

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022

00:00:00.000 --> 00:00:30.050

Yearwood, Shannon

Hi everybody and welcome to the Connecticut State Department of Education School lunch trade table talk for this stormy indecisive weather day of June 9th. I'm Shannon Yearwood. I'm with the child nutrition programs and joined by Team Awesome here who are my colleagues who you all know very well. This is being recorded and transcribed. And as you know, you can find these recordings on our School Lunch Tray, Table Talk or School Lunch Tray and Table Talk page. And you know where you can get to that.

00:00:30.130 --> 00:00:40.900

Yearwood, Shannon

By that bookmark you have all of your browsers to find program guidance. Best place you can get any resources. So I want to take a moment and thank everybody.

00:00:40.990 --> 00:01:10.850

Yearwood, Shannon

And I was so thrilled to see that folks really found that question button this time it's submitted those questions ahead of time. So thank you so much for doing that. I know I created a little bit of confusion in the last time with some of you when I said use that, use that link to send us questions on the state appropriation to be able to try and continue some of this transition of meals at no cost to households into the next year. So let me clarify my own confusion that I created that's.

00:01:10.990 --> 00:01:40.480

Yearwood, Shannon

If you have questions, keep them coming. Keep putting them into that link. That's the that's the place to go. That's helping us develop our QA documents. It's helping us be able to know exactly what kind of guidance to develop. So I'm not going to be able to answer a lot of your questions around that that you have submitted yet, but they definitely are informing us and helping us know what's on your mind. So be patient as we are, we have our plan. We are moving forward through all of the clearance processes. It is going to take.

00:01:41.060 --> 00:02:06.940

Yearwood, Shannon

Quite a systems overhaul here, with some of our technology and other areas that are impacted by this, so stay tight. We are working very hard and furiously on that, but definitely continue to submit those questions. They've been great. One of the questions I can answer on that right now is around will we be developing guidance for you to be able to use? Will we be developing resources, templates and?

00:02:07.610 --> 00:02:16.160

Yearwood, Shannon

Of course, we absolutely plan on doing that, so we will make sure that you have what you need and that's why it's so important to let us know what you need. So use that link to do that.

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022

00:02:16.530 --> 00:02:38.120

Yearwood, Shannon

Umm. So I'm gonna go ahead and we're gonna switch up things a little bit. Keep you on your toes and go forward with the questions that were submitted ahead of time because we feel like that's gonna be a good mini group discussion here to help be able to give you all of the information. And there was a wide spectrum of information that you guys are looking for. So thanks again so much for those who submitted that.

00:02:38.700 --> 00:02:55.860

Yearwood, Shannon

Umm, so we're gonna go ahead the first. The first question was will we be getting additional guidance on the requirement to serve lunch every school day, even on early release days. So we did issue guidance back in early November of 2021 and then we.

00:02:56.040 --> 00:03:10.750

Yearwood, Shannon

Umm. If we sent an updated revision on December 8th, we had included an incorrect link on that first one, so there wasn't any content change. That was just a link that we updated. So you do have that and if you need additional guidance.

00:03:11.840 --> 00:03:26.820

Yearwood, Shannon

They have nothing and let us know what would be helpful types of guidance. If you need other than what we've already sent out, certainly happy to do that. And then my team had another I had a couple other thoughts too. So I don't know. I don't wanna dominate this. If you guys wanna.

00:03:28.010 --> 00:03:30.760

Yearwood, Shannon

Join me on table talk and meet yourselves and share your ideas.

00:03:33.830 --> 00:04:05.040

Alston, Susan

I would love to. So one of the things that we just were talking about is, you know, if you have questions and you're not sure how to implement it, you know, talk to some other food service directors to see if they have already. We've had schools that have been offering lunch on half days at all grade levels for for a very long time. I mean, not every every school district, but that might be a good thing to find someone that who has and I'm kind of talk to them about how they got it rolling and what they needed to do and creative ways that they've done it.

00:04:05.120 --> 00:04:07.740

Alston, Susan

So that would be an option to think about.

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022

00:04:08.860 --> 00:04:10.440

Yearwood, Shannon

That's awesome. Thanks so much, Susan.

00:04:11.060 --> 00:04:20.220

Yearwood, Shannon

Umm alright and so. And if you need help finding that OM certainly let us know. But if there are other types of like documents that you need or or questions you have.

00:04:20.880 --> 00:04:24.350

Yearwood, Shannon

Let us know so that we can figure out how to give you the support you need.

00:04:24.970 --> 00:04:25.560

Yearwood, Shannon

Umm.

00:04:26.860 --> 00:04:27.790

Yearwood, Shannon

Let me see.

00:04:27.870 --> 00:04:28.120

Yearwood, Shannon

It's.

00:04:30.750 --> 00:04:35.240

Yearwood, Shannon

My team is used to be looking off the side and looking out off of her at our questions.

00:04:35.960 --> 00:04:39.890

Yearwood, Shannon

Umm, so the next question that we're about to talk about right now.

