

The School Lunch Tray: May 6, 2026

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. 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. 08-26: Paid Lunch Equity Guidance for School Year 2026-27: PLE Request Due June 30, 2026
- Reminder: Steps to Take Now for Submitting the Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Statement for School Year 2026-27, Due July 1, 2026
- Reminder: Interschool Agreements for School Year 2026-27: Due July 1, 2026 (Full Service) or August 30, 2026 (Vended)
- Final Reminder: Register by May 8, 2026, for the 2026 WSCC Academy on May 20, 2026

Need to Know

- None

Good to Know

- None

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Action Items

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 08-26: Paid Lunch Equity Guidance for School Year 2026-27: PLE Request Due June 30, 2026

The CSDE's [Operational Memorandum 08-26: Paid Lunch Equity Guidance for School Year 2026-27](#) provides guidance regarding the paid lunch equity (PLE) allowances for school year 2026-27. Note that a PLE request is part of the memo and must be completed by June 30, 2026.

Reminder: Steps to Take Now for Submitting the Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Statement for School Year 2026-27, Due July 1, 2026

All public school sponsors of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) must submit the 2026-27 HFC Statement and upload their final board-approved minutes by July 1, 2026. [Operational Memorandum No. 03-26: Requirements for Submitting the HFC Statement for School Year 2026-27](#) provides the required motion language and summarizes the **steps that districts must take now** to ensure the accurate and timely submission of the 2026-27 HFC Statement by the **July 1** deadline.

All Board of Education's (BOEs) **must** vote on whether to participate in the healthy food option of HFC.

- If the BOE votes “yes” to the healthy food option, a vote on whether to allow food exemptions is **required**. The BOE may choose to vote on whether to allow beverage exemptions.
- if the BOE votes “no” to the healthy food option, a vote on whether to allow food exemptions is **not** required. The BOE may choose to vote on whether to allow beverage exemptions.

The “[Annual HFC Application](#)” section of the CSDE's HFC webpage provides information on the required steps for submitting the annual HFC Statement. The CSDE's 21-minute video, [Completing the Application Process for HFC](#), provides detailed guidance on the HFC application process.

Note: Sponsors do not submit the HFC Statement and final BOE-approved minutes until requested by the CSDE. The CSDE's Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs (CNP System) will be open to submit the annual HFC Statement in April 2026.

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Reminder: Interschool Agreements for School Year 2026-27: Due July 1, 2026 (Full Service) or August 30, 2026 (Vended)

[Operational Memorandum No. 04-26 Interschool Agreements for School Year 2026-27](#) provides guidance on the requirements and deadlines for submitting interschool agreements to the CSDE. Sponsors that vend or satellite meals to another district are required to submit and receive approval of an annual interschool agreement to the CSDE. This form must be signed by the authorized representative for the providing sponsor and the recipient site.

- 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, 2026**.
- Recipient Site Vended Interschool Agreements must be submitted to the CSDE at least two weeks before the start of the school year and no later than **August 31, 2026**.

The interschool agreement forms are available under “I” on the CSDE’s [Forms for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. Operational Memorandum No. 04-26 is available on the CSDE’s [School Nutrition Operational Memos 2026](#) webpage.

Final Reminder: Register by May 8, 2026, for the 2026 WSCC Academy on May 20, 2026

Registration is open through May 8 for the University of Connecticut Rudd Center’s 2026 WSCC Academy, a day of free professional development. Connecticut schools can send either a district or school level team. Teams are encouraged to include representation from both wellness and climate teams for a day of meaningful integration and planning.

- **Date and time:** May 20, 2026, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- **Location:** UConn Hartford
- **Registration:** [2026 WSCC Academy Registration](#)

For more information, refer to the flyer at the end of the [School Lunch Tray from April 22, 2026](#).

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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/2026/slt_05_06_2026.pdf.



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