

The School Lunch Tray: June 18, 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

- CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 10-25: Paid Lunch Equity Guidance for School Year 2025-26: PLE Request Due June 30, 2025
- Reminder: 2025-26 Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Statement: Due July 1, 2025
- 2025-26 Full-service Interschool Agreements Due July 1, 2025
- Reminder: Meal Pattern Changes Required by USDA final rule, Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, Effective July 1, 2025
- New Product-based Limits for Added Sugars for School Year (SY) 2025-26, Effective July 1, 2025
- New ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12 for SY 2025-26, Effective July 1, 2025
- Changes to Vegetable Substitutions in the SBP for Grades K-12 for SY 2025-26, Effective July 1, 2025
- Schools Must Accept Medical Statements from Registered Dietitians Effective July 1, 2025

Need to Know

- Updated NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 for SY 2025-26
- Updated Menu Planning Checklists for Lunch for Grades K-12 for SY 2025-26
- Updated CSDE Resources: Overview of Menu Planning for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP
- Updated Preschool Meal Patterns for SY 2025-26: NSLP, SBP, and ASP
- Updated Preschool Menu Planning Forms for SY 2025-26
- New CSDE Resource: Meal Pattern and Crediting Resources for the School Nutrition Programs
- New CSDE Resource: Crediting Summary Charts for the School Nutrition Programs for SY 2025-26
- New CSDE Resource: Noncreditable Foods in the Meal Patterns for the School Nutrition Programs for SY 2025-26
- Updated CSDE Comparison Charts for the School Nutrition Programs for SY 2025-26
- Updated CSDE Crediting Resources for the School Nutrition Programs for SY 2025-26
- Coming Soon: Updates to the CSDE's Recorded Training Modules for the NSLP, SBP, and ASP Meal Patterns
- Coming Soon: Updates to the CSDE's Recorded Training Modules, Preschool Meal Pattern Training for the School Nutrition Programs
- Coming Soon: Updates to the CSDE's Menu Planning Guidance Series for Grades K-12 and Preschool

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- Coming Soon: Updates to the CSDE's Menu Planning Guidance Series for Grades K-12 and Preschool

Good to Know

- Fourth Annual PK-12 School Staff Appreciation Digital Backpack Program



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

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 10-25: Paid Lunch Equity Guidance for School Year 2025-26: PLE Request Due June 30, 2025

The CSDE's [Operational Memorandum No. 10-25: Paid Lunch Equity Guidance for School Year 2025-26](#) provides guidance regarding the PLE Allowances for school year 2025-26. Note that a PLE Request is part of the memo and must be completed by June 30, 2025.

The PLE for SY 2025-26 is available in the "[Paid Lunch Equity](#)" section of the CSDE's Financial Management for School Nutrition Programs webpage.

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Reminder: 2025-26 Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Statement: Due July 1, 2025

All public school sponsors of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) must submit the 2025-26 HFC Statement and upload their final board-approved minutes by July 1, 2025, in the CSDE's [Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs](#) (CNP System). Please review the important information below.

- **Only authorized signers 1 or 2 can submit the HFC Statement:** The HFC Statement must be completed, certified, and submitted by the district's authorized signer 1 or 2. These are the only two individuals who can submit the HFC Statement.
- **Enroll district in the 2025-26 application process before beginning HFC Statement:** The district must enroll in the 2025-26 application process for the school nutrition programs before the 2025-26 HFC Statement can be accessed. For guidance on how to enroll the district, refer to the CSDE's [Instructions for Enrolling in the Annual Application Process for the School Nutrition Programs](#). If the authorized signer cannot access the HFC Statement in the CNP System, this means the district has not yet enrolled.
- **Instructions for submitting the HFC Statement:** Authorized signer 1 or 2 completes the HFC Statement in the CSDE's Connecticut Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs (CNP System). Please read the CSDE's [Instructions for Submitting Connecticut's Healthy Food Certification Statement for School Year 2025-26](#) before entering the CNP System.
- **Complete the HFC module only:** Do not begin the application process to participate in the school nutrition programs for school year 2025-26. The CSDE will notify sponsors when it is time to start the online application process for school nutrition programs.
- **Guidance on HFC application requirements:** The HFC application requirements are summarized in the "[Annual HFC Application](#)" section of the HFC webpage and CSDE [Operational Memorandum No. 03-25](#). For additional guidance, refer to the CSDE's 21-minute training module, [Completing the Application Process for Healthy Food Certification](#).
- **Questions:** Contact Susan Fiore at susan.fiore@ct.gov.

