

# Professional Standards Topics and Training Hours for the Preschool Meal Pattern Training Modules

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) final rule, *Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Programs Personnel as Required by the HHSFKA of 2010*, requires minimum education standards and annual training standards for school nutrition professionals who manage and operate the [National School Lunch Program \(NSLP\)](#) and [School Breakfast Program \(SBP\)](#). These standards ensure that school nutrition personnel have the knowledge, training, and tools needed to plan, prepare, and purchase healthy products to create nutritious, safe, and enjoyable school meals. This document summarizes the training hours and professional standards topics provided by the CSDE’s *Preschool Meal Pattern Training for the School Nutrition Programs*

## Training Description

The CSDE’s *Preschool Meal Pattern Training for the School Nutrition Programs* is a series of eight recorded modules that provide comprehensive guidance on complying with the preschool meal patterns for the NSLP, SBP, [Afterschool Snack Program \(ASP\)](#) of the NSLP, and [Seamless Summer Option \(SSO\)](#) of the NSLP. This training program is intended for school food service staff and other school staff who plan, prepare, and serve preschool meals and snacks.

## USDA Key Areas and Training Topics

The CSDE’s *Preschool Meal Pattern Training for the School Nutrition Programs* meets the USDA’s Professional Standards training topics for the key areas of 1000 Nutrition and 2000 Operations. Training topics for these key areas are indicated below:

- 1100 MENU PLANNING: 1110 USDA Nutrition Requirements and 1160 Special Diets, including Food Allergies
- 2200 SERVING FOOD: 2220 Offer versus Serve and 2240 Serving Lines

Table 1 summarizes the specific Professional Standards training topics addressed in each module.

## Training Hours

Completing all eight modules of the CSDE’s *Preschool Meal Pattern Training for the School Nutrition Programs* provides **4.25 training hours** toward the annual training requirements of the USDA’s Professional Standards. Completing less than eight modules provides the specific training hours indicated for each module (refer to table 1). For example, a cafeteria manager who only completes modules 2 and 3 earns 1.25 training hours. Training hours for each individual module are rounded down to the nearest 15-minute increment.

# Professional Standards Topics and Training Hours for the Preschool Meal Pattern Training Modules

Table 1: Professional Standards Contribution of CSDE’s What’s in a Meal Training Modules

Module	Training hours *	USDA Professional Standards		Module description
		Key area	Training topics	
1: Introduction to Training (length: 16:34)	0.25	1000 Nutrition	<b>1100 MENU PLANNING:</b> 1110 USDA Nutrition Requirements	Introduces the <i>Preschool Meal Pattern Training for the School Nutrition Programs</i> , provides an overview of the modules and training objectives, identifies common acronyms and abbreviations, describes how to use the toolbar to navigate the training modules, and identifies resources for guidance and training on the preschool meal patterns.
2: Introduction to Preschool Meal Patterns (length: 46:08)	0.75	1000 Nutrition	<b>1100 MENU PLANNING:</b> 1110 USDA Nutrition Requirements <b>2200 SERVING FOOD:</b> 2240 Serving Lines	Reviews the NSLP, SBP, and ASP preschool meal pattern requirements and identifies resources for guidance and training on the preschool meal patterns. Topics include the federal preschool meal pattern legislation, the requirements for food-based menu planning (including food components, minimum portions, and restrictions/nutrition requirements for certain foods), the preschool meal patterns and menu planning considerations for breakfast, lunch, and snack, co-mingled meal service, a knowledge check on co-mingled meals, and the USDA’s recommended best practices for preschool meals and snacks.
3: Meal Pattern Comparison of Preschool and Grades K-12 (length: 37:02)	0.5	1000 Nutrition	<b>1100 MENU PLANNING:</b> 1110 USDA Nutrition Requirements	Compares the preschool meal patterns to the meal patterns for grades K-12 and highlights the key differences (including the meal pattern components and servings, and the crediting requirements for each of the five meal pattern components) and identifies resources for guidance and training on the meal pattern differences.

\* Completing all modules provides **4.25 training hours**. Completing less than eight modules provides the specific training hours indicated for each module.

