

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: January 29, 2021

**Presenters:** Shannon Yearwood, Fionnuala Brown, Caroline Cooke, Teri Dandeneau, Monica Pacheco, Terese Maineri, Susan Alston, Susan Fiore

0:06

Hi, welcome to the Department of Education School Lunch Tray Table Talk. We are so happy you're able to join us this Friday. I'm Shannon Yearwood, I oversee the Child Nutrition Programs on behalf of the Department of Education, and I'm delighted to introduce you to some of my team that's joining us today.

0:22

So I will walk you through what we've highlighted this week, and what we have in store for the future. So huge shout out to Susan Fiore, who you see who is the mastermind behind the School Lunch Tray and all of our wonderful program resources.

0:37

We have Fionnuala Brown, who many of you know from your School Nutrition and Seamless Summer Option adventures.

0:42

Monica Pacheco, who's also a food distribution and Farm to School and Procurement, and you name it. We have Susan Alston who's on our School Nutrition and Seamless Summer Option team.

0:54

And Caroline Cooke on our Summer Food Service program team.

0:57

We have Teri Dandeneau, you know, who you also know from School Nutrition and Seamless Summer Option, and Terese Maineri, who's on our Summer Food Service Program Team and also does Special Milk programs so.

1:09

Thank you so much to my team, I'm going to go ahead, we are keeping this short into a half an hour.

1:14

Throughout the, throughout the webinar, please, please, please enter your questions into the question box or into the chat feature, and we will certainly take the opportunity to go through those at the end.

1:25

Anything we can't answer, we will move to next week, and be sure to address them. So with that, I'm gonna pass it along to my fabulous team.

1:32

Thank you so much, and have a wonderful rest of your week, weekend, I guess.

1:45

You're on Fionnuala.

1:49

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: January 29, 2021

Speaker 2 - Thank you so much. Good morning, everyone. I am coming to you from Watertown, Connecticut, where it is 14 degrees, and rigid. So I hope everyone is staying warm today. We are going to jump right into the items in the School Lunch training. As Shannon said, it's an opportunity to kind of present the information in a little different manner, and giving you an opportunity to ask questions about any of the items that we have. Um, we have, the information we're going to present today is about the School Lunch Tray Table Talk webinars moving forward. Really excited about a new resource, web page we have for you. We're going to go over USDA Foods, and then finish up with some really important information about food safety guidelines for distributing meals for consumption off site or at home.

2:46

So, we have Susan Fiore, who is going to kick us off with the first two items.

2:56

Speaker 3 - Thank you.

2:58

Scroll down to the first item.

3:04

Here we go.

3:08

Okay, so this is a continuation of the Table Talk series that we started last month, and we're very excited, because we're adding a new section to that webinar, which is the Resource Roundup. So you're going to see the same format that we've had up until now, which is a half-hour of information on the School Lunch Tray.

3:31

And then following that, at the end, we're going to feature a resource or a set of resources for a specific topic, and do a little bit deeper dive on where they are, how to use them, any requirements, any forms, and any other recommendations. So we're really hopeful that that will help you to kind of remember what we have on our website, and also to be able to find those resources fairly quickly.

3:52

So if we scroll down just a little bit more, you're going to see the registration link for the February table talk series.

4:02

And just so you're aware, that one link lets you register for the entire series, so you don't need to go back in each time.

4:09

And as a reminder, as Shannon said at the beginning, please submit your questions in advance, that helps us to make sure we're addressing all your concerns, and we can talk about those things during the webinar. So that's just a little brief overview of what's coming up in February.

4:25

And then if we can scroll down just a little bit more to our new webpage our School Lunch Tray Table Talk. So this just came out yesterday and Fionnuala, if you can click into it, we'll take a look at it.

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: January 29, 2021

4:38

This is a website that includes, starting in January, all of the PDF versions of the School Lunch Tray, as well as links to the webinar for Table Talk and the transcript. So you'll see if we can just pause right there.

