

School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: January 22, 2021

Presenters: Speaker 1 - Shannon Yearwood, Speaker 2 - Fionnuala Brown, Speaker 3 - Monica Pacheco, Speaker 4 - Susan Fiore, Speaker 5 - Caroline Cooke Teri Dandeneau, Susan Alston, Terese Maineri

Recorder - Michelle Rosado

0:05

Speaker 1 - Hi and “Happy Friday” welcome to School Lunch Tray Table Talk with our Department of Education crew, and we're very excited you're able to join us today, so as we've done, the last two, Fridays will go through our, school lunch tray that was issued this Wednesday. Make sure to walk you through the great resources that are in there, and we're just going to get started. So with that, since we have a short period of time, I'm going to hand it off to Fionnuala

0:30

Speaker 2 - Happy Friday, everyone.

0:33

Okay, thanks, Shannon.

0:38

So, I'm going to, I was all set now?

0:54

(Recorder) You're good, it's on the screen.

0:56

It is, okay, thank you.

0:58

And alright, so thanks Shannon. The School Lunch Tray for this week is short and sweet. We have three items we're going to review. We have USDA Foods update, and then we are going to give you some information about the Medical Statement for the Meal Modification in School Nutrition Programs, and also an update regarding the production records on those forms. So I just wanted to thank those of you who are attending, you know, we kicked this off as a, as a, as a way to go over the items in the school lunch tray on changes, to present the items in a little bit of a different fashion. And we wanted to give you an update that, this is, evolving the School Lunch Tray Table Talk for the month of February.

1:46

We're going to be on extending it, and we're going to, beyond the half an hour, we're going to add on another half hour, and we're going to start to highlight resources and talk a little bit about how to navigate to those resources, and also the particular resource we're going to be highlighting. So, we're really excited about that. Again, that's gonna start in February. So February, we're actually going to switch to Thursdays at nine in the morning, and information regarding this will be going out next week. And it will be an hour, the School Lunch Tray will be an hour, because we're going to add something we think will be very beneficial for Directors, Business Managers, Operators out there,

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and that's really highlighting all of the wonderful resources the Department of Education has on our website.

2:37

It sometimes can be overwhelming to navigate around, and even find a resource. So, we thought this may be a positive thing.

2:47

So look, look forward to doing that in February, so we're going to kick off, and Monica Pacheco, who is one of the coordinators of the USDA Foods Program is going to review the update on USDA Foods, Monica.

3:05

Speaker 3 - Okay, thanks Fionnuala. Good Friday morning, everybody. I just wanted to go over, we have one small notice in the School Lunch Tray this week and that's about the Shredded Pepper Jack Cheese.

3:17

If you recall, for those who could join us a couple of weeks ago, when we did our longer webinar, we talked about the back log that has occurred this year, something we've never seen before, of course, this year of some of the cheese coming up to their best use by date, which it's happening now with our Pepper Jack Cheese. And so, those items are going to be removed from the HPC inventory and off your allocation to the next week or so.

3:44

So, just as a reminder we did also talked about the fact that we have Shredded White Cheddar and String Cheese and then also the Sliced Cheddar that will soon approach our best by date next month.

3:58

So again, I think we talked about please try to take any of this product that you can in the next few weeks. If you can store it, freeze it, keep it on hand, if you have the room and capacity to do so.

4:12

Please keep that in mind we had listed those items it up again, it's not all of the deliveries.

4:18

We have multiple deliveries of this product, but some of it is coming up on its time. Also, to, for those who may have requested the Pepper Jack Cheese as part of our ordering program that we just did for the first time, it concluded on Wednesday. We're going to be sending out the invoices or the receipts on that very shortly, as we've begun to process those.

4:41

And it's going to say on your invoice, that the cheese has to be taken ASAP, as a reminder, and to co-ordinate with Steve at HPC to get it on your next possible delivery. Otherwise, we're going to have to start pulling some of that product as well. So, if you have any questions, you can reach out

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to Allison or myself, and we'll be happy to help you with it. We're hoping that this is only the only time.

5:02

It should only be happening with this first ordering time where we're going to have, you know, notice, note the cheese, and pull that as quickly as possible. We should take care of the back log with this.

5:12

And we don't anticipate seeing this happening moving forward with our next ordering, when we do that in February.

5:18

And I think I'm all set Fionnuala, thank you.

5:24

Speaker 2 - Okay, thank you so much, Monica. Um, so the next item we have on the School Lunch Tray would be the updating the Medical Statement for the Meal Modification in the School Nutrition Programs and Susan Fiore is going to review that.

5:43

Speaker 4 - Good morning, everybody. Thank you Fionnuala and happy Friday. So, as you can see in the School Lunch Tray, we have an updated medical statement and the guidance as well. And just to let you know that primarily the change in this document is the updated nondiscrimination statement for USDA and also some updated links.

