

School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: May 12, 2022

00:00:00.000 --> 00:00:10.690

Yearwood, Shannon

Hi, everybody and welcome to the Department of Education's School Lunch Tray Table Talk. We are, as usual, very thrilled to have you joining us today.

00:00:11.810 --> 00:00:42.320

Yearwood, Shannon

We have a very condensed time period. We have a conflict that we learned about the last minute, so I apologize for that, but we are we are sticking with a half an hour today. So this will be 2:00 to 2:30 because we have a lot of items to cover today. We are going to be a little nontraditional with our School Lunch Tray Table Talk and we are going to stick with the items and the School Lunch Tray. We're gonna do our very best to leave some room for questions at the end. If we don't have time, we can certainly follow up with you. If we do have time, we are going to.

00:00:42.440 --> 00:01:13.470

Yearwood, Shannon

To limit those questions to what is pertaining to the School Lunch Tray content for the last two weeks, just so that we have a way of really streamlining this and sticking with our timeline. So without any further hesitation, please know that we would love for you to enter questions in the chat as you go, even if we can't get those to those today, we will certainly get back to you and those are what we use to issue guidance, develop resources and anything that could be helpful to you if we know what's going on.

00:01:13.730 --> 00:01:36.200

Yearwood, Shannon

You will be muted in your cameras. Will be off except for my team. Awesome. Here, who you see and who will be going through the table talk items with you. So thank you so much. I think I forgot to introduce myself. I'm Shannon and what the town nutrition programs with the Connecticut State Department of Education. And it is my honor to be here with my colleagues and pass it off to Susan Fiore to help us complete our first topic.

00:01:37.310 --> 00:01:42.630

Fiore, Susan

Thanks, Shannon, and hi everybody. Can you just give me a heads up team that you can see the screen? Yes, good. All right so the first topic is our Healthy Food Certification Statement for school year 2022-23. And I just wanted to highlight a few of the key things to keep in mind as you go through the process of submitting your Healthy Food Certification Statement.

So the CNP System was opened this week and you can go ahead and get that Statement started but there are a couple things for your to keep in mind. And the first is that we have a very detailed set of instructions that are to help you get through this process.

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Fiore, Susan

They show snips of each of the steps and make it very easy to follow through. Follow along with what you need to do to get that statement uploaded. So please take a look at that before you begin and one of the other things to remember is that at this point this is the HFC module only you are not beginning the application process for school year 2022-23 for school nutrition programs you are just doing the HFC module, so that's a really important point. You'll receive notification.

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Fiore, Susan

Later on, when the CNP system is open to submit the application, so right now it's just HFC. And the last key thing to keep in mind is there are two different responsibilities in terms of who does what for completing that Healthy Food Certification Statement. And this is in terms of the claims preparer and the authorized signer. So the claims preparer has to first go in and get the system started for school year 22-23 and I want to show you a little summary chart to help you.

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Fiore, Susan

With this process, uh, because we received a lot of questions every year that you can't get in, you can't see the HFC statement and that's because the right person is not doing.

00:03:30.870 --> 00:03:31.340

Fiore, Susan

And.

00:03:32.980 --> 00:04:02.960

Fiore, Susan

With claims compare enrolls the district in the 2022-23 application and then that's it. They cannot do anything else. They cannot upload the HFC statement. They cannot upload the meeting minutes. So their job is done. Once the claims appear has opened up the system, then it's the authorized signer 1 or 2's turn and they go in and they complete and certify and submit the HFC statement including uploading the Board of Education minutes with the board votes. So those are the two steps.

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Fiore, Susan

And if you are looking for more detail on how to do them, you can see that in this chart refers to the sections of each of the guide where you can find the steps for the claims preparer and authorized signer 1 or 2.

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Fiore, Susan

And there's also a section for those few public school districts that are non HFC as well. So take a look at those instructions. Go ahead and get your.

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Fiore, Susan

HFC statement enrolled and then have your authorized signer 1 go in and sign and you'll be good to go. Any questions please reach out to me. My email is at the bottom of this information and I'll be happy to help. So I think that's it for HFC and I'm gonna turn it over to Allison.

