

The School Lunch Tray: September 9, 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

- USDA Requirement for Displaying "And Justice for All" (AJFA) Posters
- CSDE Virtual Office Hour: How to Complete and Submit the Annual Financial Report on September 14, 2026
- CSDE Virtual Trainings – Getting Ready for Success: Preparing for the School Nutrition Program Administrative and Procurement Reviews
- CT Fresh Ed: Buy Local Program Guidance on Breakfast Items 

Need to Know

- CT Grown for CT Kids Week, October 5-9, 2026, Celebrating "Breakfast and Beyond – CT Fresh all Day Long" 
- USDA Virtual Training – Local Procurement 101: A Refresher for the 2026-27 School Year 
- Reminder: Completion of the Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) Online Agreement

Good to Know

- Reminder: Register for the School Nutrition Association of Connecticut (SNACT) Annual Conference: October 29 and 30, 2026

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Action Items

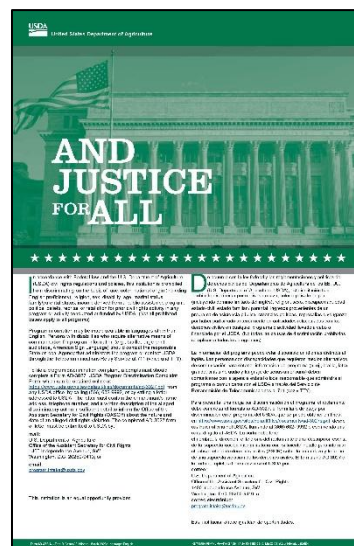
USDA Requirement for Displaying “And Justice for All” (AJFA) Posters

The USDA requires that school food authorities (SFAs) must display the current version of the green AJFA poster (11 inches by 17 inches) in a prominent location where program benefits/services are provided, and the poster can be seen by program participants and potential participants.

The current USDA-approved AJFA poster is dated **March 2025** and is indicated as “Form AD-475-A—Title IX Poster/Published: March 2025/Language: English” on the bottom left of the poster. This is the only allowable version that SFAs can display.

The CSDE does not have a supply of the current AJFA posters, and they are not currently available for order. If the March 2025 AJFA posters are not available for display, paper copies may be substituted. The AJFA posters may be downloaded and printed at the following link: [AJFA poster \(AD-475-A\)](#).

SFAs should contact their [CSDE school nutrition team member](#) with any questions.



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CSDE Virtual Office Hour: How to Complete and Submit the Annual Financial Report on September 14, 2026

The CSDE will conduct a virtual Teams office hour for school food authorities (SFAs) on September 14, 2026, from 2:00-3:00 pm. This session will answer questions on completing and submitting the Annual Financial Report for School Nutrition Programs, which is due September 15, 2026.

Use the Teams link below to access the office hour.

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join: <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/288741899882025?p=9FlaJAqir6S4QYKcop>

Meeting ID: 288 741 899 882 025

Passcode: sh2KG9nd

[Need help?](#) | [System reference](#)

Dial in by phone

[+1 860-840-2075,,695219124#](#) United States, Hartford

[Find a local number](#)

Phone conference ID: 695 219 124#

CSDE Virtual Trainings – Getting Ready for Success: Preparing for the School Nutrition Program Administrative and Procurement Reviews

In early August, the CSDE notified all SFAs that were selected for a school nutrition program Administrative Review (AR) and Procurement Review (PR) for school year (SY) 2026-27. Below is important information regarding the trainings and dates.

Trainings

The three virtual training sessions listed below are **mandatory for SFAs scheduled for an AR and/or PR during SY 2026–27**. The sessions are also open to all SFAs, including those not selected for an AR. New school nutrition program directors are encouraged to attend.

Each webinar will focus on different areas and is designed to help SFAs understand the Administrative Review and Procurement Review process, prepare required documentation, and identify key areas of focus before the AR/PR.

Required Attendance

The three trainings are required for food service directors and business administrators who have been notified that they will receive an AR and/or PR during SY 2026–27. [Registration](#) is required for SFAs having an AR. SFAs not having an AR or PR do not have to register to attend the trainings.