00:04:40.580 --> 00:04:56.170

Yearwood, Shannon

Is will you be reviewing the memo issued superintendents on June 2nd regarding the school nutrition program grants flexibilities. So I'm gonna combine this with another question we received around any update on healthy food certification money this year.

00:04:57.230 --> 00:05:01.400

Yearwood, Shannon

And so again, just team pitching as you as you would like to.

00:05:02.000 --> 00:05:20.680

Yearwood, Shannon

Umm so that that school nutrition program grants and flexibility is memo that was issued that was in

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022

regard to the school breakfast, severe need grant and the healthy food certification. And no, that had the state match and the Healthy Food Certification. And then we just sent out the.

00:05:20.880 --> 00:05:53.850

Yearwood, Shannon

That allow the operational memorandum on the states or severe needs school breakfast. I do want to tell you to look for a revision for that original communication. It did state that we used the 2021 school year counts for calculating healthy food certification and that is not that. That was not correct. So we are gonna issue a revision. We did based them off of the 18-19 school year as the last typically operating year and we did for a handful of districts who were not operating our programs and those.

00:05:54.060 --> 00:06:24.470

Yearwood, Shannon

1819 years we did use the 2021 team last summer operation and SFSP data for those school districts. So let us know if you have more questions on that that we will issue that revision as soon as that next. So Superintendents Digest will go out I believe and then otherwise reach out to us if you have any questions, if you have not received your healthy food, you should have already received your school breakfast payment. If you were eligible, if you have not received your Healthy Food Certification.

00:06:24.790 --> 00:06:33.790

Yearwood, Shannon

Payments yet then please know that you are there, should have received them or you will within this next week. Those are in the process of being sent out right now.

00:06:34.530 --> 00:06:36.150

Yearwood, Shannon

Did I get any of that wrong team?

00:06:36.980 --> 00:06:38.270

Yearwood, Shannon

Then, alright, yes.

00:06:39.420 --> 00:06:40.200

Yearwood, Shannon

Umm.

00:06:43.230 --> 00:06:44.160

Yearwood, Shannon

Hey, Teri.

00:06:45.010 --> 00:06:49.920

Yearwood, Shannon

Will will we be having a training workshop for free reduced applications verification?

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022

00:06:50.910 --> 00:07:11.150

Dandeneau, Therese

Hey, Shannon. Yes, we will. It's gonna be we're gonna be doing it this year. It's gonna be in August and it's going to be via webinar and we're breaking it down into multiple webinar, a series of workshops. So that way it's not all done in one.

00:06:54.320 --> 00:06:54.610

Yearwood, Shannon

Hi.

00:07:11.840 --> 00:07:21.290

Dandeneau, Therese

Shot, which is very long for everybody. So we are working on it now and we will send out an email to everyone when it is ready to go.

00:07:22.270 --> 00:07:35.000

Yearwood, Shannon

Great. Thank you so much. Yes, we're all. We're all going to need lots and lots of refreshers, even though we've been, we've been doing the the training through the last couple of years. We know that this is really when the page when the the rubber hits the pavement so.

00:07:35.720 --> 00:07:36.190

Yearwood, Shannon

Ah.

00:07:37.470 --> 00:07:38.110

Yearwood, Shannon

Alright.

00:07:39.000 --> 00:07:41.390

Yearwood, Shannon

And I have my team on edge. Wondering. I'm gonna call on next.

00:07:42.310 --> 00:08:13.700

Yearwood, Shannon

Alright, so we had a question submitted around the Fresh Fruit And Vegetable Program and I this is the one that I'm gonna take an opportunity to also share as you are likely aware, especially if you are operating the summer meals service program or the Seamless Summer Option going into this summer, USDA did grant us the option to additional options of determining area eligibility. Those have been posted on the Summer Food Service Program Program guidance webpage. If you look under area eligibility.

00:08:13.840 --> 00:08:34.660

Yearwood, Shannon

You will find those two new lists though. The way that it works. So you can we we highly encourage you to use that area eligibility 21-22 school year list because that's the one that's gonna give you the

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022

longest eligibility cycle for your summer meals or your at risk after school meals programs through the Child and Adult Care Food Program for those of you who operate that.

00:08:35.150 --> 00:09:06.770

Yearwood, Shannon

Umm. And then we also have the option of using school year 19-20 data and that will help confer out area eligibility for only two years. And then we had another methodology that we could use that's very similar to CEP, the Community Eligibility Provision multiplying multiplier option to establish and identified student percentage and a client or identified student percentage and a claiming percentage. I'm really fumbling my rights today and so that we put those lists.

00:09:06.840 --> 00:09:38.320

Yearwood, Shannon

Together, we took out any any schools that would have occurred on the 2021 list. We took those out of the 19-20 list so that you're not gonna see duplicates. So those hopefully will help you determine where else you could have sites. So we did that with the additional options. We made sure that we took out those schools that were already appearing on the school year 21-22 list so that you can maximize your eligibility and hopefully that will will make it a little less confusing.