Reminder: 2025-26 Full-service Interschool Agreements Due July 1, 2025

Sponsors that vend or satellite meals to another district are required to submit and receive approval of an annual interschool agreement to the CSDE. Full-service Interschool Agreements for schools that choose the healthy food option of Healthy Food Certification (HFC) must be submitted to the CSDE by **July 1, 2025**, to be eligible for HFC for school year 2025-26. For guidance on submitting the interschool agreements, refer to [Operational Memorandum No. 07:25 Interschool Agreements for School Year 2025-26](#).

The interschool agreement forms are available under “I” on the CSDE’s [Forms for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. This form must be signed by the authorized representative for the providing sponsor and the recipient site.

Reminder: Meal Pattern Changes Required by USDA final rule, Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, Effective July 1, 2025

As a reminder, the USDA final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), requires changes to the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) meal patterns for grades K-12 and preschool (ages 1-5) effective July 1, 2025. The information below in this section summarizes the meal pattern changes that must be implemented by **July 1, 2025**.

Updated resources to assist school food authorities (SFAs) with meeting the new requirements are identified in the “Need to Know” section below. For an overview of these changes, refer to the CSDE’s resource, [Summary of Final Rule Updates to the Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs](#), and [USDA Memo SP 19-2024, CACFP 07-2024, and SFSP 12-2024: Initial Implementation Memorandum: Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs](#).

New Product-based Limits for Added Sugars for School Year (SY) 2025-26, Effective July 1, 2025

Effective July 1, 2025, the NSLP, SBP, and ASP meal patterns must meet product-based limits for added sugars in breakfast cereals, yogurt, and flavored milk.

- **Breakfast cereals** cannot exceed 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce ([7 CFR 210.10\(c\)\(2\)\(iii\)\(B\)](#)). This requirement applies to the NSLP, SBP, and ASP meal patterns for grades K-12 and preschool. For additional guidance, refer to the Institute of Child Nutrition's fact sheet, [Nutrition Standards for Added Sugars: Breakfast Cereals](#), and the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the School Nutrition Programs](#).
- **Yogurt and soy yogurt** cannot exceed 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (no more than 2 grams per ounce) ([7 CFR 210.10\(c\)\(2\)\(iv\)\(C\)](#)). This requirement applies to the NSLP, SBP, and ASP meal patterns for grades K-12 and preschool. For additional guidance, refer to the Institute of Child Nutrition's fact sheet, [Nutrition Standards for Added Sugars: Yogurt](#), and the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the School Nutrition Programs](#).
- **Flavored milk** served in reimbursable meals and afterschool snacks cannot exceed 10 grams of added sugars per 8 fluid ounces. Flavored milk sold as a competitive food in middle and high schools cannot exceed 15 grams of added sugars per 12 fluid ounces. ([7 CFR 210.10\(d\)\(1\)\(iii\)](#)). This requirement applies to the NSLP, SBP, and ASP meal patterns for grades K-12. Flavored milk is not allowed in the preschool meal patterns. For additional guidance, refer to the Institute of Child Nutrition's fact sheet, [Nutrition Standards for Added Sugars: Flavored Milk](#).

New ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12 for SY 2025-26, Effective July 1, 2025

Effective July 1, 2025, the final rule makes significant changes to the current ASP meal pattern for grades K-12 by aligning it with the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) snack meal pattern for children. The key changes are summarized below.