00:04:47.870 --> 00:04:57.390

Calhoun-White, Allison

Hi everybody. My name is Allison Calhoun. Wait for those of you who may not know me, and I'm gonna go over some USDA food program updates, the first one.

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Calhoun-White, Allison

Is about ordering excess USDA Foods for May. This is our last big push and there's a really quick turn around on this. So you can order from yesterday we opened it and it's gonna close Friday tomorrow.

00:05:15.600 --> 00:05:35.280

Calhoun-White, Allison

And the business, you know, whenever you can get them in tomorrow is fine. There is a link to the form that you're gonna use in here. And the only thing not available right now are the individual strawberry cups. We have limited numbers of pretty much everything right now. So go ahead and put in your order.

00:05:36.400 --> 00:05:59.050

Calhoun-White, Allison

Just really keep in mind though that anything that you order now needs to be taken in by the end of the school year. On top of all of your remaining inventory too. So we want you to really think, you know, long and hard about this and certainly order the food that you can use, but don't over order either because you guys have to take this all in by next month.

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Calhoun-White, Allison

And we've had an overwhelming response already, so we will be randomizing orders. It's not first come, first serve or whatever. So take your time, get your order incorrectly.

00:06:11.170 --> 00:06:39.160

Calhoun-White, Allison

UM, that's the other thing. Ohh yeah, as a reminder to these are entitlement free, but there is the \$4.50 charge per case delivery fee for HPC and there is a 12 case minimum order, but you can mix and match it so you don't have to order 12 cases of 1 item. You can order you know some cases of applesauce and some cases of beans or whatever have you as long as you meet that 12 case minimum order.

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00:06:39.850 --> 00:06:46.140

Calhoun-White, Allison

So go ahead and and get some orders in and keep them coming. OK, that's it on that one.

00:06:47.270 --> 00:06:52.330

Calhoun-White, Allison

Umm, the next quick little update I wanted to talk to you about is.

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Calhoun-White, Allison

And this is just about raisins. But I'm gonna talk a little more about raisins. So far, with the bonus orders, we have seen a lot of problems with procuring these items. So you know, as we know, in the infinite wisdom of Congress, they give a lot of money. And then we figure out how to get it to you. You guys go through all the ordering and all of that and then now they're trying to procure these products and the procurements are not always.

00:07:22.450 --> 00:07:52.540

Calhoun-White, Allison

Happening right now. So we are seeing there's been some problems with raisins. We have a number of different truckloads of raisins coming in and so far this only affected one partial truck. But I did just get some notification that some orange juice, there's been some issues with bidding on that as well and some of the whole grain pasta that we have. And Please note we're working behind the scenes and things are changing and we always use cancellation as the.

00:07:52.730 --> 00:08:25.520

Calhoun-White, Allison

The last possible venue, but some things will have to be cancelled. So just please, I can't encourage you guys enough. Keep running your requisition status reports at least on a monthly basis right now because you know things are changing. Maybe even amounts are changing, maybe dates of when the things are coming into the warehouse are changing. So you guys gotta keep reviewing those. And I mean we will put updates in here, but it's it's better for you to just review those on a monthly basis. So you know exactly what's happening in your program.

00:08:26.480 --> 00:08:28.090

Calhoun-White, Allison

OK, so that's what I'm that one.

00:08:28.960 --> 00:08:44.050

Calhoun-White, Allison

And then the last thing I wanted to talk about is as probably I hope everybody knows by now, we do have a new DoD contract and a new vendor and the name of the vendor is Gargiulo produce and they are out of New Jersey.

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Calhoun-White, Allison

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And so since we've started this program, we always had a summary of the contract provisions that you could see on our website. And so we just updated that with the new information for the new contract and there's a lot of information in this document. The link is on here. So please, especially folks that are new take the time to read through this, not gonna go through every single point now because it's a, you know, lengthy document, but it's basically talks about everybody's summarizes the contract and talks about everybody's responsibilities.

00:09:18.570 --> 00:09:37.580

Calhoun-White, Allison

Yo, but keep in mind that this contract is truly between the DoD and the vendor and we just facilitate it here. So there's very little we can do in Connecticut when problems arise and as long as the vendor is following the letter of the contract.

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Calhoun-White, Allison

So.

