

# The School Lunch Tray: October 30, 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

- Office Hours for Phase II of the federal Local Food for School Incentive Program (LFSIP), Wednesday, November 6, 2024
- Updated CSDE Menu Planning Guidance for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs: School Year 2024-25
- Resource Roundup: Guidance on Co-Mingled Meals and Afterschool Snacks

## 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.



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## Need to Know

### Office Hours for Phase II of the federal Local Food for School Incentive Program (LFSIP), Wednesday, November 6, 2024

Join Monica Pacheco on Wednesday, November 6, 2024, from 2:00-3:00 p.m. for an opportunity to ask questions and get answers regarding the newly announced Phase II of the federal LFSIP. Learn about this additional opportunity to purchase local foods for your school meal programs. Join with link below.

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[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 292 439 585 282

Passcode: KSD7mg

#### Dial in by phone

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[Find a local number](#)

Phone conference ID: 757 907 377#

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### Updated CSDE Menu Planning Guidance for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs: School Year 2024-25

The CSDE's recently updated the previous *Menu Planning Guide for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs* to a new series of three separate guides. These guides are dated October 2024 and provide comprehensive information and resources to assist school food authorities (SFAs) with meeting the USDA preschool meal patterns and meal service requirements for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP, and Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) of the NSLP.

- [Guide to Meeting the Preschool Meal Patterns and Crediting Requirements for the School Nutrition Programs](#): Provides information and resources to assist SFAs with meeting the preschool meal patterns and crediting requirements for the five meal components (milk, meats/meat alternates, vegetables, fruits, and grains).
- [Guide to Meal Service Requirements for Preschoolers in the School Nutrition Programs](#): Provides information and resources to assist SFAs with meeting the meal service requirements and guidance for preschoolers, including meal schedules and time to eat, types of meal service (pre-plated, cafeteria style, family style, and combination style), co-mingled meals and afterschool snacks, point-of service meal and afterschool snack counts, children's intent to participate in the meal service, prohibition of gender separation, requirements for field

## The School Lunch Tray: October 30, 2024

trip meals and classroom meals, and water availability during service of meals and afterschool snack.

- [Guide to Menu Documentation for the School Nutrition Programs](#): Provides information and resources to assist SFAs with maintaining the required records to document that menus comply with the USDA's meal patterns for the school nutrition programs (preschool and grades K-12). Includes the requirements and guidance for school menus, production records, standardized recipes, Buy American, and documentation for crediting commercial products, including Child Nutrition (CN) labels, product formulation statements, and nutrition information.

These guides are based on current USDA regulations and policy and Connecticut statutes and regulations and apply to school year 2024-25. They include updated information to reflect the changes required by the USDA final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#).

The entire series is available in the "[CSDE's Menu Planning Guidance Series for the Preschool Meal Patterns](#)" section of CSDE's Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

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### Resource Roundup: Guidance on Co-Mingled Meals and Afterschool Snacks

"Co-mingling" is the practice of serving meals or afterschool snacks to a variety of grades in the same service area at the same time. The USDA has specific requirements when meals for preschoolers and older grades are co-mingled.

Links to guidance for co-mingled service are available in the "[Co-mingled Meals and Afterschool Snacks](#)" section of the CSDE's Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage. Detailed guidance on the requirements for co-mingled meals and afterschool snacks is available in section 4 of the CSDE's [Guide to Meal Service Requirements for Preschoolers in the School Nutrition Programs](#). Training on co-mingled meals is available in "Module 2: Introduction to Preschool Meal Patterns" of the CSDE's [Preschool Meal Pattern Training for the School Nutrition Programs](#).

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For more information, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's [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\\_10\\_30\\_2024.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/slt/2024/slt_10_30_2024.pdf).

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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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