- Reimbursable snacks must include the minimum serving of two of the five meal components (milk, meats/meat alternates, vegetables, fruits, grains).
- Breakfast cereals, yogurt, and flavored milk must meet the product-based limits for added sugars (refer to "[New Product-based limits for Added Sugars for School Year \(SY\) 2025, Effective July 1, 2025-26](#)" in the "Action Items" section above).
- Raw leafy greens (such as lettuce and spinach) credit as half the volume served, e.g., $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of raw leafy greens credits as $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the vegetables component.

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- Dried fruits (such as raisins, dried apricots, and dried mixed fruit) credit as twice the volume served, e.g., $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of dried fruit credits as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the fruits component.
- Juices cannot exceed half of the fruits and vegetables offered during the week.
- At least 80 percent of the weekly grains offered at snack must be WGR, based on the total oz eq of offered grains in the weekly snack menu.
- Grain-based desserts do not credit, except for sweet crackers such as animal and graham crackers.

The CSDE's updated [ASP meal pattern for grades K-12](#) for SY 2025-26 is now available in the "[Meal Patterns and Crediting](#)" section of the CSDE's ASP webpage. The updated SY 2025-26 [ASP Menu Form for Grades K-12](#) is now available in the "[Forms](#)" section of the CSDE's ASP webpage. These documents are dated June 2025.

For more information on the ASP meal pattern changes, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Summary of Final Rule Updates to the Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs](#), and the CSDE's recorded webinar from May 15, 2025, [Afterschool Snack Program \(ASP\) Meal Pattern Updates for School Year 2025-26 and ASP Operational Requirements](#). More resources are available in the "[Meal Patterns and Crediting](#)" section of the CSDE's ASP webpage.

Changes to Vegetable Substitutions in the SBP for Grades K-12 for SY 2025-26, Effective July 1, 2025

Effective July 1, 2025, SFAs that choose to offer vegetable substitutions in the SBP for grades K-12 must comply with the requirements of the USDA final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#). SFAs that offer vegetable substitutions on one day per school week may offer any vegetables from any subgroups, including starchy vegetables. SFAs that offer vegetable substitutions on two or more days per school week must offer vegetables from at least two different subgroups.

For additional guidance, refer to [USDA Memo SP 02-2025](#), Substitution of Vegetables for Fruit Flexibility in the School Breakfast Program: Q&As for Program Operators. For information on the vegetable subgroups, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Vegetable Subgroups in the National School Lunch Program](#).

Schools Must Accept Medical Statements from Registered Dietitians Effective July 1, 2025

Effective July 1, 2025, the USDA final rule requires that schools must accept medical statements from registered dietitians requesting meal modifications on behalf of students with disabilities in the school meal programs. For more information, refer to [7 CFR 210.10\(m\)\(1\)\(i\)](#) and [USDA Memo SP 07-2025 and CACFP 07-2025: Requirement to Accept Medical Statements from Registered Dietitians for Schools and Child and Adult Care Institutions and Facilities](#).

Need to Know

Updated NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 for SY 2025-26

The SY 2025-26 NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12 (dated June 2025) are now available. These meal patterns reflect the changes implemented by the USDA final rule, effective July 1, 2025. The NSLP and SBP meal patterns are available for five-day weeks and seven-day weeks in the “[Breakfast Meal Patterns](#)” section and “[Lunch Meal Patterns](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Updated Menu Planning Checklists for Lunch for Grades K-12 for SY 2025-26

The CSDE’s updated [Menu Planning Checklists for Lunch for Grades K-12](#) for SY 2025-26 (dated June 2025) reflect the changes implemented by the USDA final rule, effective July 1, 2025. These checklists assist SFAs with planning meals to meet the NSLP meal patterns. They are available for five-day and seven-day weeks for the three required grade groups (K-5, 6-8, and 9-12) and the optional grade group for K-8.

