

# The School Lunch Tray: March 20, 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

- CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 08-2024 Annual Notification Requirement for All Local Educational Agencies (LEAs): Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Due April 5, 2024
- Direct Certification Case Management Reminder
- Review List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages: Updated March 18, 2024

## Need to Know

- Table Talk Tomorrow: Thursday, March 21, 2024 – Special Guest CSDE's Deputy Commissioner Sone-Moyano and a listening session about student unpaid meal debt and charging policies
- Resource Roundup: Capital Expenditure Approved List for School Food Authority Equipment Purchases

## Good to Know

- Evaluation of the USDA Summer EBT Demonstrations: Lessons Learned from More Than a Decade of Research
- Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) Webinar: A Deep Dive into FRAC's New School Meal Participation Reports, March 21, 2024

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

### **CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 08-2024 Annual Notification Requirement for All Local Educational Agencies (LEAs): Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Due April 5, 2024**

[CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 08-2024](#) outlines the steps for collecting data to update the CEP notification lists. All National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) sponsors (regardless of participation or intent to participate in the CEP) must submit school-level CEP eligibility data to the CSDE no later than April 5, 2024. **Residential child care institutions and Special Milk Program sponsors are not eligible to participate in the CEP and are exempt from this requirement.** This memo is available on the CSDE's [Operational Memoranda for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

For information on how to access the CNP System to enter notification data, please refer to the CSDE's document, [Community Eligibility Provision \(CEP\) Data Collection Guidance for School-level Eligibility Information](#).

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### **Direct Certification Case Management Reminder**

Sponsors (including CEP schools) must check the case management section in the direct certification web application to ensure that all eligible children are matched weekly and directly certified. This is especially important for the upcoming annual reporting of the CEP notification lists outlined in the [CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 08-2024](#).

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### **Review List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages: Updated March 18, 2024**

Updated lists of foods and beverages are now available on the CSDE's [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) webpage. School food authorities (SFAs) should review these lists immediately to ensure that all commercial a la carte foods and beverages being sold to students are listed. Items not listed cannot be sold to students.

New products on the lists are indicated by **pink highlighting** on the manufacturer and product name. Items that have been **added or deleted** since the last update are listed on the CSDE's document, [Summary of Updates to Approved Food and Beverages](#).

These lists identify foods that comply with Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS) and beverages that comply with the state beverage statute (Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes) and the USDA Smart Snacks beverage standards. Foods on this list also comply with Smart Snacks because the CNS requirements are stricter than the Smart Snacks food standards. For additional guidance, visit the "[How To Evaluate Foods for CNS Compliance](#)" section of the CSDE's Connecticut Nutrition Standards webpage.

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## Need to Know

### **Table Talk Tomorrow: Thursday, March 21, 2024 – Special Guest CSDE’s Deputy Commissioner Sone-Moyano and a listening session about student unpaid meal debt and charging policies**

Join the CSDE’s Deputy Commissioner Sone-Moyano and the school nutrition programs staff tomorrow from 2:00-3:00 p.m. for this week’s Table Talk. This week’s Table Talk will include a listening session about student unpaid meal debt and charging policies. Please join us ready to share your experiences, relevant data, and effective strategies.

To submit questions in advance, visit <https://forms.office.com/g/GWS7DCbbgo>.

Registration is not required. Please use the link below to join Table Talk on Microsoft Teams.

#### **Microsoft Teams meeting**

#### **Join on your computer, mobile app or room device**

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 225 336 668 44

Passcode: muTuBy

[Download Teams](#) | [Join on the web](#)

#### **Or call in (audio only)**

[+1 860-840-2075,327687577#](tel:+18608402075327687577) United States, Hartford

Phone Conference ID: 327 687 577#

[Find a local number](#) | [Reset PIN](#)

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### **Resource Roundup: Capital Expenditure Approved List for School Food Authority Equipment Purchases**

SFAs may purchase equipment listed on the CSDE’s [Capital Expenditure Approved List for School Food Authority Equipment Purchases](#) without prior approval. However, as required by 2 CFR 200.439, SFAs must receive prior approval from the CSDE for any capital expenditure requests for equipment with a unit cost of \$5,000 or greater that is not included on this list. Any used equipment with a purchase price of \$5,000 or greater also requires CSDE approval using the CSDE’s [Capital Expenditure Request Form](#).

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## Good to Know

### **Evaluation of the USDA Summer EBT Demonstrations: Lessons Learned from More Than a Decade of Research**

The USDA's recently released report, [Evaluation of the USDA Summer EBT Demonstrations: Lessons Learned From More Than a Decade of Research](#), finds that Summer EBT: reduces childhood food insecurity by a significant amount, including the most severe form of food insecurity; promotes a healthy diet; and parents and caregivers have positive opinions of the program.

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### **Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) Webinar: A Deep Dive into FRAC's New School Meal Participation Reports, March 21, 2024**

Join FRAC for a 45-minute deep dive detailing the findings and key recommendations from two new FRAC reports: *The Reach of School Breakfast and Lunch During the 2022–2023 School Year* (to be released in mid-March 2024) and [The State of Healthy School Meals for All: California, Maine, Massachusetts, Nevada, and Vermont Lead the Way](#). These complementary reports shine a light on what happened in states with the end of the nationwide waivers which allowed schools to offer meals at no charge during the pandemic, and how statewide policies in five states helped to counteract the impact of the waivers expiring.

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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/2024/SLT\\_03\\_20\\_2024.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SLT/2024/SLT_03_20_2024.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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