

# The School Lunch Tray: February 28, 2024

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***

- Operational Memorandum No. 06-24: Interschool Agreements for School Year 2024-25: Due July 1, 2024 (Full Service) or August 30, 2024 (Vended)
- Operational Memorandum No. 07-24: Process for Submitting the HFC Statement for School Year 2024-25: Due July 1, 2024

## ***Need to Know***

- USDA Resource: Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Manual
- Resource Roundup: Using Product Formulation Statements in the School Nutrition Programs

## ***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: February 28, 2024

## Action Items

### Operational Memorandum No. 06-24: Interschool Agreements for School Year 2024-25: Due July 1, 2024 (Full Service) or August 30, 2024 (Vended)

[Operational Memorandum No. 06-24: Interschool Agreements for School Year 2024-24](#) is now available on the CSDE's [School Nutrition Operational Memos 2024](#) webpage. Sponsors that sell USDA meals or Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) snacks to another district or school during school year 2024-25 must complete and submit an interschool agreement to the CSDE.

- The **Full-service Interschool Agreement form** must be submitted to the CSDE by **July 1, 2024**.
- 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, 2024**.

The interschool agreement forms are available under “I” on the CSDE's [Forms for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

---

### Operational Memorandum No. 07-24: Process for Submitting the HFC Statement for School Year 2024-25: Due July 1, 2024

Section 10-215f of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that each local board of education or governing authority (BOE) for all Connecticut public school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) must **take action annually** to certify whether all food items sold to students will or will not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards. This includes all public schools, regional educational service centers, the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS), charter schools, interdistrict magnet schools, and endowed academies.

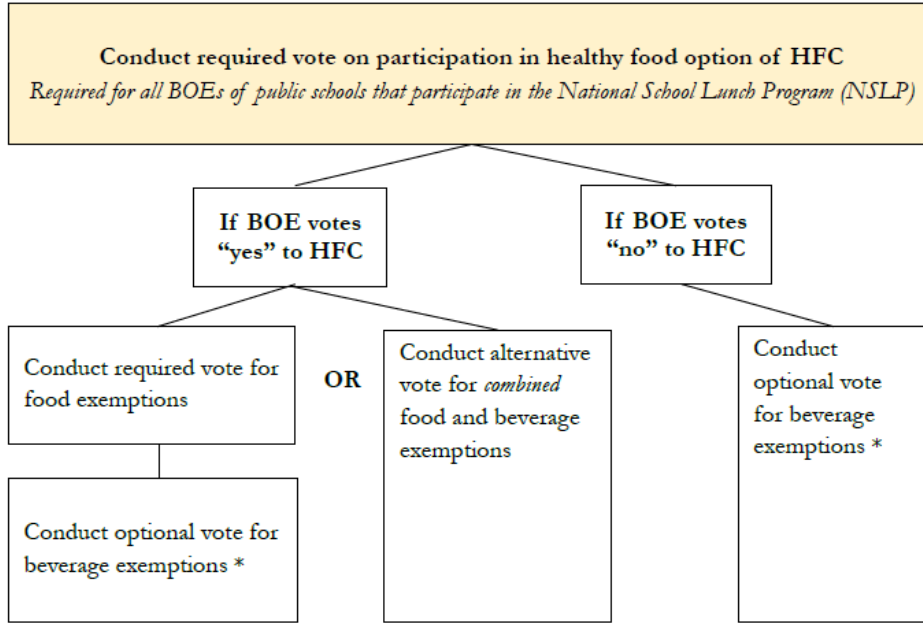
[Operational Memorandum No. 07-24: Requirements for Submitting the HFC Statement for School Year 2024-24](#) is now available on the CSDE's [School Nutrition Operational Memos 2024](#) webpage. This memo provides the required motion language and summarizes the **steps that districts must take now** to ensure the accurate and timely submission of the 2024-25 HFC Statement by the deadline of **July 1, 2024**.

- All BOEs must vote on whether to participate in the healthy food option of HFC.
- If the BOE votes “yes” to the healthy food option, a vote on whether to allow **food exemptions** is required. The BOE may also choose to vote on whether to allow **beverage exemptions**.
- If the BOE votes “no” to the healthy food option, a vote on whether to allow food exemptions is not required. The BOE may choose to vote on whether to allow **beverage exemptions**.

The chart below summarizes the BOE votes. The CSDE's 21-minute video, [Completing the Application Process for HFC](#), provides detailed guidance on the HFC application process.

# The School Lunch Tray: February 28, 2024

## Summary of BOE Votes



\* Beverage exemptions are defined by a separate statute (C.G.S. Section 10-221q) and are not part of the annual HFC Statement. BOEs may choose whether to allow beverage exemptions. If the BOE does not vote to allow beverage exemptions, noncompliant beverages cannot be sold to students on school premises at any time.

## Need to Know

### USDA Resource: Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Manual

The USDA's [Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labeling Manual](#) provides food manufacturers with instructions on how to apply for and obtain approval for a CN label. It also contains instructions for calculating the contribution that meats, meat alternates, poultry, and seafood products make toward the meal pattern requirements for Child Nutrition Programs (CNP). CN labels are approved by USDA and provide a way for a manufacturer to demonstrate how a processed food product contributes to the meal pattern requirements in CNP. Additional CN label-related resources for food manufacturers and CNP operators (including policy guidance and technical assistance) are available on the USDA's [CN Labeling Program](#) website.

For guidance on using CN labels in the school nutrition programs, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the School Nutrition Programs](#).

### **Resource Roundup: Using Product Formulation Statements in the School Nutrition Programs**

School food authorities (SFAs) must be able to document the crediting information for commercially prepared foods that are processed or contain added ingredients, such as deli meats, pizza, chicken nuggets, hummus, coleslaw, and smoothies. A product formulation statement (PFS) is required for all commercial processed products that do not have a CN label. A PFS is a document developed by manufacturers that provides specific information about how a product credits toward the USDA meal patterns for Child Nutrition Programs. It generally includes a detailed explanation of what the product contains and indicates the amount of each ingredient in the product by weight.

Commercial processed products without a CN label or PFS cannot credit in the school nutrition programs. For detailed guidance on the PFS requirements, refer to the CSDE's resource, [\*Using Product Formulation Statements in the School Nutrition Programs\*](#).

---



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/2024/SLT\\_02\\_28\\_2024.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SLT/2024/SLT_02_28_2024.pdf).

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

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](mailto: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](mailto:louis.todisco@ct.gov).