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Module	Training hours *	USDA Professional Standards		Module description
		Key area	Training topics	
4: Milk Component (length: 31:49)	<b>0.5</b>	1000 Nutrition	<b>1100 MENU PLANNING:</b> 1110 USDA Nutrition Requirements 1160 Special Diets, including Food Allergies	Reviews the requirements and crediting information for the milk component and identifies resources for guidance and training. Topics include the required preschool meal pattern servings, the federal regulatory standards for fluid milk, allowable types of milk, the requirement for menu documentation, the requirements for fluid milk substitutes for children without a disability, the types of noncreditable milk, and a knowledge check about crediting milk in the preschool meal patterns.
5: Meat/Meat Alternates Component (35:58)	<b>0.5</b>	1000 Nutrition	<b>1100 MENU PLANNING:</b> 1110 USDA Nutrition Requirements	Reviews the requirements and crediting information for the MMA component and identifies resources for guidance and training. Topics include an overview of the MMA requirements, the required preschool meal pattern servings, crediting requirements for different types of MMA (commercial processed products, cheeses, legumes including roasted legumes and pasta made of 100 percent legume flours, nuts and seeds and their butters, yogurt and soy yogurt, tofu, tempeh, surimi, alternate protein products (APPs)) and noncreditable MMA.
* Completing all modules provides <b>4.25 training hours</b> . Completing less than eight modules provides the specific training hours indicated for each module.				

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Module	Training hours *	USDA Professional Standards		Module description
		Key area	Training topics	
6: Fruits Component and Vegetables Component (length: 36:30)	<b>0.5</b>	1000 Nutrition	<b>1100 MENU PLANNING:</b> 1110 USDA Nutrition Requirements	Reviews the requirements and crediting information for the fruits component and the vegetables component and identifies resources for guidance and training. Topics include the required preschool meal pattern servings, the juice limit, crediting requirements for different types of fruits (fresh fruits, frozen fruits, canned fruits, dried fruits, pureed fruits and vegetables, smoothies made with pureed fruits and vegetables, and coconut), crediting requirements for different types of vegetables (raw leafy greens, canned vegetables, legumes, dried vegetables, and soups), noncreditable fruits and vegetables, and the USDA’s Best Practices for fruits and vegetables in preschool meals and snacks.
7: Grains Component (length: 38:47)	<b>0.5</b>	1000 Nutrition	<b>1100 MENU PLANNING:</b> 1110 USDA Nutrition Requirements	Reviews the requirements and crediting information for the grains component and identifies resources for guidance and training. Topics include the required preschool meal pattern servings (ounce equivalents [oz eq]), allowable grain foods, the preschool WGR requirement and menu planning considerations, the preschool WGR criteria and methods to determine if foods are WGR, grain-based desserts, serving the same grain foods to preschoolers and grades K-12, methods for determining a grain food’s oz eq contribution, and a knowledge check on grain-based desserts.

\* Completing all modules provides **4.25 training hours**. Completing less than eight modules provides the specific training hours indicated for each module.

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Module	Training hours *	USDA Professional Standards		Module description
		Key area	Training topics	
8: Meal Service for Preschoolers (length 26:14)	0.25	1000 Nutrition	<b>1100 MENU PLANNING:</b> 1110 USDA Nutrition Requirements  <b>2200 SERVING FOOD:</b> 2220 Offer versus Serve 2240 Serving Lines	Reviews the requirements and considerations for the preschool meal service options and identifies resources for guidance and training. Topics include the allowable types of meal service (pre-plated meal service, cafeteria-style meal service, family-style meal service, and combination-style meal service), the requirements for classroom meals, considerations for offer versus serve (OVS) with co-mingled meal service, and the USDA’s requirement for making potable water available to students during the meal service.

\* Completing all modules provides **4.25 training hours**. Completing less than eight modules provides the specific training hours indicated for each module.

## Resources

Guide to Professional Standards for School Nutrition Programs (USDA): [https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/Professional\\_Standards\\_Guide.pdf](https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/Professional_Standards_Guide.pdf)

Preschool Meal Pattern Training for the School Nutrition Programs (“How To” section of CSDE’s Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage): <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-Preschoolers-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/How-To>

Professional Standards (USDA webpage): <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/professional-standards>

Professional Standards for School Nutrition Professionals (CSDE webpage): <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Professional-Standards-for-School-Nutrition-Professionals>

Professional Standards Learning Objectives (USDA): [https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/cn/ps\\_learningobjectives.pdf](https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/cn/ps_learningobjectives.pdf)

Professional Standards Training Topics (USDA): [https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/cn/ps\\_trainingtopics.pdf](https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/cn/ps_trainingtopics.pdf)

USDA final rule, Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Programs Personnel as Required by the HHFKA of 2010: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/fr-030215>

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For more information, visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) 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/Training/Preschool/Preschool\\_Meal\\_Pattern\\_Training\\_USDA\\_Professional\\_Standards.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Training/Preschool/Preschool_Meal_Pattern_Training_USDA_Professional_Standards.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](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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