

## The School Lunch Tray: May 22, 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. 10-24: New Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) Allowances for School Year (SY) 2023-24 Only – Offsetting Unpaid School Meal Charge
- Operational Memorandum No. 11-24: Annual Application Process for the Community Eligibility Provision

### Need to Know

- USDA Foods Reminder: Processing Sweeps on June 30, 2024
- Information Session on Tuesday, May 21, 2024: Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (SEBT) Program
- CSDE Summer Meals Training on May 23, 2024: Local Foods, USDA Foods, and Food Safety
- New Production Records for the Optional K-8 Meal Pattern for the NSLP and SBP
- Resource Roundup: New CSDE Resource: Ideas for Using Excess USDA Foods Inventory

### Good to Know

- Join Free Training Webinars from the Institute of Child Nutrition
- Order Team Nutrition Materials in Print

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.



## Action Items

### Operational Memorandum No. 10-24: New Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) Allowances for School Year (SY) 2023-24 Only – Offsetting Unpaid School Meal Charges

[Operational Memorandum No. 10-24](#) was issued via email on Friday, May 17, 2024. This memo provides guidance for SY 2023-24 only allowing school food authorities (SFAs) that have an excess balance in the nonprofit school food service account to use those excess funds to eliminate the SFA's balance of unpaid school meal charges prior to June 30, 2024. For SFAs to participate in this opportunity, a PLE Exemption Request for Unpaid Meal Charges must be completed no later than **May 31, 2024**. Refer to [Operational Memorandum No. 10-24](#) for more information and the link to the exemption request.

### Operational Memorandum No. 11-24: Annual Application Process for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

[Operational Memorandum No. 11-24](#) outlines the annual application process for the CEP. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are eligible to participate in the CEP if the Identified Student Percentage (ISP) for the entire district, groups of schools, or an individual school meets or exceeds 25 percent.

The SY 2024-25 lists of eligible and near-eligible LEAs and schools are available on the [Eligibility](#) section of the CSDE's [CEP](#) webpage.

- [List of Eligible and Near-eligible Connecticut LEAs \(Districts\)](#)
- [List of Eligible and Near-eligible Connecticut Schools](#)

LEAs must formally apply for the CEP for school year (SY) 2024-25 if they are interested in participating in the CEP for SY 2024-25 and if they meet at least one of the following criteria:

- LEAs/schools electing CEP participation for the first time;
- LEAs/schools in the mid-cycle of CEP participation that are requesting changes to their currently approved ISP;
- LEAs/schools that are currently in the fourth year of CEP participation with an ISP greater than or equal to 25 percent, and would like to start a new four-year cycle; and
- LEAs/schools currently in the fourth year of CEP participation with a new, calculated ISP greater than or equal to 15 percent, but less than 25 percent (eligible for one "grace" year based on the ISP as of April 1, 2024 of the current four-year cycle).

**Note:** LEAs and schools **must notify the CSDE no later than June 1, 2024**, if they intend to:

- formally apply for the CEP for the next school year;
- continue with their current ISP (for mid-cycle CEP participating LEAs and schools);
- recalculate their ISP;
- withdraw from the CEP and revert to the regular meal counting and claiming process; or

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- continue participating in CEP for one grace year (a fifth year) because the calculated ISP from April 1, 2024, is at least 15 percent, but less than 25 percent.

To notify the CSDE about the LEA/school's CEP decisions above, complete the [CEP in SY 2024-25 survey](#).

### Need to Know

#### USDA Foods Reminder: Processing Sweeps on June 30, 2024

As a reminder, all USDA Foods Processing Pounds will be swept from each Recipient Agency's account into the state account on or about June 30, 2024. For more information, refer to the CSDE's [Operational Memorandum No. 02-19](#): United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Foods – Processing of USDA Foods.

