

The School Lunch Tray: April 24, 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

- None

Need to Know

- Operational Memorandum No. 09-24: Payment of Fiscal Year 2023-24 State Funds for the National School Lunch Program
- Updated CSDE Resource: Healthy Celebrations

Good to Know

- Discover MyPlate Look and Cook Recipe: Garden Bite
- Team Nutrition Cooks: Salad With Vinaigrette Dressing
- Team Nutrition Resources for Fruits and Vegetables

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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Need to Know

Operational Memorandum No. 09-24: Payment of Fiscal Year 2023-34 State Funds for the National School Lunch Program

The CSDE's [Operational Memorandum No. 09-24](#) outlines the process used for the payment of fiscal year 2023-34 state funds ("state match") paid as reimbursement to SFAs that participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The memo contains an attachment that lists the reimbursement amount that eligible SFAs will receive. Please review and share with appropriate staff members. This memo is available on the CSDE's [Operational Memoranda for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Resource Roundup: Healthy Celebrations

Birthday parties and holiday celebrations at school provide a unique opportunity to make healthy eating fun and exciting for children. Schools can take advantage of classroom celebrations to serve nutritious foods that taste good and provide students with an opportunity to learn about healthy eating. The CSDE's newly updated [Healthy Celebrations](#) provides ideas for nonfood celebrations and incorporating nutritious foods during school celebrations. The CSDE encourages school food authorities to share this resource with school staff.

Good to Know

Discover MyPlate Look and Cook Recipe: Garden Bite

April is National Garden Month and a great time to teach children about where fruits and vegetables come from. In this food preparation activity from [Discover MyPlate](#), kindergarteners will create a healthy and fun-sized snack featuring garden vegetables. Watch the [Look and Cook Recipes Video](#) to see the assembly and finished product (includes all five Discover MyPlate Look and Cook recipes) or download the [Garden Bite recipe card](#).

Team Nutrition Cooks: Salad With Vinaigrette Dressing

Get older kids (8 to 12 years) involved in the preparation of this tasty Salad with Vinaigrette Dressing from [Team Nutrition Cooks](#). This recipe highlights the goodness of fresh fruits and vegetables and shows how easy and fast it is to make a homemade salad dressing. Watch the [Skills Video](#) and share the [Family Handout](#).

Team Nutrition Resources for Fruits and Vegetables

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Team Nutrition offers a variety of resources to teach kids about how fruits and vegetables grow.

- Have children practice counting, reading, and writing with these activities from the [Discover MyPlate Student Workbook](#) (available as printable PDFs):
 - [Time to Grow!](#)
 - [1, 2, 3, 4 - Grow, Fruit and Veggies, Grow!](#)
 - [Time for Strawberries](#)
- Review sight words and help children build literacy skills with the [Discover MyPlate Emergent Reader: Where Food Comes From](#).
- Share the [Veggie Garden Grower badges](#) to reward students for their efforts after a learning activity. Find them in this [Discover MyPlate With Nate and Kate Parent Handout](#).
- Take kids on a Great Garden Detective Adventure to discover the sweetest, crunchiest, and juiciest fruits and vegetables through a series of fun investigations with this [Standards-Based Gardening Nutrition Curriculum for grades 3 and 4](#).
- Explore a world of possibilities in the garden using 10 inquiry-based lessons to engage 5th and 6th graders in growing, harvesting, tasting, and learning about fruits and vegetables in [Dig In! Standards-Based Nutrition Education from the Ground Up](#).

USDA Child Nutrition Program operators can request free printed copies of certain Team Nutrition materials, while supplies last, at <https://pueblo.gpo.gov/TN/TNPubs.php>.

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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_04_24_2024.pdf.

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