00:09:38.720 --> 00:09:45.020

Yearwood, Shannon

And the reason that's related to Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program is because there are eligibility free or reduced price.

00:09:45.100 --> 00:10:16.630

Yearwood, Shannon

Umm, eligibility requirements for that program as well. And so we needed to wait a little bit for some USDA guidance on whether or not we could use those area eligibility flexibilities for the fresher and vegetable program as well. And we are able to. So with that things again became a little more complex and so we are waiting for a little bit more from USDA and then we'll be able to move forward with that. So I don't have a timeline for you quite yet, but it is very solidly on our radar and we will get that out and available to you as soon as possible.

00:10:16.770 --> 00:10:24.930

Yearwood, Shannon

We're aware that all the timings been moved back a little bit, but as we continue on these unprecedented times, that is unfortunately becoming more the norm.

00:10:25.730 --> 00:10:26.310

Yearwood, Shannon

Umm.

00:10:27.520 --> 00:10:28.250

Yearwood, Shannon

Alright.

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022

00:10:29.820 --> 00:10:32.470

Yearwood, Shannon

It's like anything else that I was supposed to talk about.

00:10:33.440 --> 00:10:35.170

Yearwood, Shannon

I think that was it.

00:10:37.330 --> 00:10:42.300

Yearwood, Shannon

Alright, I think we're ready for you, Susan Fiore, if we wanna pull up the School Lunch Tray.

00:11:01.670 --> 00:11:03.240

Yearwood, Shannon

And formula I think you're up.

00:11:11.330 --> 00:11:12.250

Brown, Fionnuala

Thanks Shannon.

00:11:13.130 --> 00:11:42.790

Brown, Fionnuala

Umm, so the first here is the local school wellness policy training assessment reviews we have been sending out information on this for the last two years. The due date is soon approaching, so June 30th, 2022. We have more than half of our sponsors have completed this assessment and you have sent us notification of that and share the link where you have it posted to the to the public.

00:11:42.960 --> 00:11:52.890

Brown, Fionnuala

For those of you who are in the middle of it, if you need any assistance, please reach out to myself. Or if you're having some difficulty with the.

00:11:54.230 --> 00:12:07.260

Brown, Fionnuala

Steps one and steps 2 on the website for the Rudd Center, you can reach out to Sarah McKee. Susan if you wanna just really quickly pull up. What's what's next there? I just wanted to point out two things.

00:12:13.440 --> 00:12:44.580

Brown, Fionnuala

So again, we have our you can Scroll down please a little more. We have a chart that lists the four steps and the worksheets and videos that go along to support the completion of this assessment of your local school Wellness policies. I wanted to say, you know, step one and Step 2 are will direct you over to the Rudd centers tools. The well sat 3.0 and the well set. I we have updated step three that basically if you enter your well set.

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022

00:12:44.910 --> 00:13:00.700

Brown, Fionnuala

I scores in their online system over there. It will print out a the connections between your practice and your policy and you can use that and you do not need to actually complete a worksheet. So for those of you who are.

00:13:01.430 --> 00:13:08.520

Brown, Fionnuala

At step three and you're ready to finish up. Step three and four. Please refer to the chart here and.

00:13:09.570 --> 00:13:41.610

Brown, Fionnuala

The first area there it it video four and video 4.1 would be applicable and you don't need to actually do anything further and when you enter the the scores online and then lastly I just wanted to say you are required to to summarize your findings right. And so we've talked about this during the webinars we've mentioned this on the table talks, you're not finished with the process by just completing step one and Step 2 you have to look at those connections and then you have to come up with a summary. We give you a worksheet or a way to.

00:13:41.700 --> 00:14:07.010

Brown, Fionnuala

Easily compile your findings there and then the last step would be then making that available to the public. So USDA requires that you make your assessment available to the public and we are asking for you to then forward that link to where that is posted. You forward that to myself and that's how we're kind of identifying all of the sponsors who have met this requirement and.

00:14:07.090 --> 00:14:36.430

Brown, Fionnuala

Umm and then don't need to do it again for for three years. Again, if you have any issues or if you have some challenges you can reach out to directly to me and and I can see how I can assist you and we can get you through completing it by June 30th, 2022. So that is it all that you ever want to know about local school wellness policies and moving on and I'm not sure which item is next. It is Teri OK.

00:14:35.910 --> 00:14:37.550

Dandeneau, Therese

Those to me. Thanks for nola.

00:14:38.400 --> 00:14:39.700

Dandeneau, Therese

Umm, I'm reporting.

00:14:41.590 --> 00:15:12.440

Dandeneau, Therese

On the USDA Child Nutrition database and this is a required part of the nutrient analysis software



## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022

approved for use in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program. It is a nutrient database of over 10,000 food items, which covers 19 nutrients. The database is usually updated once a year in the spring and software companies with nutrient analysis software approved by USDA are required to annually update this.

