

The School Lunch Tray: January 29, 2025

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

- Reminder: Webinar on Rudd Center's New Wellness School Assessment Tool (WellSAT) Website
- New CSDE Resource: County Assignments for Summer Meals
- Updated CSDE Webpage: Eligibility for Free and Reduced-price Meals and Free Milk in School Nutrition Programs
- Updated CSDE Webpage: Menu Planning for Child Nutrition Programs
- Updated CSDE Webpage: Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs
- Updated CSDE Webpage: Professional Standards for School Nutrition Professionals
- Resource Roundup: Handwashing

Good to Know

- Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025 Continuing Professional Education Self-Study Modules

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.



Need to Know

Reminder: Webinar on Rudd Center's New Wellness School Assessment Tool (WellSAT) Website

On February 6, 2025, from 2:00 – 3:00 p.m., the University of Connecticut Rudd Center for Food Policy and Health will conduct a webinar on their new WellSAT website. As a reminder, the USDA's final rule, [Local School Wellness Policy \(LSWP\) Implementation Under the HHFKA of 2010](#), requires that each local LEA must complete an assessment of their LSWP at least once every three years. The first LSWP assessment in CT was required by June 30, 2022. The second triennial assessment is due June 30, 2025. The LSWP Triennial Assessments are completed on the Rudd Center's WellSAT webpage.

New CSDE Resource: County Assignments for Summer Meals

Each Connecticut county has an assigned CSDE Summer Meals team member to provide technical assistance for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). These programs comprise Connecticut's Summer Meals. The CSDE's new [County Assignments for Summer Meals](#) summarizes the assigned CSDE Summer Meals team members for each county.

Updated CSDE Webpage: Eligibility for Free and Reduced-price Meals and Free Milk in School Nutrition Programs

The CSDE's [Eligibility for Free and Reduced-price Meals and Free Milk in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage has been updated for easier access to relevant information. In addition to the Overview, Contact, and Laws/Regulations sections, the left navigation bar topics now include Application Forms, Parent and Guardian Notification Letters, Processing Applications and Notifying Households, Guidance for School Food Authorities, and Determining Eligibility Training.

Updated CSDE Webpage: Menu Planning for Child Nutrition Programs

The CSDE's [Menu Planning for Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage has been updated for easier access to relevant information. In addition to the Overview, Contact, and Laws/Regulations, the left navigation bar topics now include Cycle Menus, Portion Control, Recipes for Child Nutrition Programs, and Nutrient Analysis of Menus. The Overview page contains links to a variety of menu planning resource such as food themes, salad bars, seasonal and local foods.

Updated CSDE Webpage: Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs

The CSDE's [Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage has been updated for easier access to relevant information. In addition to the Overview, Contact, and Laws/Regulations sections, the left navigation bar topics now include Choking Prevention, Handwashing, HACCP, Time and Temperature, Guidance for Child Nutrition Programs, and Education and Training.

Updated CSDE Webpage: Professional Standards for School Nutrition Professionals

The CSDE's [Professional Standards for School Nutrition Professionals](#) webpage has been updated for easier access to relevant information. In addition to the Overview, Contact, and Laws/Regulations sections, the left navigation bar topics now include Staff Qualifications, Tracking Training Hours, Training Resources, and Related Resources. As a reminder, the USDA requires professional standards for employees who manage and operate the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP).

Resource Roundup: Handwashing

Handwashing in food service is essential for preventing the spread of harmful bacteria and viruses, which can lead to foodborne illnesses. Proper hand hygiene is a key practice for food handlers to ensure food safety. Resources on proper handwashing are available in the "[Handwashing](#)" section of the CSDE's [Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Good to Know

Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025 Continuing Professional Education Self-Study Modules

The [Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025 Continuing Professional Education Self-Study Modules](#) allows individuals to obtain continuing professional education (CPE) credits for reading the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025. Credits are provided by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR), the credentialing body for Registered Dietitians and Dietetic Technicians, Registered. The self-study modules will equip professionals with knowledge of the scientific underpinnings that make the Dietary Guidelines relevant across all life stages. These CPE activities expire on April 22, 2027.

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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/2025/slt_01_29_2025.pdf.

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