

## The School Lunch Tray: June 30, 2021

Dear School Sponsors of Child Nutrition Programs:

The School Lunch Tray contains the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) weekly e-mail notifications for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) school nutrition programs. This week's topics are listed below.

- Operational Memorandum No. 06-21: Annual Application Process for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)
- CEP Annual Notification of Local Educational Agencies (LEAs)
- Overview of Outreach and Evaluation for Connecticut Summer Meals
- Accessing Nutrient, Allergen, and Ingredient information for USDA Foods in Schools: Webinar on August 5, 2021
- Food Allergy Research & Education's (FARE) New Substitutions Hub
- Farm to School Topic Area added to the Institute of Child Nutrition's (ICN) Child Nutrition Sharing Site
- Resource Roundup: USDA's Eligibility Manual for School Meals

Please review and share with appropriate staff members. Thank you.



### Operational Memorandum No. 06-21: Annual Application Process for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

[CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 6-21](#) outlines the annual application process for the CEP. LEAs must formally apply for the CEP for school year 2021-22 if they meet at least one of the following criteria:

- LEAs/schools electing CEP participation for the first time;
- LEAs/schools in the mid-cycle of CEP participation that are requesting changes to their currently approved ISP;
- LEAs/schools that are currently in the fourth year of CEP participation with an ISP greater than or equal to 40 percent, and would like to start a new four-year cycle; and
- LEAs/schools currently in the fourth year of CEP participation with a new, calculated ISP greater than or equal to 30 percent, but less than 40 percent (eligible for one “grace” year based on the ISP as of the LEA’s selected date between July 1, 2020, and June 7, 2021, in year 4 of the current four-year cycle).

**Note:** LEAs and schools **must notify the CSDE no later than July 15, 2021**, if they intend to:

- formally apply for the CEP for the next school year;
- continue with their current ISP (for mid-cycle CEP participating LEAs and schools);
- recalculate their ISP; or
- withdraw from the CEP and revert to the regular meal counting and claiming process.

To notify the CSDE about the LEA/school’s CEP decisions above, email your [CSDE school nutrition consultant](#).

Operational Memorandum No. 06-21 is available on the CSDE’s [Operational Memoranda for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. For information on how to access the CNP System to enter notification data, refer to the CSDE’s document, [Community Eligibility Provision \(CEP\) Data Collection Guidance for School-level Eligibility Information](#).

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### CEP Annual Notification of Local Educational Agencies (LEAs)

The 2021-22 lists of eligible and near-eligible LEAs and schools are now available in the [Eligibility](#) section of the CSDE’s [CEP](#) webpage. The CSDE would like to thank all LEAs for submitting data to inform the eligibility lists. The CSDE will submit these data to the USDA.

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### Overview of Outreach and Evaluation for Connecticut Summer Meals

The CSDE is pleased to announce a partnership with the University of Connecticut (UConn) Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity, UConn Extension, and End Hunger Connecticut! to conduct the Summer Meals study outreach and evaluation. Each of our partners bring a unique skills set and access to local communities that can help the CSDE make Summer Meals more accessible.

- The **End Hunger Connecticut!** team will implement a statewide strategy for summer nutrition program outreach events to increase the number of children served through the USDA summer nutrition programs. This will include a statewide communications plan through media, advertising, and social media engagement. End Hunger Connecticut! will engage community organizations and corporate assistance from grocers and retail stores to share information on summer nutrition programs in local communities.
- The **UConn Extension** team will provide outreach and communication support to increase community awareness, participation, and retention in summer nutrition programs. Specifically, this focuses on increasing participation in summer nutrition programs by building capacity among community-based partners, and ensuring that all outreach activities engage with people of color and targets individuals in rural, suburban, and urban communities. This work will also focus on engagement in Farm-to-Summer and increasing access to local foods.
- The **Rudd Center** is working to determine ways to increase access to Summer Meals by evaluating outreach methods and service delivery models to increase participation in the summer nutrition programs. This work will include visitation, observation, interviews, and surveys for summer nutrition program sponsors, staff and households. The team will look for barriers to participation with households and collect meal data.

These organizations will be contacting sponsors of Summer Meals to offer support and partnership, and conduct evaluation activities. The CSDE encourages sponsors to engage with these organizations to increase the accessibility of Summer Meals.