00:09:40.270 --> 00:09:43.620

Calhoun-White, Allison

So a couple other things I wanted to talk about specifically.

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Calhoun-White, Allison

We wrote in this that the vendor would like to see everybody's.

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Calhoun-White, Allison

Scheduled well, I just talked to them today and they don't wanna see everybody's scheduled. So you don't have to email your schedule to the vendor. So they just wanted to stress that if you guys have any specific holidays, vacation, things like that, you need to let them know and also not place orders for that time. Because I was, I heard and I didn't even know this was happening that the current vendor HPC was sometimes, you know, people would place orders.

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Calhoun-White, Allison

For a holiday that they weren't going to be here at HPC with just move that cause they knew the schedules, they knew how. Connecticut basically, you know the the schedules worked. The new vendor is not going to do that. OK. So you guys have to be in a communication with them if you have any strange off days or you know things that they wouldn't normally know about. And also in the same token don't put an order in if you're not gonna have school and there's not gonna be anybody there to receive the order. So you know being.

00:10:52.130 --> 00:11:22.040

Calhoun-White, Allison

From New Jersey, things are gonna be different, and there's definitely gonna be a period of

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transition for all of us, but we're in it together. So just, you know, keep that in mind if they're not gonna know if you have an odd day off. So another thing is one of the changes I did want to bring to your attention is that this contract, all of the federal holidays, they don't deliver on that. Some consider those days off. And they did add Juneteenth on as a holiday, which is Sunday, June 19th.

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Calhoun-White, Allison

So that will be celebrated on Monday, June 20th, observed on Monday, June 20th. So you know, make sure if that's one of your delivery days, you're aware of that then then the vendor will be delivering the day after that too.

00:11:37.280 --> 00:11:37.790

Calhoun-White, Allison

Umm.

00:11:38.670 --> 00:12:10.260

Calhoun-White, Allison

And when it comes to new delivery days too, just make sure that you guys are going into favors and checking the delivery days assigned to you in FFAVORS. Cause I don't believe there were assigned days last year in favors either with the with HPC, there are now and those are not always being communicated if they're a change because the new vendor didn't have the old vendors information as to who was getting what on what day. So make sure you know you carefully go and check what you're assigned.

00:12:10.480 --> 00:12:16.810

Calhoun-White, Allison

Today is an order accordingly for that and we do understand too that.

00:12:18.000 --> 00:12:48.550

Calhoun-White, Allison

Some days are better than others to get fresh produce. I know a lot of people want Mondays. A lot of people want Tuesdays, but especially since this vendor is coming from New Jersey, they're they're doing splitting the state up in zones. And so it it would be impossible for them to accommodate everybody's requested days. So. But that being said, they're trying to kind of work things out this school year. So if you do have issues with a specific day, I would say now would be the time to communicate with the vendor.

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Calhoun-White, Allison

And just let them know the challenges you are experiencing. So it is in their head when they're kind of solidifying all of those roots and delivery days for next year. They do not have to change any days and they may not change any days, but it certainly can't hurt for you to explain to them, you know what your situation is of any sort of special request and you know, let them know and hopefully we can work together and be collaborative. But I mean, the great news is people are getting produce now.

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00:13:19.630 --> 00:13:43.630

Calhoun-White, Allison

And it's not coming every month, it's coming every week from what I've heard. So a lot of positive things. And I also saw the catalog, which looks amazing too. It's it's there's a lot of things on the catalog and things that we didn't have on there before, so good things happening with DoD the preferred way of communication with the vendor is through their DoD customer support email. And that is a dedicated mailbox.

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Calhoun-White, Allison

And so they really prefer to have everything in writing. And just so any issues, you know, email them directly if you are not getting any sort of satisfaction or response they they seem to be very responsive. You can certainly loop in Monica and myself as well.

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Calhoun-White, Allison

OK, so that was a lot to say, but again, all this stuff is most of it is in the documents that go ahead and take a look at that. And I am all set. Thank you.