Updated CSDE Resources: Overview of Menu Planning for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

The SY 2025-26 versions of the CSDE’s resources below provide guidance to help menu planners meet the NSLP and SBP meal pattern requirements for grades K-12 and encourage student selections of reimbursable meals with offer versus serve (OVS).

- [Overview of Menu Planning for Grades K-12 in the NSLP](#)
- [Overview of Menu Planning for Grades K-12 in the SBP](#)

These documents reflect the changes implemented by the USDA final rule, effective July 1, 2025. They are available on the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Updated Preschool Meal Patterns for SY 2025-26: NSLP, SBP, and ASP

The CSDE's updated SY 2025-26 preschool meal patterns for the NSLP, SBP, and ASP (dated June 2025) reflect the changes implemented by the USDA final rule, effective July 1, 2025. They are now available in the "[Meal Patterns](#)" section of the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage and the direct links below.

- [ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers](#)
 - [Breakfast Pattern for Preschoolers](#)
 - [Lunch Meal Pattern for Preschoolers](#)
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Updated Preschool Menu Planning Forms for SY 2025-26

The CSDE's updated SY 2025-26 preschool menu planning forms for the NSLP, SBP, and ASP (dated June 2025) reflect the changes implemented by the USDA final rule, effective July 1, 2025. They are available in the "[Menu Forms and Production Records](#)" section of the CSDE's Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

New CSDE Resource: Meal Pattern and Crediting Resources for the School Nutrition Programs

The CSDE's new resource, [Meal Pattern and Crediting Resources for the School Nutrition Programs](#), (dated June 2025) replaces the previous resources below, which are discontinued.

- Resources for the School Meal Patterns for Grades K-12
- Resources for the Preschool Meal Patterns

This document includes resources and websites to assist school SFAs with meeting the USDA's meal patterns and crediting requirements for the NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP. Resources are organized alphabetically by topic.

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New CSDE Resource: Crediting Summary Charts for the School Nutrition Programs for SY 2025-26

The CSDE's new resource, [Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs](#), (dated June 2025) replaces the previous resources below, which are discontinued.

- Crediting Summary Charts for the ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
- Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs
- Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

This document summarizes the crediting requirements and methods for the five meal components of the NSLP, SBP, and ASP meal patterns for grades K-12 and preschool, including the updates required by the USDA final rule.

New CSDE Resource: Noncreditable Foods in the Meal Patterns for the School Nutrition Programs for SY 2025-26

The CSDE's new resource, [Noncreditable Foods in the Meal Patterns for the School Nutrition Programs](#), (dated June 2025) replaces the previous resources below, which are discontinued.

- Noncreditable Foods in the Afterschool Snack Program Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
- Noncreditable Foods in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12
- Noncreditable Foods in the Preschool Meal Patterns for the School Nutrition Programs

This document provides guidance on noncreditable foods for the NSLP, SBP, and ASP meal patterns for grades K-12 and preschool, including the updates required by the USDA final rule.

Updated CSDE Comparison Charts for the School Nutrition Programs for SY 2025-26

The CSDE's updated comparison charts below for SY 2025-26 (dated June 2025) reflect the changes implemented by the USDA final rule, effective July 1, 2025. These charts compare the meal pattern requirements for the preschool meal patterns (ages 1-5) and the meal patterns for grades K-12.

- [Comparison of Lunch and Breakfast Meal Pattern Requirements for Grades K-12 and Preschool in the School Nutrition Programs](#)
- [Comparison of Afterschool Snack Program \(ASP\) Meal Pattern Requirements for Grades K-12 and Preschool](#)

They are available on the CSDE's [Meal Patterns Preschoolers School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

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Updated CSDE Crediting Resources for the School Nutrition Programs for SY 2025-26

The CSDE has updated the SY 2025-26 crediting resources for the meal patterns for grades K-12 and the preschool meal patterns (ages 1-5) to reflect the meal pattern changes effective July 1, 2025, required by the USDA final rule. All previous versions are obsolete and should be discarded. The current versions are dated June 2025.