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### **Accessing Nutrient, Allergen, and Ingredient information for USDA Foods in Schools: Webinar on August 5, 2021**

On August 5, 2021, from 2:00-3:00 p.m., the FNS will conduct a webinar for states and school districts that serve direct delivered USDA Foods for child nutrition programs. FNS plans to release a new initiative that will allow states and school districts to access up-to-date, vendor-specific nutrition, allergen, and ingredient information for direct delivered USDA Foods. The GS1 Global Data Synchronization Network™ (GS1 GDSN) project will inform the ordering decisions of FNS stakeholders and will help them manage meal planning to meet USDA nutrition standards and provide safe meals for students with food allergies and other special dietary needs. Participants will learn how this information will be made available and when USDA Foods vendors will be required to submit nutrition, allergen, and ingredient information.

Registration is available at <https://usda-fns.webex.com/usda-fns/onstage/g.php?MTID=e20d21918e624ab454ba2f4d2fi83ee51>.

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### **Food Allergy Research & Education's (FARE) New Substitutions Hub**

FARE's website includes a new [Substitutions Hub](#) that provides information on handy alternative ingredients to replace common allergens in cooking and baking. Examples of substitutions are provided for milk, egg, wheat, butter, cheese, and peanut butter. The website also includes videos and downloadable handouts with helpful tips and recipes.

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### **Farm to School Topic Area added to the Institute of Child Nutrition's (ICN) Child Nutrition Sharing Site**

The ICN's Child Nutrition Sharing Site (CNSS) has added a Farm to School topic area to the [Resource Hub](#)! In collaboration with the ICN, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Office of Community Food Systems (OCFS) is building the Farm to School Database and welcomes your farm to school resource submissions. As farm to school continues to grow across the country, it is important for stakeholders to have the opportunity to share and access farm to school resources. The ICN CNSS Resource Hub is a one-stop-shop for Farm to School grantees, state agencies, and other partner organizations to host and promote these resources.

To submit resources to the Farm to School topic category in the CNSS Resource Hub, visit the [Submission Form](#) and under "Type of Program", choose Farm to School and complete the form.

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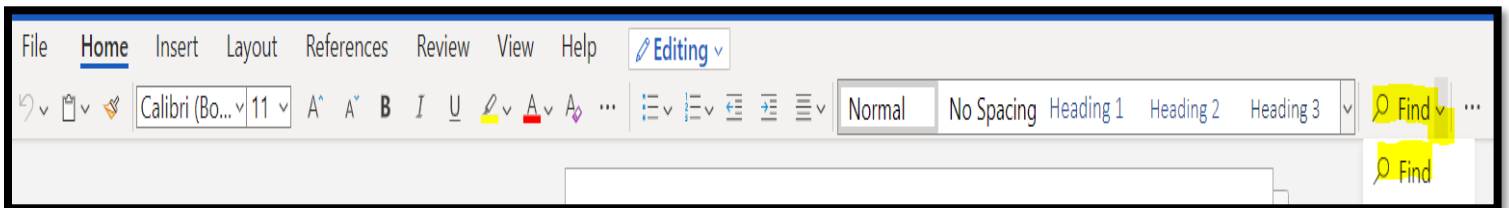
## Resource Roundup: USDA’s Eligibility Manual for School Meals

This week’s Resource Roundup highlights the USDA’s resource, [Eligibility Manual for School Meals](#). The most recent version is dated July 18, 2017. This document is the “go to” manual for determining officials, direct certification contacts, and verifying officials. It provides important information on how to:

- process free and reduced-price meal applications,
- establish direct certification student eligibility, and
- conduct the annual verification of newly approved applications on file as of October 1.

This manual also provides guidance on record retention, confidentiality and disclosure requirements, and verification for cause.

**Quick tip:** Download the manual to your desktop. Use “Find” on your toolbar and type in the word you are looking for, e.g., “foster.” The Find or Navigation tool will take you to all of the locations where the word “foster” is located in the document. Using “Find” on your toolbar will help to save time when searching for information.





For more information, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [School Lunch Tray Table Talk](#) webpage, or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Training/TableTalk/SLT\\_06\\_30\\_2021.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Training/TableTalk/SLT_06_30_2021.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;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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