

The School Lunch Tray: October 13, 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.

- Reminder: Updating the School Year 2021-2022 Sponsor Application
- Reminder: CSDE's Survey for Reporting Supply Chain Issues Impacting Operations
- Calendar of School Nutrition Program Requirements and Activities for School Year 2021-22
- Buy American Request for Information (RFI) Responses due November 2, 2021
- Team Nutrition Webinar Recording Available: Master the Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool (PSTTT)
- USDA Foods from Farm to Plate e-Letters
- New USDA Tool: Shop Simple with MyPlate
- Resource Roundup: Instructions for Submitting the Financial Report for School Nutrition Programs (Due October 31, 2021)

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



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Reminder: Updating the School Year 2021-2022 Sponsor Application











School year (SY) 2021-22 Sponsor Applications must be completed and submitted through the [Connecticut Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs \(CNP System\)](#) by **October 15, 2021**. Please review the instructions, [Updating the School Year 2021-2022 Sponsor Application for School Nutrition Programs Manual](#), which also include important instructions for completing the Food Safety Inspection Report and the annual Financial Report. *Please review this information carefully.* **Claims cannot be entered or submitted without an approved application.**

Note: Instructions for applying for the SY 2021-2022 U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Waivers will be sent to each sponsor after their SY 2021-22 Sponsor Application is approved.

Important Information about the Checklist Summary:

- Carefully review the [Required Items for the Online Sponsor Application “Checklist Summary” in the Connecticut State Department of Education’s \(CSDE\) Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs](#) to ensure you upload all materials required for completing the Sponsor Application. Incomplete Sponsor Applications will not be reviewed or approved. Required materials include the **Application for Free and Reduced-price School Meals** and the approval and verification template letters.
- National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and Seamless Summer Option (SSO) sponsors must make the **Application for Free and Reduced-price School Meals** available to all households and process them accordingly to ensure that students receive additional benefits that they may be eligible for, such as Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) benefits. This includes notifying the household of a student’s eligibility.
- Please note that the **Sample Parent/Guardian Notification Letter for Direct Certification Version 3: Medicaid Benefits Reduced-price Meals** must be uploaded for sponsors that collect Applications for Free and Reduced-price School Meals. **This form must be uploaded under “SNP Upload.”**
- Additionally, although the online application screen indicates that the “*Item is not required for submittal or approval” (see the screen shot below), this language pertains only to those sponsors (i.e., residential child care institutions (RCCIs), Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) district-wide) that are prohibited from collecting applications for free and reduced-price school meals. **All other NSLP and SSO sponsors must submit each of the forms included on the attached checklist.**

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Required Forms/Documents to send to CNP	Document Submitted to CNP	Date Submitted to CNP	Document on File w/CNP
Policy Statement (SIGNED)	 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meal Application and Data Management Process	 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Site Information on Money Collection System and Point-of-Service Meal Counting System	 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public Media Release	 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* Application for Free and Reduced-price School Meals or Free Milk	 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* Parent/Guardian Letter: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) (Meals or Milk)	 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* Parent/Guardian Notification Letter (approving or denying meals or milk benefits)	 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* Parent/Guardian Notification Letter of Direct Certification - Version 1	 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* Parent/Guardian Notification Letter of Direct Certification - Version 2	 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* Notice of Selection for Verification of Eligibility	 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* Letter of Verification Results and Adverse Action for Income Households	 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* SNP Upload	 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* Item is not required for submittal or approval.			

Questions may be directed to your [CSDE CNP consultant](#).

Reminder: CSDE's Survey for Reporting Supply Chain Issues Impacting Operations

The CSDE is aware that school food authorities (SFAs) may be experiencing challenges with the supply chain and that this causes great concern about the ability to acquire needed items. In order to quantify the impact on operations throughout the state, please complete the [CSDE's brief survey to report supply chain issues impacting your program](#). This survey link can be used throughout the school year to report supply chain issues.

Calendar of School Nutrition Program Requirements and Activities for School Year 2021-22

The Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [Calendar of School Nutrition Program Requirements and Activities](#) is now available for school year 2021-22. This calendar helps school food authorities (SFAs) comply with the many requirements and due dates associated with operating the USDA's school nutrition programs.