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Alston, Susan

OK. Thank you, Allison. So I'm just gonna give the one to give an update about the supply Chain Assistance Fund. So the funds were sent out on Friday, May 6th. If you go into the grants payment report, which we put the link in the school lunch tray, you can go and and look up your school. You'll see that it is in there, it it will look like we have below. So it's called the Supply Chain Assistance Public. That's how it will be appear in the system. The invoiced coding will be.

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Alston, Susan

I under score public, so if you're getting an email from whoever receives the the funds and checking on those accounts, they don't know what it is. These are the supply chain assistance funds that you were tested and then the attestation statement for to receive those. We didn't have to return or redistribute any of the funds, so everyone that we had allotted for accepted it, so that's great. So you do have those. We just wanna remind you a few things. Remember you can only use these for the purchase of domestic foods that are minimally processed.

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Alston, Susan

You have questions about what those might be. You can reach out to your county consultant, or you can reach out to me. You can only use them to support the NSLP SBP or the seamless summer option. I'm in the after school snack program. They have to be deposited into the nonprofit school Food Service account. You cannot use them for retroactive purchases, so if they. So if you were invoiced on Friday but you didn't receive the funds until Monday, you cannot use those for to.

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Alston, Susan

Pay for invoices that you received from your vendors till at least Monday. OK, so it's not when you knew that the funds were coming or it's when you actually received the funds so that they were actual money in your account. And just the last reminder for those is that the you have to maintain documentation of how you use those funds and if you need any more information about that and you weren't able to attend our info session. If you go to the supply chain assistance funds, you click on that in the school lunch tray, we have the OM.

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Alston, Susan

On the list of payments we have the Q&A and we also have the link to the info session and the transcript so that you can refresh your memory, read some more information about what you're allowed to spend the money on and or not.

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Alston, Susan

I think back to Susan.

00:16:39.510 --> 00:17:09.340

Fiore, Susan

Thanks Susan. So this is just a real quick update. You probably saw this go out a week or so ago, April 25th. We updated the list of acceptable foods and beverages and just as a reminder, this is a list of all foods that meet our state nutrition standards as well as beverages that meet our state beverage statute and the Smart Snacks beverage standard. So all schools that are voting yes to HFC need to be following this list for all commercial products that are purchased in, in schools and sold to students and.

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Fiore, Susan

Yeah, those schools that are not on HFC can use this list to identify foods that will comply with Smart Snacks as well. And just a real quick plug. I'm in the process of trying to go through and update a lot of the entries from years ago that are now discontinued or product formulations have changed. So if you see any new products out there that aren't on the list or you have any vendors that are coming to you with new products, please send them along my way, we'll get them reviewed and included on that list. So they'll be there for.

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Fiore, Susan

That your purchases for next school year.

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Fiore, Susan

And I think.

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Fiore, Susan

I am also the next one, which is the transitional sodium limits, and I just wanted to let you know that we have a summary chart in a handout that'll be helpful to you to identify what those standards are for next school year. And I'm just gonna quickly open that up for you.

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Fiore, Susan

This is a handout that just gives you a quick overview of the sodium requirements and you can see

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here with those transitional standards are, so the limits are in two targets for the National School Lunch Program. The first target is effective July 1, 2022, and the second target is effective July 1, 2023 and the sodium targets for the school breakfast program are effective July 1, 2022 and they go for two years. So just real quick, if you're not sure what those are, you can take a look at this resource here.

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Fiore, Susan

And that will give you a little more information on those standards that take effect as of this July 1st.

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Fiore, Susan

And I am now turning it over to Teri.

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Dandeneau, Therese

Thank you, Susan. We just wanted to make you aware of USDA's new manual to assist sponsors with conducting a nutrient analysis of their menus. A nutrient analysis is not required. However, some sponsors may choose to do a nutrient analysis to ensure compliance with the required dietary specifications such as calories, saturated fat and sodium.

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Dandeneau, Therese

A nutrient analysis may also assist in determining if Ala carte items are compliant with a smart snacks and school nutrition standards. As a reminder, only nutrient analysis software approved by USDA are considered an allowable cost to the nonprofit school food service account and a list of the USDA approved software programs is included at the end of the manual. Or you can Google it to find it. Find that information. So I encourage you to take a look at the manual. It's very well done. It's quite comprehensive and easy to read.

