

The School Lunch Tray: September 13, 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

- Final Reminder: School Year 2023-24 Sponsor Agreements Due Friday, September 15, 2023

Need to Know

- Advanced Placement (AP) Testing and Access to a Student's Eligibility for Free or Reduced-price Meals
- Recording Available: CSDE's State Transition Assistance for Breakfast and Lunch Expenses (STABLE) Funds Information Session

Good to Know

- Resources for National School Lunch Week: October 9-13, 2023
- USDA Webinar: Meal Talk: Celebrate Lunch Trays Many Ways, October 12, 2023
- USDA Webinar: Level Up Your Professional Standards Tracking, October 17, 2023

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

Final Reminder: School Year 2023-24 Sponsor Agreements Due Friday, September 15, 2023

The school year 2023-24 Sponsor Agreements must be completed and submitted by Friday, September 15, 2023. **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 2023-24 Application Packet dashboard. The school nutrition programs staff urge SFAs to review the CSDE’s resources, [Updating the Sponsor Application for School Nutrition Programs](#) and [Required Items for the Online Sponsor Application “Checklist Summary.”](#) to troubleshoot application issues before contacting their school nutrition team member.

2023 - 2024 Application Packet

Packet Submitted Date: 09/05/2023
 Packet Approved Date:
 Packet Original Approval Date:
 Packet Status: Submitted for Approval

Type of Agency: Educational Institution
 Type of SNP Organization: Public

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
View Admin Revise	✓ Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Schedule	Rev. 1	Approved
Details	Meal Pattern Compliance Dashboard		Pending Validation
Details	➔ Checklist Summary (12)		
Details	Application Packet Notes		

Site Applications	Approved	Pending	Return for Correction	Denied	Withdrawn/ Closed	Error	Total Applications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

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Need to Know

Recording Available: CSDE's State Transition Assistance for Breakfast and Lunch Expenses (STABLE) Funds Information Session

The recording of the CSDE's [STABLE Funds Information Session](#) on August 15, 2023, is now available. For more information and resources about the STABLE funds, visit the [STABLE Funds](#) section of the CSDE's Current School Year Operational Updates for School Nutrition Programs webpage.

Advanced Placement (AP) Testing and Access to a Student's Eligibility for Free or Reduced-price Meals

On September 8, 2023, the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) Performance Office issued an email to all AP Coordinators. The relevant information is excerpted below. Please note that for the purposes of AP, PSAT, or SAT testing, the determining official may allow the school or district's AP coordinator access to a child's eligibility information. As a reminder, if the AP coordinator requests access, they must complete the [Disclosure Release Request for Free or Reduced Eligibility Status of Students in the School Nutrition Program form](#) before the determining official can approve access to this confidential information.

*The process for obtaining fee waivers for eligible students for the College Board's Advanced Placement test has not changed. For 2024 Advanced Placement® (AP) testing, AP coordinators must order tests for students by **November 15, 2023**. This is the deadline to submit exam orders for all full-year and first-semester AP courses, and exam only sections. The late [order fee](#) applies for exams ordered after this date. A [fee](#) also applies for exams cancelled after this date. Please visit the [College Board's AP Central](#) for more information.*

*The CSDE and College Board will cover the entire cost of the **2024 AP** exam fees for all students from low-income families who attend public school in Connecticut. The AP coordinators will indicate in the [AP Registration and Ordering \(APRO\)](#) site a student's low income status. Since the AP, PSAT, and SAT are considered part of a CSDE State Educational Program, the AP, PSAT, and SAT coordinator can be given access to a student's income eligibility status. To request access, the coordinator must complete the [Disclosure Release form](#) to ensure that they have an understanding of the USDA regulations and do not use this information for other purposes.*

*Please note that once the AP, PSAT, or SAT coordinator completes the [Disclosure Release Request for Free or Reduced Eligibility Status of Students in the School Nutrition Program form](#) and it is reviewed and approved by the district or school's determining official (the person that processes the free and reduced-price meal applications), they can access the free, reduced and paid information **directly via the CSDE's Public School Information System (PSIS)** without having the determining official provide them with a list of children who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals.*

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The deadline for the AP coordinator to indicate in APRO students who are eligible for the fee waiver is April 30, 2024. [Learn more about AP Exam fee reductions.](#)

Resource Roundup: UConn Rudd Center's Implementing School Wellness Policies Video 2: Food as a Reward

Did you know that using food as a reward in schools can contribute to students' unhealthy eating habits and undermine nutrition education? Are you looking for ways to reduce or eliminate food rewards in your classroom? This [8-minute video](#), created by the UConn Rudd Center, explains the importance of not using food as a reward, the prevalence of districts in Connecticut that prohibit using food as a reward in policy and practice, the challenges that schools face implementing these practices, and strategies to overcome these barriers. A list of alternatives to food rewards is available in the Rudd Center's resource, [Nonfood Rewards: Promoting Healthy School Environments](#).

Good to Know

Resources for National School Lunch Week: October 9-13, 2023

National School Lunch Week is October 9-13, 2023. Child Nutrition program operators may order free print materials to help celebrate. Some examples are below. Visit the [Team Nutrition Resource Order Form](#) to explore the complete list.

Stickers

- [I've Got Great Taste](#)
- [Make Today a Try-Day](#)
- [Official Taste Tester](#)

Decals

- [Discover New Foods](#)
- [Fueling My Healthy Life](#)

Posters

- [Be a Food Critic!](#)
- [MyPlate](#)
- [Offer vs. Serve High School Lunch](#)
- [Offer vs. Serve Middle School Lunch](#)
- [Taste-Test](#)

Student Resources

- [MyPlate Guide to School Lunch](#)
- [Stronger With School Meals Activity Booklet](#)

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USDA Webinar: Meal Talk: Celebrate Lunch Trays Many Ways, October 12, 2023

In celebration of National School Lunch Week, Team Nutrition will present a [Meal Talk Webinar](#) to highlight the many ways to offer school lunch with inspiration from across the country. Speakers from the Arizona Department of Education and Bellingham Public Schools in Washington will share strategies and success stories related to incorporating student food preferences and locally grown foods in USDA standardized recipes. Participants will also learn about USDA's Team Nutrition resources and the Healthy Meals Incentive Recognition Awards.

- *Date and time:* Thursday, October 12, 2023, 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- *Registration:* [Registration link](#)

USDA Webinar: Level Up Your Professional Standards Tracking, October 17, 2023

On Tuesday, October 17, 2023, USDA's Team Nutrition will present the webinar, "Level Up Your Professional Standards Tracking." This webinar will review the basic features of the Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool (PSTTT) and explore the latest updates to the PSTTT such as logging Certifications and enhanced search and filter capabilities.

- *Date and time:* Tuesday, October 17, 2023, 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.
 - *Registration:* [Registration link](#)
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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_09_13_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

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