As a best practice, SFAs should review the CSDE's calendar and enter the relevant due dates in their own calendar to assist with the timely submission of all required documents. Please share with calendar with all staff members responsible for reporting and compliance in your school nutrition programs.

Note: Schedules on this calendar are subject to change and do not represent all federal and state requirements for operating the USDA Child Nutrition Programs in schools and institutions.

Buy American Request for Information (RFI) Responses due November 2, 2021

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) wants to hear from you! Responses to the [School Meals Buy American Provision Request for Information](#) are due on November 2, 2021. FNS is seeking feedback from all stakeholders on how the Buy American provision and guidance are currently implemented, changes FNS should make to current regulations and how FNS can better support local operators. FNS greatly appreciates the efforts of school food stakeholders to keep kids fed while facing pandemic-related challenges. Your feedback on this Request for Information will help FNS improve school meal procurement requirements in the future.

Please submit your responses at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/08/04/2021-16479/request-for-information-buy-american-in-the-national-school-lunch-program-and-school-breakfast>.

Team Nutrition Webinar Recording Available: Master the Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool (PSTTT)

The recording of the Team Nutrition webinar: [Master the Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool \(PSTTT\)](#) is now available for all school nutrition professionals. Since the release of the PSTTT in November 2017, Team Nutrition has continuously worked to incorporate feedback to streamline the user experience. This webinar showcased the latest enhancements, including

- updated Welcome dashboard where you can access your own certificates and training history;
- optional employee identification numbers that can be added to employee profiles;
- training duration logged in increments of 5 minutes; and
- additional manager/director role features, including:
 - deactivating employees;
 - managing schools within their district;
 - including employees with no logged training in summary report;
 - editing district information;
 - creating new district;
 - requesting enhanced access if responsible for managing multiple districts, including districts in different states; and
 - uploading multiple new training titles and their training information at one time to be included on the PSTTT training list.

Team Nutrition also provided information about the new feature (released on September 13) which allows managers and directors the flexibility of uploading multiple employees' information to easily create user profiles at one time. The webinar provided a live demonstration of the PSTTT and an overview of the professional standards requirements and resources. Participants learned about the benefits of using the PSTTT and these new features which allow directors, managers, and staff to prepare for the 2021-22 school year.

USDA Foods from Farm to Plate e-Letters

The [USDA Foods from Farm to Plate e-Letters](#) feature resources, news, and best practices, rotating the monthly focus between a trio of program-specific e-Letters, one of which is the "Spotlight on Schools" for USDA Foods in the National School Lunch Program and other child nutrition programs. Visit the webpage to subscribe.

New USDA Tool: Shop Simple with MyPlate

The USDA recently released a new tool called Shop Simple with MyPlate. This tool helps people save money while shopping for healthy food choices. You can find cost-saving opportunities in your area and discover new ways to prepare budget-friendly foods.

The tool can be used from any device and is available at <https://www.myplate.gov/app/shopsimple>. Browse budget-friendly food suggestions from each of the MyPlate food groups, get tips for purchasing and storing the food, serving ideas, recipes, and nutrition info. Enter your zip code to find cost-saving opportunities in your local area, including stores that accept SNAP EBT, rewards for SNAP participants, and farmers markets.

Resource Roundup: Instructions for Submitting the Financial Report for School Nutrition Programs (Due October 31, 2021)

The CSDE's resource, [Instructions for Submitting the Financial Report for School Nutrition Programs](#), provides guidance on how to submit the annual Financial Report. As a reminder, all SFAs must submit the Financial Report in the [CNP System](#) by **October 31, 2021**

[Section 210.14](#) of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for the NSLP requires that all school food authorities (SFAs) must maintain a nonprofit status for the school food service operations, and any revenues must be used only for the operation or improvement of the food service program. As indicated under "Net Cash Resources" (7CFR 210.14(b)), the SFA shall limit its net cash resources to an amount that does not exceed three months average expenditures for its nonprofit school food service. The annual financial report monitors adherence to this regulation.



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_10_13_2021.pdf.

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To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [How to File a Complaint](#), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (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.

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