6:04

So, really, the content hasn't changed in terms of what's required or any of the other information. But it's important to update your documents because the links that are in the current statement are incorrect. USDA several months ago, updated their civil rights page. And the links that are in our current documents no longer go to the proper section of the Civil Rights page. And it's important that you have that information in your form, because in terms of civil rights compliance, participants need to be able to know where to go to get information if they do need to file a civil rights complaint.

6:42

So, while it's a minor update, it's very important to make that change, and we would encourage you not only to update your own forms in terms of if you have a link on your webpage, but also check with your school nutrition, sorry, your school health services, your nurses, and make sure that they're aware that that's the current statement that you need to use.

7:06

If you, Fionnuala, if you want to click into the link, just to show folks where that is, the medical, let's see, right.

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7:18

So on the special diets page, there's a section on medical statements and you can find the medical statements and the guide on how to complete it and what you need to do there as well.

7:30

But I just wanted to give you a little bit of an overview of when the statements are required and give you a little bit of a reminder for what you need to be thinking of for having this statement on file.

7:40

So, even though we're in in unprecedented times with COVID, these requirements still apply and schools and institutions that participate in the Child Nutrition Programs must provide meal accommodations to children whose disability restricts their diet.

7:56

And that's outlined in the statement here, as well as the guidance.

8:00

So, what you need to be thinking about is that these modifications are based on the medical statement, which is signed by a recognized medical authority. And just as a reminder, in Connecticut, a recognized medical authority is defined by our State Department of Public Health, and it includes licensed physicians, physician assistants, and advanced practice registered nurses. Those are the only three groups of medical professionals that can sign the medical statement. So you want to make sure that your medical statement has the signature of one of those professionals on file.

8:33

So, in terms of children without a disability, as a reminder, again, you're not required to make those meal accommodations. Um we encourage you to do so when you can. If you do choose to make modifications for children without a disability, you need to make sure that those meals follow the meal pattern specific to those children. So, for example, if you're talking K12, you're following the K12 meal patterns. And if you're talking preschoolers, you're following the preschool meal patterns. So some of the situations that might occur when you would make those accommodations could be requests that are related to things like religion or moral convictions, general health concerns, personal food preferences, sometimes you might have parents who think that they want a particular type of diet because it's healthier for their child. All of those types of things are examples of optional accommodations.

9:24

They're not required, because they're not related to a disability that restricts the child's diet.

9:30

So, again, you can choose to make those accommodations for children without disabilities, but if you do so, you must meet the meal patterns.

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9:38

And just as a reminder, on our webpage, we have a ton of resources, regarding implementation guidance for completing the medical statement and how you accommodate special diets, there's PowerPoints, there's information on medical conditions.

9:53

In addition to the medical statements, we have information on milk substitutes and there's training resources as well.

10:00

So just as a reminder, all of that can be found on the Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

10:07

And just lastly, a quick update for the SFSP, uh, which does have its own form, which was new as of this past summer. The requirements are a little bit different for the SFSP, they're still required to make meal modifications if a child has a disability, but the form is a little bit different and simpler.

10:26

So, if you're in the SFSP and you're looking to find that information, we didn't include it in this version of School Lunch Tray, but if you go to the SFSP webpage, and of course, you can get there from the Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs page.

10:43

At the top of the SFSP page, you'll see a blue box and you can click right on Meal Patterns there and then underneath Meal Patterns that will bring you to the Meal Modification sections and that's where you'll find the information for the SFSP. So that's it in a nutshell, and again, just remember to refresh your documents.

11:05

You do not need to go back and collect a revised document for the kiddos that already have those documents on file. But moving forward, please use this form and make sure again that your website and your school nurses are informed as well.

11:19

I think that's it, thanks Fionnuala.

11:22

I was just a little to delayed on my clicks here, Susan, I'm sorry. I was trying to navigate then to the Summer Food Service Program website for those, for that form. So this is where I'm at the summer food. Speaker 4 - If you go to, slow down for a second. Yeah. Just go right up to the top of the page.

11:43

I just want to show them so they can click right in, okay. Now, on a tiny bit.

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11:50

Scroll down to the blue box, there you go, click on Meal Patterns.

11:58

Right, and that's going to bring you right to Meal Patterns.

12:00

And if you scroll down just a tiny bit, you're going to see, there you go, Meal modifications for special diets.

12:10

There you'll see the request form for the SFSP and, again, it's much simpler. And you'll also see that right above that has guidance for meal modifications, which gives you a little more information on completing that.

12:26

Speaker – 2 Great. Just wanted to show that.

12:29

Speaker 4 - Thank you.

12:33

Speaker 2 - Okay, thanks so much, Susan Fiore. Um, so everything you need to know is on that website for, on the webpage, for accommodating special diets in school nutrition programs, and then we just navigated to the Summer Food Service Program, as well.

12:51

So I would encourage anybody to check that out if you have questions. And certainly reach out to your county consultant as you as you work through that.

12:59

Um, Sue?

13:04

So the last item we have, I don't know why I'm having difficult time today. I apologize navigating around here.