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Training Dates

- September 10, 2026, 1:00–3:30 p.m., Overview of the AR process, AROT, Applications and Verification, Meal Counting and Claiming
- September 17, 2026, 1:00–3:30 p.m., Overview of Meal Compliance, Menu Documentation, Accommodation, General Areas, Onsite Reviews and Supplemental Areas
- September 24, 2026, 1:00–3:30 p.m., Overview of Procurement

Training Access Information

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join: <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/282509131680015?p=oQrMXM7ebIbtIpEtJe>

Meeting ID: 282 509 131 680 015

Passcode: aa6id6AR

[Need help?](#) | [System reference](#)

Dial in by phone

[+1 860-840-2075](tel:+18608402075), [189456618#](tel:+189456618) United States, Hartford

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Phone conference ID: 189 456 618#

CT Fresh Ed: Buy Local Program Guidance on Breakfast Items



As CT Grown for CT Kids Week approaches with the theme “Breakfast and Beyond – CT Fresh all day long!” please be aware of the following when purchasing local breakfast items:

- Bacon is not creditable under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and is not eligible for reimbursement with CT Fresh Ed: Buy Local Program funds.
- Link sausage is also not eligible for reimbursement under the Buy Local Program as it is not minimally processed.
- Any yogurt served in the NSLP or School Breakfast Program must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces. Any submissions for reimbursement of local yogurt must include documentation showing the yogurt meets this requirement. For more information on added sugars in yogurt, refer to the CSDE’s resource, [Crediting Yogurt in the School Nutrition Programs](#), and visit “[Yogurt and Soy Yogurt](#)” in the “Meats and Meat Alternates” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

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For more information about the CT Fresh Ed: Buy Local Program, including approved participating sponsors and funding allocations, please visit the CSDE's [Buy Local Program](#) webpage.

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Need to Know

CT Grown for CT Kids Week, October 5-9, 2026, Celebrating “Breakfast and Beyond – CT Fresh all Day Long”

This year’s CT Grown for CT Kids Week theme, “*Breakfast and Beyond – CT Fresh all Day Long*,” focuses on the local items that schools serve at breakfast. Farm to School extends beyond fresh produce. CT farms also provide dairy items such as cheese and yogurt, vegetables like sweet potatoes, and proteins such as sausage, ground meat, and pork or chicken. Many of these items are ideal for the SBP and can also be incorporated into “breakfast for lunch” meals.

[Regional Farm to School Coordinators](#) are available to help source CT Grown items for breakfast, lunch, or snacks, and can help plan menu items or activities to support CT Grown for CT Kids Week. Please add all planned activities to the [CT Grown for CT Kids Week Registration](#), which allows the CSDE to track the number of schools celebrating this special week.



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USDA Virtual Training – Local Procurement 101: A Refresher for the 2026-27 School Year

Join the USDA Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA) as part of the *Harvest to Hallways Initiative* for a webinar that will inspire and empower SFAs to incorporate local foods into school menus. This webinar will review local procurement strategies, the geographic preference option, and USDA farm to school resources.

Local Procurement 101 will be offered twice, covering the same content in each session:

- Webinar 1: September 9, 2026, 11:00 a.m. – [Registration Link for September 9](#)
- Webinar 2: September 15, 2026, 2:00 p.m. – [Registration Link for September 15](#)

State agencies, SFAs, and others are welcome to register for either session. Choose the date and time that works best. **Both webinars will feature identical material.**

Note: This training does not replace the required attendance at the CSDE trainings, Procurement 101 Training 4 Part Series (October 15 and 22, 2026, and November 5 and 12, 2026). Refer to the [SLT Newsletter 09 02 2026](#) for information and registration regarding the upcoming CSDE procurement training.

Reminder: Completion of the Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) Online Agreement

Local educational agencies (LEAs) are reminded that their CNP Online Agreement must be approved before the September claim may be submitted. The CSDE is approving CNP Online Agreements in the order that they are submitted. Issues with the Agreement will delay the approval process.

If the LEA's CNP Online Agreement has not been approved, please review the agreement to ensure that 1) the checklist items have been correctly uploaded and completed in full, especially the **Meal Application and Data Management Process Meal Application and Data Process** form, and the **Site Information on Money Collection System and Point-of-Service Meal Counting System** document; 2) the policy statement is signed by an authorized representative, and 3) the Direct Certification for Reduced-price Medicaid Letter Version 3 is uploaded. Additionally, carefully review each site application to ensure that the pricing information is accurate, especially the reduced price for breakfast and lunch.

For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Updating the Sponsor Application for School Nutrition Programs School Year 2025-26](#) and the [Required Items for the Online Sponsor Application "Checklist Summary" in the Connecticut State Department of Education's \(CSDE\) Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs](#).

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Good to Know

Reminder: Register for the School Nutrition Association of Connecticut (SNACT) Annual Conference: October 29 and 30, 2026

The SNACT Annual Conference will be held on October 29 and 30, 2026, at the Mystic Marriott. The deadline to reserve the hotel is September 28, 2026.

This year's theme is *Fueling Futures: Growing Impact in School Nutrition*. The conference will feature three leadership sessions with nationally recognized speaker Joe Pettit, as well as culinary demonstrations, a trade show, and the opportunity to network with fellow colleagues. Thursday night will feature a Carnival Extravaganza with Bingo and awards. For more information, visit SNACT's [Annual Conference](#) webpage. For information on how to become a SNACT member, visit the [SNACT Membership](#) webpage.

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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_09_09_2026.pdf.

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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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