00:15:12.530 --> 00:15:28.190

Dandeneau, Therese

Their software programs with this current release of data. So you'll wanna make sure that if you are currently using a nutrient analysis software program that your software company is using the most recent version which is CN 25.

00:15:29.260 --> 00:15:39.740

Dandeneau, Therese

So we just wanted to let you know about that and there's the link to it if you want to look into it. We don't need to today, but I'm gonna go to Susan Fiore, who is going to talk about Smart Snacks.

00:15:42.830 --> 00:15:43.790

Fiore, Susan

Thanks, Teri.

00:15:45.430 --> 00:16:18.980

Fiore, Susan

I just have a quick update on a resource that USDA has regarding implementing Smart Snacks in schools and they have a guide that they've recently updated and it has some new information and links and some additional instructions. So if you are not on Healthy Food Certification, then this is the guide for you. This applies to all private schools and residential childcare institutions and it also applies to public schools that are not participating in Healthy Food Certification, so.

00:16:19.220 --> 00:16:33.960

Fiore, Susan

You can find all the information about the Smart Snacks requirements there and also we have a link to our Smart Snacks webpage where we have additional resources and guidance as well. So that's just a quick update and I'm turning it over to.

00:16:35.940 --> 00:16:37.050

Fiore, Susan

Who am I turning it over to.

00:16:38.460 --> 00:16:39.550

Pacheco, Monica

That would be me, Susan.

00:16:39.200 --> 00:16:40.110

Fiore, Susan

Monica.

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022

00:16:41.480 --> 00:17:13.670

Pacheco, Monica

Hi, good afternoon everybody. I just wanted to take a minute to go over and announcement that USDA made last week on June 1st. It's it was a rather big announcement actually our Secretary of Agriculture Secretary Vilsack made the announcement and it was about a real change or a shift in some of the way USDA is operating and some investments they're making to move forward. From this time we've come through, it is the food systems transformation and there is a press release and it's linked there.

00:17:13.810 --> 00:17:43.950

Pacheco, Monica

I highly recommend you take a moment to look through, and it's not too long and and basically USDA is has been looking at you know how systems have held up and not held up during the pandemic and now during the time of the war in Russia, war in Ukraine by Russia, that is definitely taxing some of our systems. And so you know if if you say there's a silver lining in all this, they're trying to get lessons learned from all this and move forward with some new initiatives so.

00:17:44.060 --> 00:17:58.820

Pacheco, Monica

This goes over that. There are basically four key areas, and I'm just gonna go over that real quickly with you. It's building them more resilient food supply chain that provides more and better market options for consumers and producers while reducing carbon pollution.

00:17:59.540 --> 00:18:11.490

Pacheco, Monica

It's also creating a fair food system that combats market dominance and helps producers and consumers gain more power in the marketplace by creating new, more and better local market options.

00:18:12.270 --> 00:18:19.920

Pacheco, Monica

At the third is making nutritious food more accessible and affordable for consumers that sings to the hearts of all the dietitians that are on this I know.

00:18:21.280 --> 00:18:52.250

Pacheco, Monica

And emphasizing equity. So those are four main areas and then they go through a whole bunch of different initiatives. They're looking at four key areas of production processing, aggregating and distribution and markets and consumers. Several, many of these are pretty high level and they're in other areas of agriculture that might not, you know see as a direct impact to us immediately. But there's two that I wanna just point out quickly and one is that they're looking to leverage more investments in the farm to school program. So do you know that this is?

00:18:52.390 --> 00:19:23.400

Pacheco, Monica

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022

I'm definitely gonna be coming down the road that they're looking to increase funding there, how they're doing exactly is yet to be seen. And then the other is that there are also looking to create a new healthy food incentive fund in this directly affects school food authorities to try to help, to innovate and accelerate efforts to improve the nutritional quality of the school meals to children. So those are two key pieces that caught my eye when I was going through the press release that I think, you know, certainly will be affecting our work, your work down the road and.

00:19:23.520 --> 00:19:36.010

Pacheco, Monica

So you wanna keep your ears and eyes open to what updates come from this? We know no more than what I just basically read to you now, but more to come very soon I'm sure. So take a moment. Read through this. I think it's some good information.

00:19:36.860 --> 00:19:37.880

Pacheco, Monica

And I'm all set. Thank you.

00:19:41.360 --> 00:19:46.530

Maineri, Terese

Hi, good afternoon everyone. I have a quick update from End Hunger regarding.

00:19:47.670 --> 00:20:12.700

Maineri, Terese

A survey requesting outreach material for summer meals programs. I just wanted to bring to your attention that the survey is time sensitive, so if you need materials, by all means click on the tournament or the link for the survey and complete the form by I think it's June 13th at 6:00 PM. Thanks.

00:20:14.730 --> 00:20:17.720

Maineri, Terese

Not sure who the next individual there's.

00:20:16.270 --> 00:20:46.870

Alston, Susan

OK, I everyone. Yep. I'm so I'm gonna talk about the state severe needs School Breakfast Program grant. Yesterday we in the School Lunch Tray and we did send out the operational memorandum. That explains that a little bit, but you would have already received your payments or you should have earlier this week if you haven't, you know check if you're not aware of it if someone didn't notify you that they're there. So in this as Shannon has been talking as we.