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Dandeneau, Therese

It's a great resource, so I'm gonna turn it over to Fionnuala. Who's gonna talk about wellness policies.

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Brown, Fionnuala

Thanks, Teri.

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Brown, Fionnuala

So I'm just offering a quick reminder that next Tuesday, May 19th, we have our last wellness local School Wellness Assessment Workshop covering steps three and four.

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Brown, Fionnuala

This again is due June 30th, 2022. We have resources available to you on the how to complete your local school Wellness training and assessment. That last link there you can register right up to the day before it's a one hour workshop. It's pretty consolidated. It'll give you everything you need to know. So if you haven't.

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Brown, Fionnuala

Attended this workshop. I highly recommend it. That's it for local school wellness policies.

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Brown, Fionnuala

Back over to you, Teri.

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Dandeneau, Fionnuala

Thank you Fionnuala and so there are two resource roundups that I wanna talk about, and one is the reminder of the State Department of Education's operational memoranda that's on our website. If you go to program guidance and click on ohh, it will take you right that you'll see it and you just click on it and you'll see operational memoranda listed. And Susan has brought it up. So that way you can take a look at it here. It also lists the USDA school memos as well. If you want to take a look at those and.

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Dandeneau, Therese

If you go to the left, you'll see the gray box, and if you click on 2022, you're going to see all the memos that have been issued for this school year, and so take a look at it. Just remember, if you're ever wondering. Hey, did the State Department of Education issue this information? Check out the operational memoranda and you'll be able to find it there if we have indeed issued it. And the other resource Roundup pertains to vegetable subgroups in the National School Lunch Program. And we just wanna remind you that we have this wonderful document that Susan Fiore put together.

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Dandeneau, Therese

And it outlines the vegetable subgroups for grades K through 12 and the National School Lunch meal, meal pattern requirements, and these five subgroups are required for vegetables, and they are dark green, red, orange beans, peas and legumes, and starchy and other. And so you wanna take a look at this resource and make sure that you're meeting the requirements for serving the vegetable subgroups every week. And there's a great guy.

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Dandeneau, Therese

There to show you what vegetables are included in each of those subgroups. So with that, I'm going to turn it over to Therese and to Shannon to see if there's any questions.

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00:22:38.080 --> 00:22:46.190

Maineri, Terese

We just had the the one question that came in earlier regarding how these schools certification and if.

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Maineri, Terese

It should be interschool agreements to be entered.

00:22:53.120 --> 00:22:59.110

Maineri, Terese

There as well. Umm online, I'm assuming it's it's meant to stay. It should be entered online.

00:23:01.240 --> 00:23:35.170

Fiore, Susan

I can take that. The interschool agreements are a separate process than Healthy Food Certification. The online system only will accept the Healthy Food Certification Statement. If you go back to the memo that was issued in January, I believe it was and you can find that on the webpage that Teri just pointed out to you, you'll find information about the interschool agreements and where they need to be submitted and they are emailed to the department. They're emailed to Sean Fogarty and you can find the information in that memo as well as his email address on the interschool agreement form. So when you've got them completed.

00:23:35.310 --> 00:23:38.760

Fiore, Susan

Go ahead and email them in and you should be good to go.

00:23:43.420 --> 00:24:14.870

Yearwood, Shannon

Great. Thanks so much. Well, looks like you guys helped us along with making sure that we could meet our time constraints today. Certainly if you have some last minute questions, we can listen to me promote program guidance for a few seconds. Will you enter in your last questions that you might have for us today, but it just wanna thank my team again for being here and for being so conscientious about what we do put in the School Lunch Tray. We try and speakers. So your time and make sure that we only.

00:24:14.990 --> 00:24:33.780

Yearwood, Shannon

Provide you with that information that you need, and then it's very clear on what what our expectations are, whether you act on that, whether you need to know it or whether you should just know it. So thanks so much for everybody for joining us today. And with that, we'll we'll have an abbreviated abbreviated School Lunch Tray Table Talk and let give you 6.

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00:24:34.790 --> 00:24:35.770

Yearwood, Shannon

Thank you very much.

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For more information, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's Training for School Nutrition Programs 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/School_Lunch_Tray_Table_Talk_04_28_2022_Transcript.pdf.

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