

## The School Lunch Tray: July 19, 2023

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**

- **Reminder:** Submit USDA National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Equipment Assistance Grants Request for Proposals (RFP) by July 28, 2023

### **Need to Know**

- **CSDE Job Announcement:** Education Services Specialist for School Nutrition Programs
- **Reminder:** Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-5 Eating Together in the NSLP or School Breakfast Program (SBP)
- **Resource Roundup:** CSDE Child Nutrition Programs Staff Contact Information for School Year 2023-24

### **Good to Know**

- None

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: July 19, 2023

### Action Items

#### **Reminder: Submit USDA National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Equipment Assistance Grants Request for Proposals (RFP) by July 28, 2023**

The deadline for the USDA National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Equipment Assistance Grants Request for Proposals (RFP) is **5:00 p.m. on Friday, July 28, 2023**. Extensions will not be given. Submit the application **by email** to Sean Fogarty at [sean.fogarty@ct.gov](mailto:sean.fogarty@ct.gov).

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Consolidated Appropriations Act (Public Law 117-103) provided funds to state agencies to competitively award equipment assistance grants to eligible school food authorities (SFAs) participating in the NSLP. These funds will allow SFAs to purchase equipment to serve healthier meals that meet the updated meal patterns, improve food safety, and expand access. Total funds available are \$692,832. The CSDE will award grants of up to \$50,000 per SFA.

For this grant, the previous free or reduced-price meals percentage eligibility requirement has been eliminated. All SFAs participating in the NSLP are eligible to apply. Priority is given to schools that did not receive previous equipment grant funding under earlier USDA NSLP Equipment Assistance Grants.

The RFP document is available on the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) 2023 [Request for Proposals](#) webpage. For questions, please contact Sean Fogarty at 860-807-2055 or [Sean.Fogarty@ct.gov](mailto:Sean.Fogarty@ct.gov).

### Need to Know

#### **CSDE Job Announcement: Education Services Specialist for School Nutrition Programs**

The CSDE is accepting applications for an Education Services Specialist (ESS) for the Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs (CNP), School Nutrition Programs team. The ESS is essential to the CSDE for operating programs that meet regulatory requirements, supporting access to USDA nutrition programs, and maintaining program integrity. This role will assist in administering the federal USDA school nutrition programs including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), and the Food Distribution Program (FDP). For more information, refer to the [CSDE Job Announcement](#).

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#### **Reminder: Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-5 Eating Together in the NSLP or School Breakfast Program (SBP)**

SFAs that serve reimbursable NSLP and SBP meals to preschoolers and grades K-5 in the **same service area** at the **same time** may choose one of the options below.

1. Use the grade-appropriate meal patterns for each grade group, i.e., use the preschool meal pattern for ages 1-4 and use the K-5 meal pattern for grades K-5.
2. Use the K-5 meal pattern for both groups.

SFAs must use the preschool meal patterns when meals are served to preschoolers in a different area or at a different time than older students. The USDA allows the option to serve the same meal pattern to preschoolers **only when preschoolers are co-mingled with K-5 students during the meal service**. The USDA strongly encourages schools to find ways to serve grade-appropriate meals to preschoolers and grades K-5 that best address their nutritional needs.

For more information, refer to [USDA Memo SP 37-2017: Flexibility for Co-Mingled Preschool Meals: Questions and Answers](#), and visit the “[Preschoolers Eating with Other Grades \(Comingled Meals\)](#)” section of the CSDE’s Connecticut Nutrition Standards Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

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### Resource Roundup: CSDE Child Nutrition Programs Staff Contact Information

The CSDE has several resources to assist SFAs with contacting the correct person in the Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs.

- The [County Assignments for School Nutrition Programs](#) lists the CSDE’s technical assistance consultants for school nutrition programs, and indicates which consultant is assigned to each county. This is the person you should first contact with questions about school nutrition programs.
- The [Child Nutrition Staff and Responsibilities](#) handout lists all staff in the CSDE’s Child Nutrition Programs and includes a list of their key responsibilities.

These documents and additional contact information are available on the CSDE’s [Contact Information for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

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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, Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SLT/2023/SLT\\_07\\_19\\_2023.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SLT/2023/SLT_07_19_2023.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; or
2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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