

The School Lunch Tray: September 8, 2021

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.

- Updated National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) Preschool Meal Patterns for School Year 2021-22
- Updated Comparison Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 and Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP
- Operational Memorandum No. 09-2021: School Meals Emergency Operating Costs Reimbursement Program
- Reminder: Required Survey for SFAs: Local School Wellness Policy Triennial Assessments in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program
- New Back-to-School Resources from Team Nutrition
- USDA Recorded Webinar Available: Planning for a Dynamic School Environment: Guidance for Meal Service Flexibilities for School Year 2021-22
- Resource Roundup: New CSDE Resource: Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

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



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Updated Preschool Meal Patterns and Menu Planning Forms for School Year 2021-22

The updated 2021-22 preschool meal patterns for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) are now available on the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

- [ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers](#)
- [Breakfast Pattern for Preschoolers](#)
- [Lunch Meal Pattern for Preschoolers](#)

The preschool menu planning forms are also updated. The preschool menu planning forms for breakfast and lunch are available in the "[Menu Forms for Preschoolers](#)" section of the CSDE's Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage. The preschool menu planning forms for the ASP are available in the "[Documents/Forms](#)" section of the CSDE's ASP webpage.

Please discard any previous versions and replace with these September 2021 versions.

Updated Comparison Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 and Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP

The CSDE has updated the comparison charts for the meal patterns for grades K-12 and preschoolers for school year 2021-22. These documents summarize and compare the meal pattern requirements and applicable resources for preschoolers and grades K-12 in the school nutrition program. School food authorities (SFAs) must ensure that all foods served in school meals meet the specific meal pattern requirements for each grade group. The direct links are below.

- [Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschool and Grades K-12 in the Afterschool Snack Program of the NSLP](#)
- [Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschool and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#)

These charts are also available under "C" on the CSDE's [Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Operational Memorandum No. 09-2021: School Meals Emergency Operating Costs Reimbursement Program

[CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 9-2021](#) contains important information about the additional funding awarded to the Connecticut State Department of Education through the School Meals Emergency Operating Costs Reimbursement Program to be distributed to school food authorities whose revenues declined or were temporarily interrupted during the early months of the pandemic due to COVID-19.

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The Child Nutrition Emergency Cost Reimbursement Program: School Nutrition Programs [Webinar](#) from August 19, 2021, is now available in the “[Related Resources](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Operating Child Nutrition Programs during COVID-19 Outbreaks](#) webpage.

Operational Memorandum No. 09-2021 is available on the CSDE’s [Operational Memoranda for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Reminder: Required Survey for SFAs: Local School Wellness Policy Triennial Assessments in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

On June 11, 2021, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) issued [COVID-19: Child Nutrition Response #98: Nationwide Waiver of Local School Wellness Policy Triennial Assessments in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast](#) to provide local educational agencies (LEAs) with additional time to focus on wellness activities. The new deadline to complete a triennial assessment is **June 30, 2022**.

All SFAs are required to complete a [brief survey](#) by **September 10, 2021**. This survey will assist the CSDE with establishing a plan for providing technical assistance on school wellness policies to SFAs.

For more information on the triennial assessment requirements, visit the “[What’s Next](#)” section of the CSDE’s School Wellness Policies webpage.

New Back-to-School Resources from Team Nutrition

USDA’s Team Nutrition initiative invites you to share *Stronger with School Meals* materials with schools, families, and children. School meals, and the school nutrition professionals that provide them, help children be strong physically (through good nutrition) and mentally (through the sharing of mealtimes in person or virtually). Celebrate the school community and promote healthy foods with these fun new school meals materials. Materials include:

- an infographic for teachers and parents (in English and Spanish);
- an activity booklet for elementary-aged students;
- five stickers for students;
- two buttons for school nutrition professionals; and
- two Thank You cards that parents, teachers, staff, and students can use to thank school nutrition professionals.

All materials are available for download at fns.usda.gov/tn/stronger-school-meals-educational-materials. Printed versions will be made available this fall only for Team Nutrition Schools. Schools can join Team Nutrition Schools or update their school’s information at fns.usda.gov/tn/schools.

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Team Nutrition has also updated [Seamless Summer Option: Providing Multiple Meals at a Time During the Coronavirus](#). This tip sheet includes considerations, tips, best practices, and sample menus for SSO operators who wish to distribute multiple meals at one time.

For additional back-to-school resources, visit Team Nutrition's Back-to-School Support Kit at fns.usda.gov/tn/back-school.

USDA Recorded Webinar Available: Planning for a Dynamic School Environment: Guidance for Meal Service Flexibilities for School Year 2021-22

On August 26, 2021, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) delivered a live webinar to state agencies and local program operators that provided an overview of the nationwide waivers for school year 2021-22. The webinar discussed scenarios where flexibilities may be utilized and suggestions for planning for the unexpected. Resources were shared to further help state agencies and local program operators meet the unique needs of their community. The webinar recording is available at <https://youtu.be/rHGnysYjCWI>.

Resource Roundup: New CSDE Resource: Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

The CSDE's new resource, [Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs](#), provides quick access to information about the crediting and documentation requirements for the preschool meal patterns for the NSLP, SBP, ASP, and SSO. This document includes an overview chart of the crediting and documentation requirements, and individual charts that summarize the crediting requirements and methods for each of the five meal pattern components, including milk, meat/meat alternates, vegetables, fruits, and grains.

As a reminder, the CSDE's "[Crediting Foods in Preschool Menus](#)" section of the CSDE's Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage contains many more resources to help SFAs determine whether and how foods and beverages credit in the NSLP and SBP preschool meal patterns, including crediting handouts, USDA and CSDE memos, and comparison charts.

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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_09_08_2021.pdf.

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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.

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