBT benefits during the 2021-22 school year. Over \$3.4 million in benefits were provided statewide, with an average benefit of \$49.50 per student.

This is the first distribution of the larger \$118.1 million in food benefits going to over 287,000 schoolchildren in Connecticut covering the 2021-22 school year and subsequent summer period through the federal P-EBT program. Specifically:

- On August 29, DSS began depositing P-EBT benefits onto the existing electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards to households of over 71,650 schoolchildren currently enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); Temporary Family Assistance (TFA); or HUSKY Health/Medicaid Programs EBT cards were issued to households that have not previously received an EBT card from DSS. The EBT card will arrive with instructions on how to activate them and access the food benefits.
- This current distribution does not include children who attended a school participating in the Community Eligibility Provision, in which all children receive free meals. Those benefits are expected to be distributed to non-DSS clients beginning on a date in mid-September to be announced.
- Households will see a single benefit deposit covering the entire 2021-22 school year. A separate benefit deposit covering the summer period is expected later this year.
- Benefits will differ from student to student and depend on the learning model due to COVID - 19 the student was in each month of the 2021-22 school year
- The average benefit amount in this distribution is \$45.90 per student.
- Households that believe the student's information may have been incorrectly reported should contact the student's school and request for the school to review the student information submitted to the CSDE for the 2021-22 school year. If the school determines that an error in reporting was made, the school may contact the CSDE with a formal request to reconsider the benefits determination.

The Pandemic EBT benefits are administered in Connecticut by DSS, in cooperation with the Department of Education. Federal support is provided by the Department of Agriculture's Food and

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Nutrition Service. Additional information, including frequently asked questions, is available on the CSDE's [Pandemic EBT \(P-EBT\)](#) webpage.

CT Grown for CT Kids Week October 3-7, 2022

[CT Grown for CT Kids Week](#) is coming soon. The [CT Farm to School Collaborative](#) is hosting the CT Grown for CT Kids! website. This website includes a menu of resources and ideas to fit your needs. From an Apple Crunch event to larger schoolwide celebrations, CT Grown for CT Kids Week highlights the great work of farmers, producers, and schools to source locally and teach kids about food, nutrition, and the farming community. More resources are being added all month, so check the site frequently and start planning your celebrations!

Resource Roundup: Calendar for Completing Verification

The CSDE [Calendar for Completing Verification](#) summarizes the tasks and completion dates required for Connecticut school nutrition programs to comply with the USDA verification requirements. The CSDE's verification forms are updated annually in August/September and are available on the CSDE's [Verification Procedures for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. As a reminder, the formal verification process begins on October 1.

Good to Know

USDA Webinar: Supply Chain Assistance Best Practices, September 26, 2022

On December 17, 2021, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) provided \$1 billion in relief funds through the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), authorized under the CCC Charter Act [15 U.S.C. 714]. On July 31, 2022, FNS allocated an additional \$943 million through the CCC. This webinar will be an opportunity to hear best practices on how these funds have been used to enhance local school districts' ability to purchase foods for school meals. These additional resources are supporting schools through supply chain challenges.

- *Date and time:* September 26, 2022, 1:00-2:00 p.m.
- *Registration:* https://www.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_ihvrZk-TRk6SWloBIEI6Dg
- *More information:* Contact SM.FN.PMOS-OSB@usda.gov

Meal Talk: Taste-Test Events Webinar: October 12, 2022

In honor of National School Lunch Week, the USDA's Team Nutrition initiative will present a *Meal Talk* webinar on Taste-Test Events on Wednesday, October 12, 2022, from 3:00-4:00 p.m. Team Nutrition staff and guest speakers from the Pennridge School District in Pennsylvania and Kern County Superintendent of Schools in California will share tools, tips, strategies, success stories, and best practices related to hosting taste-test events with elementary and secondary school students. Attendees will hear about new ideas and tools for conducting taste-test events as well as strategies for incorporating taste-test results into menu planning.

Registration link: <https://usda-fns-events.webex.com/usda-fns-events/onstage/g.php?MTID=ea5574c93866eda2fo9a4f6ea66ef5d55>



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](#) at the Connecticut State Department of Education, School Health, Nutrition and Family Services, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SLT/2022/SLT_09_14_2022.pdf.

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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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