

The School Lunch Tray: August 6, 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

- Triennial Assessment (Due June 30, 2025) and Reporting Form Due September 15, 2025
- School Year (SY) 2025-26 Free and Reduced-Price Application Materials

Need to Know

- None

Good to Know

- Updated USDA Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool
- Food Allergy Resource & Education's (FARE) Back-to-School Resource Hub
- Food Allergy Management in Schools (FAMS): Expert Recommendations for K-12
- Resource Roundup: USDA Child Nutrition Dashboard



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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Action Items

Triennial Assessment (Due June 30, 2025) and Reporting Form Due September 15, 2025

As a reminder, all sponsors were federally required to complete the triennial assessment of their Local School Wellness Policy (LSWP) by June 30, 2025, and to make the results publicly available. This includes posting the assessment summary on the organization's website or sharing it through other public channels.

In addition, the CSDE requires all sponsors to complete the [Triennial Assessment Reporting Form](#) by September 15, 2025. This reporting form allows the CSDE to track sponsor compliance with federal requirements related to the triennial assessment and public disclosure of LSWP implementation.

For guidance and resources related to the triennial assessment and local wellness policies, visit the "[Triennial Assessments](#)" section of the CSDE's School Wellness Policies webpage. For questions, email fionnuala.brown@ct.gov.

The CSDE thanks sponsors for their continued efforts to support student health and wellness in Connecticut schools.

School Year (SY) 2025-26 Free and Reduced-Price Application Materials

The CSDE has posted the updated school year (SY) 2025-26 free and reduced-price application materials in the "[Application Forms](#)" section and "[Parent and Guardian Notification Letters](#)" section of the CSDE's Eligibility for Free and Reduced-price Meals and Free Milk in School Nutrition Programs webpage. All forms are effective as of August 1, 2025.

- **How to Fill Out the Application Parent/Guardian Video:** The CSDE's parent/guardian video, [How to Fill Out the Application for Free and Reduced-price Meals or Free Milk and Summer EBT](#), is a brief video helping parents and guardians complete the free and reduced-price application form. Sponsors are encouraged to provide a link to this video on the school or district's website.
- **Public/Media Release:** The Public/Media Release template is available under [Forms for School Nutrition Programs](#).
- **Web-based Applications:** Sponsors using web-based applications are reminded to review the CSDE's document, [Requirements Before Implementing Web-based Applications](#). This guidance outlines key requirements for implementing web-based online free and reduced-price meal application systems.
- **New S-EBT Guidance Document:** The CSDE has developed a new resource, [Student Eligibility for Free or Reduced-price Meal Benefits Through the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer \(S-EBT\) Program](#), to clarify student eligibility for free or reduced-price meals via S-

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EBT. Starting in SY 2025-26, the "direct certification list" will be renamed the **Direct Certification S-EBT List**. This change reflects that students eligible for S-EBT will also automatically qualify for free or reduced-price meals or free milk and will be listed on the Direct Certification S-EBT list with special codes. Note that S-EBT eligibility is **not** considered direct certification since the household submitted an application to the S-EBT team for review and approval. Please review this new document carefully and share it with all relevant staff.

- **Direct Certification Rollover:** The CSDE IT Department is currently working on the SY 2025-26 direct certification rollover. The Bureau of Child Nutrition will notify districts via email once the rollover is completed.
- **Addendum C:** As a reminder, the [Addendum C: Information on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\) New Increased Income Guidelines Effective October 1, 2024](#), will *not* be updated until the end of September.

Good to Know

Updated USDA Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool

Team Nutrition recently announced the latest update to the [Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool](#). The Professional Standards Training Database, previously a site to search for relevant professional standards trainings, has been integrated into the Professional Standards Trainings and Tracker Tool (PSTTT), allowing users to both find training and log it for record keeping.

This integration is the result of user feedback, and it provides a new guest user access option for those who do not want to use the PSTTT for logging annual training hours.

Both registered and guest users will be able to search for and access Professional Standards trainings from the PSTTT site. Users may search for a training and view details such as title, length, format, provider, and cost. Links to trainings will allow users to navigate to the website where the training is hosted. Training format ranges from online trainings, print materials, and even face-to-face trainings.

Team Nutrition's [Professional Standards Resources](#) website include links to the PSTTT and recorded webinars on how to use the PSTTT. For additional information, visit the [Professional Standards for School Nutrition Professionals](#) website.

Food Allergy Resource & Education's (FARE) Back-to-School Resource Hub

The Food Allergy Resource & Education's (FARE) [Back-to-School Resource Hub](#) is newly updated and full of practical tools—from downloadable posters to online trainings—to help families and schools feel more ready and confident for the year ahead.

Food Allergy Management in Schools (FAMS): Expert Recommendations for K-12

FARE's [Food Allergy Management in Schools \(FAMS\): Expert Recommendations for K–12](#) offer schools a clear and practical roadmap to support students with food allergies. These recommendations provide practical, evidence-based, actionable suggestions for how schools can become safer for children living with food allergies. This guide was funded by the CDC in partnership with the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Resource Roundup: USDA Child Nutrition Dashboard

The [USDA Child Nutrition Dashboard](#) is comprised of public data published in the [child nutrition tables](#). The goal of the dashboard is to provide national and state level visualization of meals served, participation, and funding data for the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, and Summer Food Service Program. The dashboard can be used by federal, state, and local organizations to assess trends in child nutrition program activity.

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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_08_06_2025.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

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