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#### Information Session on Tuesday, May 21, 2024: Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (SEBT) Program

On Tuesday, May 21, 2024, the Connecticut State Department of Education and Connecticut State Department of Social Services are hosting an information session about the Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (SEBT) program launching in summer 2024. Thousands of children in Connecticut will be eligible to receive grocery benefits during the summer. Join the information session to learn about the program and school food authorities' role in ensuring that kids receive this critical benefit this summer.

- **Date and time:** Tuesday, May 21, 2024, from 2:00-3:00 p.m.
- Registration is not required. Join the meeting using the link below.

#### Microsoft Teams [Need help?](#)

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 225 522 033 195

Passcode: R3mWGv

#### Dial in by phone

[+1 860-840-2075,,775640774#](#) United States, Hartford

[Find a local number](#)

Phone conference ID: 775 640 774#

For organizers: [Meeting options](#) | [Reset dial-in PIN](#)

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### CSDE Summer Meals Training on May 23, 2024: Local Foods, USDA Foods, and Food Safety

The CSDE strongly encourages SSO sponsors to attend the next session of the CSDE's annual Summer Meal Programs training on May 23, 2024.

- **Training:** Local Foods, USDA Foods, and Food Safety
- **Date and time:** Thursday, May 23, 2024, from 2:00-3:00 p.m.

Registration is not required. Join the Teams trainings using the link below:

#### Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 257 292 443 91

Passcode: Yizq7A

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

Or call in (audio only)

[+1 860-840-2075,,834102498#](#) United States, Hartford

Phone Conference ID: 834 102 498#

Phone Conference ID: 920 756 855#

For questions about Summer Meal training, please contact [caroline.cooke@ct.gov](mailto:caroline.cooke@ct.gov).

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### New Production Records for the Optional K-8 Meal Pattern for the NSLP and SBP

The CSDE recently received requests to develop production record templates for the optional K-8 meal pattern for the NSLP and SBP. Two new production records are now available.

- Production Record for Grades K-8 Option in the NSLP
- Production Record for Grades K-8 Option in the SBP

These production records may be used in schools that follow the [optional K-8 meal pattern for the NSLP and SBP](#), where students in grades K-8 or grades 5-8 eat together during the same meal period. These new production records are available in the "[Documents/Forms](#)" section of the CSDE's Production Records for School Nutrition Programs webpage.

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### Resource Roundup: New CSDE Resource: Ideas for Using Excess USDA Foods Inventory

A new CSDE resource is available, [Ideas for Using Excess USDA Foods Inventory](#). This document includes ideas to help menu planners use their excess inventory of USDA Foods in the USDA's school nutrition programs.

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## Good to Know

### Join Free Training Webinars from the Institute of Child Nutrition

The Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) offers free training on a broad range of topics for child nutrition professionals. Some upcoming webinars are listed below.

- May 30, 2024: School Nutrition Strategies, Trainings, Action Plans, and Resources (STAR) Webinar - Inventory Management: Strategies for Tracking and Controlling Costs
- June 6, 2024: Culinary Institute of Child Nutrition (CICN) Webinar - A Crash Course in Using the Food Buying Guide

To receive webinar and registration information for upcoming webinars, [subscribe to the ICN newsletter](#). A link to register will be sent to subscribers one week before the webinar date.

View past webinars and learn anytime, anywhere on the ICN's online learning management system, [iLearn](#).

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### Order Team Nutrition Materials in Print

Sponsors that participate in the USDA's Child Nutrition Programs can request free print copies of Team Nutrition materials, while supplies last.

For Summer Meals (from Summer Food, Summer Moves)

- [Resource Kit](#)
- [Placemat](#)
- [Poster Set](#)

For Fun and Healthy School Events

- [Be a Food Critic! Poster](#)
  - [MyPlate Guide to School Lunch for Families](#)
  - [School Breakfast Photo Props](#)
  - [Taste-Test Poster](#)
  - [Team Nutrition Popular Events Idea Booklet](#)
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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\\_05\\_22\\_2024.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SLT/2024/SLT_05_22_2024.pdf).

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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)

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