13:14

The last item we have on the School Lunch Tray would be the update of the production records for the School Nutrition Program and Susan Fiore mentioned with the medical. This update is really around the USDA nondiscrimination Statement and updating those links. So the forms themselves, the content has not really has not really changed. And, just as a reminder, these production records are required by USDA as a way to, to document your contributions to the meal pattern.

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13:48

So, you have your menus and then your production records give the detail of how all of the items contribute to your specific meal pattern for your students, the children that you are serving in their quantities, and quantities there as well. So, and not only is this, are the production records used as USDA regulations and a requirement, there also a tool to use, right, so they will help with forecasting and also as a total meal preparation for the day, for your staff.

14:24

So, these production record forms are here for you. We know that many sponsors may have, our software programs may have their own production records, and that's fine. But we have all of the different grade configurations available for your use, on our website. They're under documents and forms.

14:45

And then on the webpage, the Production Records for School Nutrition Programs, there are a number of resources available from USDA, and also something created by the Department of Education, the requirements for production records.

15:03

And this is a really good tool reminder, even for your, for your staff, for any new food service directors. It really outlines all of the requirements regarding production records and gives a nice refresher of, you know, walking through how to properly use a production record. So what's completed beforehand, what you would complete after, on how you would ensure compliance with, with all of the regulations? So there is a tool, a document, that, that is available if you haven't seen that. And that's it for us.

15:45

Who were the three items on the School Lunch Tray, I think Shannon was, was going to be monitoring if any questions came through.

15:54

So Yeah, thank you. Speaker 1 - So we do we had two questions, one with how you sign up for the School Lunch Tray though, certainly if you are not already on the School Lunch Tray distribution for Wednesdays, let us know. And we'll get you signed up. You can just enter that here. In the, in the questions are in the chat, and we are able to extract that after this webinar, and we'll make sure to get you signed up.

16:21

Then another question came in, which may have already been answered.

16:23

It may have come in at the same time we're kind of navigating over to the Summer Food Service Program forms, but so the question is, if, in the Summer Food Service Program, is it OK to use the National School Lunch Program special diet form?

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16:39

I'm gonna ask that, I'm gonna ask my team what their opinion is here. We know we have the resources for specifically for SFSP.

16:55

Speaker 5 - Sorry, I was having connection issues, Um, so I did not actually get to listen to the part where the form was explained. But, our Master of Forms, Susan Fiore, I believe, does have a form specific for SFSP. So, ideally, that's the one that you would be using.

17:10

I'm going to go out on a limb though and say, if you have a form for NSLP because we were anticipating that we would be operating NSLP for this school year and we are not doing that.

17:27

I don't know that it necessarily makes a lot of sense to do a lot of extra work for everyone to get that new form for SFSP. Susan Fiore, do you feel strongly that you would want to see the SFSP form? Speaker 4 - No, and actually, the SFSP form is much simpler. When you look at it, you'll see it's literally one page. There's a couple of boxes that, that the, the parents can fill in, and there's a section for it to be signed. It's much simpler than the school form because of the nature of SFSP in normal times, which is sort of outside of the realm of our normal school operations. So, you can certainly use forms you have on file. You don't need to go back and replace anything with any of these forms.

18:08

But moving forward, when we get to normal, again, then you might want to consider the simpler form. It's easier for the parents really, is what it is, but either form will do and if you already have the NSLP form on file, that's fine.

18:24

Speaker 5 - The only thing I would add to that is, it's fine to use the NSLP form for SFSP. It would not be fine to use the SFSP form once we're back to NSLP. Speaker 4 - Correct.

18:37

Speaker 1 - Thank you both so much and I'm not seeing any other questions so we're gonna give a last call for questions on that.

18:45

I'm just really excited that you are able to join us. I'm looking forward to how we're going to switch this up a little bit in February.

18:53

We're really going to go, go, go back to those basics and make sure that you have an understanding of how to use some of these resources.

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19:00

And it's a great opportunity for us to talk a little bit about how you really maintain this program integrity and compliance around the basics of running your programs with relation to all of the flexibilities that we have been able to authorized for this school year. We know it's confusing. We want to be able to help you, and Susan Fiore has created some amazing resources that we use.

19:23

So certainly, join us through it for our other table talks, as we continue these through February, will continue making these, just as accessible and casual as possible. So we have a tabletop, because we want to have a conversation with you.

19:36

Certainly, there's an opportunity, before these to submit your questions ahead of time, so you got something on your mind, let us know, that will help us know exactly what kind of guidance we need to help provide to you.

19:48

So tell your friends about School Lunch Tray Table Talk, have them join us.

19:52

We'd love to have a little conversation with everybody. So with that, I'll hand it off to Fionnuala to wrap us up.

20:00

Speaker 2 - Okay, I think you kind of did.

20:03

So again, thank you everyone for those of you that have joined. We hope that these kind of, you know, snowball. And we can get more, increase our audience. And really make it a meaningful, useful time to present information to you. So thank you again, and we'll see you next week at our last Friday table talk.

20:26

Alright, next Friday, same time, same place. Bye.

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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.

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