00:20:46.960 --> 00:21:08.620

Alston, Susan

Have these School Lunch Tray or Table Talks each every other Thursday. She kept alluding to these legislative changes that were happening, but we finally were able to lock in what we were allowed to

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022

do, and so we were able to pay the breakfast, grant the breakfast grant because of all the changes in the programs and operating.

00:21:10.020 --> 00:21:39.990

Alston, Susan

Programs from last year and this year there were some changes, so the list in that memo I'm explains how we paid them. So you had to have participated in the School Breakfast Program or offered breakfast meals last year through the Seamless summer option, the school, the National School. I mean, the School Breakfast Program or the Summer Food Service Program and you had to indicate at the beginning of this school year your intent that you were gonna be doing breakfast during during the entire school year.

00:21:40.250 --> 00:22:11.560

Alston, Susan

And you had to be currently serving at the start of the school year school breakfast for this school year, and you had to meet the statutory definition of severe needs so that your site would have had to have 20% of their lunches served in the NSLP eligible to students eligible for free and reduced-price meals. And for this, the second prior year is school year 1920. So because of the pandemic and the change of operations and March, we only took those 1920 counts up until.

00:22:11.820 --> 00:22:44.860

Alston, Susan

Some operations change. There is a A, a I would say a call like a stipend, right? Grant. So there's always a set amount of money in there and based on the number of sites that qualify, the grant could be up to \$3000. But because of the number of sites and the funding, the approximate amount that you received was about \$2600. So when you scroll through any of our memos that talk about payments, we always encourage please go to the next page or Scroll down to make sure you've seen everything.

00:22:45.210 --> 00:23:15.160

Alston, Susan

Because after the memo we have the actual list of the amounts that each each sponsor should have been paid. So if you got, you know, someone reached out and said, hey, we got a a specific amount of this amount and I don't know what it's for. Check the School Breakfast grant memo, look for your school. You'll see that the number that you received payment into your account should be the same. The number of matches. If you have any questions on on about site eligibility for this and how we.

00:23:15.680 --> 00:23:45.330

Alston, Susan

Designated how many sites you could receive the grant for. Please reach out to me, OK? And so the next one that I'm gonna talk about was in last week's School Lunch Tray. And it's the resource roundup for the and we talked to send out. I'm sorry, the Buy American justification form as Shannon talked about. You know, we're trying to remind everyone of some of the resources that we

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022

have, the things that you may have forgotten over the past 2 1/2 years as we make this transition back to regular regular programming.

00:23:45.490 --> 00:24:18.480

Alston, Susan

So the Buy American provision of the National School Lunch Program requires that all school food authorities that are participating in the programs purchased to the maximum extent possible domestic products. So this is provision came about to support the mission of the child nutrition programs, which is to serve nutritious meals and to support American agriculture. We know that especially now with supply chain issues that that is not always possible. So we do want to remind you that this form.

00:24:18.560 --> 00:24:19.200

Alston, Susan

With this.

00:24:19.500 --> 00:24:25.990

Alston, Susan

Umm, it's provides you a way to document anytime that you are unable to purchase.

00:24:27.230 --> 00:24:40.130

Alston, Susan

Items that are domestic and you need to justify that and then and and and it really needs to be a good reason why, right. So we know and then we talk about this when we come out and inspections. Right bananas, right. Certain items are only.

00:24:41.170 --> 00:24:49.470

Alston, Susan

Brown, outside of the United States, but you may want to be bringing them in so you would have a a Buy American justification form on file for that.

00:24:51.140 --> 00:25:24.090

Alston, Susan

And this really kind of sums up sums it all up exactly what you need to do and the questions that we would ask if we came out about why you're not using an alternate program, did you, I mean a product or are you thinking, did you think about using what are the price of using a nondomestic as compared to a domestic product so because you know as you're kind of ordering now and and with these supply chain things we know that what you may have procured for instance such as you know tomatoes that are grown in the United States, they may be on your bid.

00:25:24.270 --> 00:25:27.430

Alston, Susan

And you may have ordered them on your order form for that week. Well.

00:25:28.180 --> 00:26:00.030

Alston, Susan

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022

The delivery driver comes. You see these boxes of tomatoes that you need because they're part of your menu and you see on the box it says product of Mexico. I mean, when that happens, right. You wanna fill out this form, you know, and you can put that kind of in there while you're explaining. Why isn't alternative being used, you know, supply chain issues, all of that stuff would be good justification to why you would be needing to use a non domestic product if you could not. If there were any other options. So make sure you have these files on form. One thing I did wanna just remind you.

00:26:00.270 --> 00:26:24.540

Alston, Susan

If you are still utilizing your supply chain assistance funds that we sent out the Buy American justification form and and does not apply to that. So those items that have to be purchased for the supply chain can only to be domestic. You cannot substitute any non domestic items you know and utilize those for those fundings.