With the final rule taking effect, many meal pattern requirements are standardized across all school nutrition programs. Several CSDE resources that previously had separate versions due to different requirements for grade groups and school nutrition programs are now consolidated into one document. In addition, titles have changed for some documents to reflect the new requirements. This information is noted below as applicable.

The crediting resources are available on the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. The documentation resources available on the CSDE's [Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Milk Component

- [Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for the Milk Component in School Nutrition Programs](#)

Meats/Meat Alternates Component

- [Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in the School Nutrition Programs](#)
- [Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternate Products in the School Nutrition Programs](#)
- [Crediting Deli Meats in the School Nutrition Programs](#)
- [Crediting Nuts and Seeds in the School Nutrition Programs](#)
- [Crediting Yogurt in the School Nutrition Programs](#) (combines the previous handouts, *Crediting Yogurt in the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs* and *Crediting Yogurt in the Preschool Meal Patterns for the School Nutrition Programs*)
- [Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the School Nutrition Programs](#)
- [Requirements for Alternate Protein Products in the School Nutrition Programs](#)

Vegetables Component and Fruits Component

- [Crediting Juices in the School Nutrition Programs](#) (combines the previous handouts, *Crediting Juice in the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs* and *Crediting Juice in the Preschool Meal Patterns for the School Nutrition Programs*)
- [Crediting Smoothies in the School Nutrition Programs](#) (combines the previous handouts, *Crediting Smoothies in the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs* and *Crediting Smoothies in the Preschool Meal Patterns for the School Nutrition Programs*)
- [Crediting Soups in the School Nutrition Programs](#)
- [Vegetable Subgroups in the National School Lunch Program](#)

Grains Component

- [Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for the Grains Component in School Nutrition Programs](#)

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- [Crediting Enriched Grains in the School Nutrition Programs](#)
- [Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the School Nutrition Programs](#) (combines the previous handouts, *Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs* and *Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the Preschool Meal Patterns for the School Nutrition Programs*)
- [Crediting Grain-based Desserts in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](#) (previously called Crediting Grain-based Desserts in the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs)
- [Crediting Whole Grains in the School Nutrition Programs](#)
- [Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for the School Nutrition Programs](#) (combines the previous handouts, *Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs* and *Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for the NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12*, and replaces the now obsolete handout, *Calculation Methods for Grains/Breads Servings for the Afterschool Snack Program Meal Pattern for Grades K-12*)
- [Grain Ounce Equivalents for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](#) (combines the previous handouts, *Grain Ounce Equivalents for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12* and *Grain Ounce Equivalents for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs*, and replaces the now obsolete handout, *Servings for Grains/Breads in the Afterschool Snack Program Meal Pattern for Grades K-12*)
- [Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs](#) (previously titled, *Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12*)
- [How to Identify Creditable Grains for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs](#)
- [How to Use the Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the School Nutrition Programs](#) (previously called *How to Use the Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program*)
- [When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs](#)
- **Weekly Whole Grain-rich Percentage**
 - [Instructions for the Worksheet to Calculate the Weekly Percentage of Whole Grain-rich Menu Items in the School Nutrition Programs for Grades K-12](#) (new)
 - [Calculating the Weekly Percentage of Whole Grain-rich Menu Items in the School Nutrition Programs](#) (previously titled, *Calculating the Weekly Percentage of Whole Grain-rich Menu Items in the NSLP and SBP*)
 - [Worksheet to Calculate the Weekly Percentage of Whole Grain-rich Menu Items in the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](#) (previously titled, *Worksheet to Calculate the Weekly Percentage of Whole Grain-rich Menu Items in School Lunch and Breakfast Menus for Grades K-12*)

Product Documentation

- [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the School Nutrition Programs](#)

- [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the School Nutrition Programs](#)
 - [Using Product Formulation Statements in the School Nutrition Programs](#)
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Coming Soon: Updates to the CSDE's Recorded Training Modules for the NSLP, SBP, and ASP Meal Patterns

The CSDE is in the process of updating the current [What's in a Meal: National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](#) training modules for school year 2025-26, based on the meal pattern changes required by the USDA final rule, effective July 1, 2025. These training modules will have a new name, What's in a Meal: Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs, to reflect the inclusion of the ASP meal pattern for grades K-12, which will be consistent with the NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12 in many areas as of July 1, 2025.