00:26:25.710 --> 00:26:29.690

Alston, Susan

And that's all I have and I'm gonna turn it back over to Teri.

00:26:33.410 --> 00:26:34.080

Dandeneau, Therese

Thanks Susan.

00:26:35.750 --> 00:27:05.020

Dandeneau, Therese

So I'm going to talk about the resource roundup and you were issued this week the email addressing the eligibility for free and reduced price meals and milk application materials that have been updated. So I'm gonna ask Susan Fiore to take me to the eligibility website. And this is the website. If you haven't been there, please check it out. I think most of you have gone here for one thing or another, and it has.

00:27:05.110 --> 00:27:12.270

Dandeneau, Therese

Pretty much everything you'd want to know about free and reduced meals and the application process. And I do want to.

00:27:13.670 --> 00:27:21.760

Dandeneau, Therese

We also, Susan, just went into the documents in the forms and these are all the forms that are available for you to look at.

00:27:21.840 --> 00:27:25.130

Dandeneau, Therese

Umm. Susan, can you back out of there one please?

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022

00:27:27.450 --> 00:27:41.930

Dandeneau, Therese

Thanks. You'll notice here under the documents in the forms that it says that in red forms that cannot be accessed or in the process or in the process of being updated for school year 22-23, and will be posted soon.

00:27:42.750 --> 00:28:09.440

Dandeneau, Therese

Because of the circumstances, the fact that we're waiting to hear about waiver approvals from USDA because we are mapping out the distribution of the \$30 million, some of these forms were not. We weren't able to do. And so they are on hold right now. So if you cannot access a form, it's because it hasn't been revised yet and it's in a holding pattern. Also as indicated in the email, the Spanish forms.

00:28:11.400 --> 00:28:24.730

Dandeneau, Therese

We're not updated yet because we're waiting from USDA to have the Spanish nondiscrimination statement and hopefully they will get that to us soon. So we can get those posted as well as we always do. We will issue you.

00:28:25.450 --> 00:28:55.520

Dandeneau, Therese

An email to notify you that these forms are updated so that way you're you can get those forms. What we wanted to get these out to you because we know that some of you leave for the summer, you're on vacation. And so you want to make copies. And so that's why we wanted to make sure that you had as many forms as we could possibly give you. So if you can go back out, Susan to the other website, the general one and then if you could Scroll down a little that one, thank you. You'll notice that there's information here regarding civil rights.

00:28:56.360 --> 00:29:27.790

Dandeneau, Therese

Also, the carryover and transfer of eligibility and the guidance for notifying parents. And then there's the eligibility manual for school meals, which if you're new to the school nutrition programs, this is an excellent document that you want to make sure that you download and start looking at right now because the information is in there is very critical to processing free and reduced meal applications and it has not been updated since 2017. So the one that's there.

00:29:27.860 --> 00:29:52.030

Dandeneau, Therese

Is the current one, and that's the one that you want to utilize, and then also we also have other documents such as the disclosure release form, which many of you utilize when you get requests for sharing of information. So I just wanted to point out that there's this information that you definitely wanna go to this website and take a look at it. And as we update it, we will let you know.

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022

00:29:53.650 --> 00:30:01.140

Dandeneau, Therese

Thanks, Susan. And now I'm gonna turn it over to Sean to see if we have any questions. Cause I believe, Sean, you're managing the questions.

00:30:04.200 --> 00:30:13.630

Fogarty, Sean

Thank you, Teri. I appreciate it. Yep, we have one question come in today and the question for the group is do we have any news on when the reimbursement rate for the next school year will be announced?

00:30:16.010 --> 00:30:28.330

Dandeneau, Therese

I can you wanna answer that one. OK, I can just tell you that it typically it's issued in the in July and it gets a little bit later every year. So hopefully we'll be by the end of July.

00:30:16.100 --> 00:30:17.280

Yearwood, Shannon

Umm yeah.

00:30:18.190 --> 00:30:18.500

Yearwood, Shannon

You can.

00:30:30.600 --> 00:30:31.620

Fogarty, Sean

Great. Thank you, Gary.

00:30:30.860 --> 00:30:31.460

Yearwood, Shannon

Thanks, Teri.

00:30:32.630 --> 00:30:56.300

Yearwood, Shannon

And we are we are putting a we are with other states encouraging USD to do everything they can to try and release those sooner than later. So that because that will also have an impact on the state funds that we were able to secure for for this transition. So it's all very interrelated and we would love to have the information sooner than later, but.

00:30:57.350 --> 00:31:27.420

Yearwood, Shannon

At Teri's absolutely right, it seems to get later and later, and one of the big things that I just realized as as we were going through this that I absolutely forgot to mention in the beginning, our waivers I I read that note. And so hopefully those of you who are on in the beginning stayed for the for the end of this show. So that you hear this too. So Please note, I know in the past table talks, we've spoken about applying for waivers and Teri is mentioning that just now made me have that light bulb.



## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022

00:31:27.500 --> 00:31:57.870

Yearwood, Shannon

Reminder, go over my go out on for me that I had forgotten to mention that. So we have applied for the waiver flexibilities that USDA is allowing us to apply for. We have been approved for several of them but not all of them, which is exactly why Teri is saying that we can't without knowing what flexibilities we're allowed to implement. We can't actually update those forms yet. So for those of you who know me, you can bet I have been reminding you.

00:31:57.940 --> 00:32:13.960

Yearwood, Shannon

very frequently that we would love to have that as sooner than later to be able to get that information out. I do want to take a moment to really explain the difference in these waivers for this year as.

00:32:14.570 --> 00:32:44.630

Yearwood, Shannon

And compared to the last several years, so the last couple of years, you know we've been operating for the most part under nationwide waiver flexibilities. So that is a fully different process than this new process that we are going through when Congress and the administration failed to act to extend USD as authorities to continue to issue waivers beyond their regulatory authority as listed in the NSLA under the 12 L waivers.

00:32:45.470 --> 00:33:15.420

Yearwood, Shannon

And the only option that USDA has is to allow states to apply for flexibilities that do not increase the cost to the to the federal government that support the program's purpose and support, or an access to the programs. And I know there's a third one that I am blanking out on right at the moment, but basically it can't cost money and it has to support the program. So we have applied for everything that we can USDA this year because these are not nationwide authority, are not nationwide.

00:33:15.500 --> 00:33:45.410

Yearwood, Shannon

Congress did not grant the authority to continue operating in this flexible way underneath these that nationwide waivers we've been under now, we have state specific waivers and we are working to implement them the very, very, very important kind of caveat for this is that it any time that you are implementing the waiver flexibilities, it has to be COVID related and you will likely have to submit a program integrity plan to let us know.

00:33:45.570 --> 00:34:02.840

Yearwood, Shannon

How you'll be implementing those? We are working furiously to get you that guidance out before summer, which is why I think Caroline may have popped on to help add in add on to this part. So

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022

I'll hand it over to you, Caroline, if you wanna go ahead and maybe you could untangle what I was trying to explain for area eligibility while you're here.

00:34:04.500 --> 00:34:05.470

Yearwood, Shannon

They're like Nope, I'm gone.

00:34:04.700 --> 00:34:05.040

Cooke, Caroline

OK.

00:34:05.950 --> 00:34:08.080

Cooke, Caroline

Yeah. Bye. Bye. Just kidding.

00:34:08.550 --> 00:34:08.900

Cooke, Caroline

Uh.

00:34:10.290 --> 00:34:15.920

Cooke, Caroline

So I was not thinking that although I will try and take a stab at that potentially.

00:34:16.800 --> 00:34:17.360

Cooke, Caroline

Umm.

00:34:18.270 --> 00:34:28.020

Cooke, Caroline

What I was going to say was the reason why I jumped on for any of you that are participating in SFSP or potentially participating in SSO.

00:34:29.000 --> 00:34:36.610

Cooke, Caroline

Be sure to come back next week, although we don't have all of our answers yet, we are planning to have at least a preliminary decision.

00:34:37.810 --> 00:35:08.100

Cooke, Caroline

Implementation of waivers for summer 22 specifically, not for school year 22-23, so please don't come with those questions. I definitely don't have answers to that, but we do have some information, at least initial information we want to share with you about implementing waivers for summer 22. So that's this day and time next week, the next Thursday, 2:00, o'clock be sure to join us for that discussion and hopefully I will come up with some answers between now and then.

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022

00:35:08.190 --> 00:35:10.240

Cooke, Caroline

To make that a valuable use of your time.

00:35:10.980 --> 00:35:11.700

Cooke, Caroline

Umm.

00:35:13.030 --> 00:35:23.490

Cooke, Caroline

I don't know how to untangle area eligibility other than to say we are looking at every opportunity that we have to make sites eligible. And as Shannon said.

00:35:24.090 --> 00:35:55.450

Cooke, Caroline

And we kind of go through a ranking process. So we start with the easiest process, which is our current year area eligible schools list and then we progressively get into minutiae of other ways that we can make sites eligible. So we do look at census data, we look at whether or not you have it defined, group of children associated with some programming and whether we have to dive into individual income for the kids or not. This year we do have two additional data sets that we can use and we've tried to make it easier to use them.

00:35:55.530 --> 00:35:59.390

Cooke, Caroline

By removing any duplication from the current school.

00:36:00.240 --> 00:36:18.170

Cooke, Caroline

Lest, Umm, in order to do that, and I will say spending lots and lots and lots of hours of every day right now looking at site eligibility. And I am very infrequently having to dip into those two additional options that we have this year. So to save yourself.

00:36:19.450 --> 00:36:42.840

Cooke, Caroline

Confusion and frustration, please feel free to reach out to me if you have sites that you're considering or that you're really hoping to serve at and let me assist you with that process because it does start from the very easiest and go through the most complicated and and I do it lots and lots and lots. And so it's a little bit more routine for me and I'm happy to help you with any sites that you're hoping to serve at.

00:36:43.700 --> 00:36:53.110

Cooke, Caroline

Having said that, if you're emailing me and you haven't gotten a response yet, it's not that I've lost you. It's just that there are lots of people reaching out, so I'm getting back to people as quickly as I can.

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022

00:36:56.180 --> 00:37:05.810

Yearwood, Shannon

Thank you so much, Caroline. And the added benefit is now you give people a little bit of time to submit more questions. So we'll we'll hand it off to Sean again.

00:37:06.480 --> 00:37:13.690

Fogarty, Sean

Yeah, thank you. So a couple more questions come in the next one being, do we have a team as a team have any information on the delays from HPC?

00:37:16.000 --> 00:37:18.190

Pacheco, Monica

Alrighty then, that would be me and.

00:37:19.190 --> 00:37:49.700

Pacheco, Monica

We do not at this very moment, but do know we are CC'd on all the communications that are coming out from HPC and and we know there have been a group that have been delayed a few weeks now and as soon as that notice came out this past week again we had meetings the following morning with HPC. We are also following up with another meeting Monday morning. Hopefully the game plan on how we can resolve this. So please be patient. I know I've only asked that 100 times and and and I'm asking again we're working hard to see if we can come up with a solution.

00:37:49.800 --> 00:38:03.030

Pacheco, Monica

This so I I apologize on our behalf for the you know for for the frustrations. I know this is causing a lot of folks, but we are trying to work it out. So hang in there and hopefully more news definitely by mid week of next week for sure.

00:38:05.270 --> 00:38:17.060

Fogarty, Sean

Thank you, Monica. I appreciate it. And I like final question we have in our chat so far. Today is it, is there any chance of getting the first 2022-2023 directs certification download earlier than mid to late August this year?

00:38:19.380 --> 00:38:20.920

Fogarty, Sean

You know, if there's a team member.

00:38:20.520 --> 00:38:23.070

Dandeneau, Therese

I'll, I'll. I'll definitely address that.

00:38:24.040 --> 00:38:24.730

Fogarty, Sean

Thank you, Teri.

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022

00:38:24.940 --> 00:38:27.550

Dandeneau, Therese

Is is there a chance? Was that the question?

00:38:28.260 --> 00:38:30.330

Fogarty, Sean

Yes, Yep. Is there a chance of getting the?

00:38:29.590 --> 00:38:34.510

Dandeneau, Therese

There's always a chance and we totally understand the need.

00:38:35.420 --> 00:38:43.200

Dandeneau, Therese

And the desire to have it downloaded as soon as possible, and Shannon and I will work very closely with IT to.

00:38:43.890 --> 00:38:46.290

Dandeneau, Therese

Do our best to ensure that that happens.

00:38:49.320 --> 00:38:50.530

Fogarty, Sean

Thank you. I appreciate that.

00:38:51.780 --> 00:39:23.630

Yearwood, Shannon

And the the theory period. I do we we get a lot of quality togetherness time with direct certification. So we hopefully won't run into the same issues we ran into at the turnover of the state fiscal year last year. We had moved to a new more secure platform which created all sorts of technology challenges and fun problem solving for us to figure out and by us it was really our IT folks while we were eagerly waiting for them to be able to figure those things out so.

00:39:23.940 --> 00:39:40.290

Yearwood, Shannon

And hopefully you'll be. I have not heard of any additional security platform migrations. Doesn't mean they won't happen. Just to reiterate anything that always happen, but yes, hopefully we won't run into that same exact snafu as we did last year.

00:39:43.160 --> 00:39:47.560

Fogarty, Sean

Thank you both. As of right now, that concludes all of our written in live questions.

00:39:49.060 --> 00:40:20.740

Yearwood, Shannon

Hey it. Thank you so much. Appreciate that one. Alright. Well, we have given you a lot of

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022

information today. I'm sure you'll have lots to absorb. We certainly have a lot of work that we are embarking on and have immediately and long term ahead. But we are in this boat with you. We're very aware of the things that you need for the most part continue to communicate with us. That's how we know. And then we just yes the the word of the day last year was pivot.

00:40:20.840 --> 00:40:52.170

Yearwood, Shannon

This year it's patience, so we're gonna stick with that theme of that, that P theme and that will be we need patience. So we are working as as quickly as we can in. Thank you so much for all you do and and for those of you ramping up for summer meals. Thank you for those of you who aren't. Thank you. So thank you for all that you've done for the school year for all of those for what you're gonna do this summer and going into this next school year and we will hopefully see you all next week as we dive a little bit more into how we will be implementing the waivers for the summer meals.

00:40:52.710 --> 00:40:58.120

Yearwood, Shannon

Operations this year. So thanks everybody and thank you to my fantastic team.

00:40:59.400 --> 00:40:59.600

Yearwood, Shannon

Right.

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: June 9, 2022



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