The updated What's in a Meal training modules will include the 18 modules below.

- Module 1: Introduction to Training
- Module 2: Introduction to School Meal Patterns
- Module 3: National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Meal Pattern
- Module 4: School Breakfast Program (SBP) Meal Pattern
- Module 5: Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) Meal Pattern (new)
- Module 6: Dietary Specifications
- Module 7: Meal Pattern Documentation for School Menus
- Module 8: Meal Pattern Documentation for Crediting Commercial Processed Products
- Module 9: Milk Component
- Module 10: Meats/Meat Alternates Component
- Module 11: Fruits Component
- Module 12: Vegetables Component
- Module 13: Grains Component
- Module 14: Whole Grain-rich (WGR) Requirement
- Module 15: Grain Ounce Equivalents
- Module 16: Water Availability During Meal Service
- Module 17: Offer versus serve (OVS) in the NSLP
- Module 18: Offer versus serve (OVS) in the SBP

Sponsors may want to wait to participate in these training modules until the updated modules are available. The CSDE will notify sponsors in the School Lunch Tray where the updated modules are available.

Coming Soon: Updates to the CSDE's Recorded Training Modules, Preschool Meal Pattern Training for the School Nutrition Programs

The CSDE is in the process of updating the current [Preschool Meal Pattern Training for the School Nutrition Programs](#) for school year 2025-26, based on the meal pattern changes required by the USDA final rule, effective July 1, 2025. Sponsors may want to wait to participate in these training modules until the updated modules are available. The CSDE will notify sponsors in the School Lunch Tray where the updated modules are available.

Coming Soon: Updates to the CSDE's Menu Planning Guidance Series for Grades K-12 and Preschool

The CSDE is in the process of updating and consolidating the current menu planning guidance series for grades K-12 and preschool, to reflect the meal pattern changes required by the USDA final rule, effective July 1, 2025.

- Crediting Guide for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (*will be consolidated into one crediting guide for the NSLP, SBP, and ASP meal patterns for grades K-12 and preschool*)
- Guide to Meal Service Requirements for Preschoolers in the School Nutrition Programs
- Guide to Meal Service Requirements for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12
- Guide to Meeting the Preschool Meal Patterns and Crediting Requirements for the School Nutrition Programs (*will be revised to remove the crediting information, which will be part of the new consolidated crediting guide*)
- Guide to Menu Documentation for the School Nutrition Programs
- Guide to the Dietary Specifications for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12
- Guide to the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

The CSDE will notify sponsors where the updated guides are available.

Good to Know

Fourth Annual PK-12 School Staff Appreciation Digital Backpack Program

The fourth annual [PK-12 School Staff Appreciation Digital Backpack Program](#) will provide special discounts to museums, breweries, sporting events (from the Yankees and Red Sox to the Hartford Athletic, Connecticut Sun and Hartford Yard Goats) and much more. Additionally, the Digital Backpack highlights existing opportunities at over 100 Connecticut State Parks. The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's (DEEP) Passport to the Parks provides free entry and parking for Connecticut-registered vehicles. Museum Passes available at local public libraries, provide free admission to the exhibits at Dinosaur, Fort Trumbull, and Gillette Castle State Parks.

During the summer, this opportunity is open to all PK-12 public and private school staff, including Adult Education program staff, drivers, paraeducators, administrators, school nurses, teachers, **school nutrition staff**, school counselors, school psychologists, custodians, and everyone who plays a part in the school ecosystem.

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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_06_18_2025.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

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