4:55

You can see on the left side, you'll see that it'll list the date of the SLT, and it'll also list the date of the Table Talk, and on the right side, a list of topics. So this will allow you to search on the webpage for a particular topic and find which webinar, in which School Lunch Tray corresponds.

5:14

If we can just go up one minute to the top of the screen, yes and click on the School Lunch Tray Table Talk YouTube Playlist, we're very excited about this.

5:24

Let's see if we can get there.

5:28

Perfect.

5:30

So all of the School Lunch Tray webinars are being recorded, the Table Talk webinars, and here's where they are.

5:37

Here's where they are live, so we have a YouTube playlist now with all of our School Lunch Tray Table Talks on it, and that link you can access from the School Lunch Tray Table Talk, webpage So we can back out of there Fionnuala, back to our PDF.

5:57

Or back to our webpage.

5:59

Perfect.

6:05

Oh just, I'm sorry, or go back to the School Lunch Tray webpage for a second, there we go.

6:11

I just wanted to highlight for you a couple of ways for you to find this.

6:15

Obviously you have the direct link to this web page in the School Lunch Tray, but if you scroll up to the top of this page.

6:25

I just want to show you a couple other places for how to find this under Program Guidance, which should be very familiar to all of you.

6:32

As you know, that's the go-to area of our web page that lists links to all of the resources and requirements for our School Nutrition Programs.

6:42

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: January 29, 2021

If you click under S, you'll get to School Lunch Tray Table Talk.

6:49

See it right there.

6:51

And then if you click under T, at the top of the page, T for training, and Fionnuala you can just scroll down the, perfect, yep, under the training for Child Nutrition Programs web page and we'll scroll down to School Nutrition Programs.

7:12

And you're going to see a link from there as well.

7:14

So you can access the School Lunch Tray Table Talk from a couple of different places. And we hope this is going to be a really useful resources resource for you to find the information that we've talked about in the School Lunch Tray. As well as on the webinars. And hopefully that'll make it a lot easier for people to find the information.

7:33

I think that's about it. Thank you Fionnuala.

7:41

Speaker 2 - Alright, thank you so much, Susan. Um, so yes, we are really excited about this.

7:45

This will be a wonderful resource for all of the Food Service Directors and Business Managers, and anyone involved with operating these programs, because it'll be a great way for that person who's coordinating, kind of, maybe you have one person in the district, who is in charge of monitoring the School Lunch Tray, and what is in that is, and then you can pass that along by sending a link to, maybe, the webinar, to be able to, for them to listen. And so, we are really excited about that.

8:22

So next, we have Monica reviewing the USDA Foods items, so.

8:34

Speaker 4 - Good morning, everyone.

8:36

So, yes, I have just a few things, but of course, one to good size one in there, and I apologize for the length, but I think all the details you need are there.

8:44

So, we are taking now the USDA, DOD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable um entitlement amount that you want to use next year, in the, in your program. So it is that time of the year show, so to speak, where you need to take a look at what your entitlement is for next year, and determine what that you want to set aside to use for the DOD program next year.

9:09

So if you, behind the scenes things that have happened, first, we have signed up for the waiver that allows us to use the Meal Counts from 18-19, again, for next year. Which that means that is

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: January 29, 2021

sort of the last normal year, if you will, that we had Meal Count prior to COVID making the dramatic changes, it did.

9:27

So those numbers will be based on those meal counts.

9:31

We also will have some carryover from this year that goes into next year, canceled trucks. People who haven't been able to use things, that has put money back into our overall entitlement. And to be expected to share normally, we would really worked, not let that happen, but this year it's expected, so that money is also rolling over.

9:51

We are going to ask that everyone run their entitlement, bonus summary report.

9:57

When they want to take a look at what they have for entitlement, for next year to make the plans for DOD, you will see the numbers look a little different.

10:05

I think for most, the numbers are going to go up a little, we put the instructions on how to run that report right here in the newsletter from the School Lunch Tray. Yeah, the other day, but it's also in our training guide on our webpage, if you need it, it's also there.

10:18

When you run that number, you will also see there was a DOD number, already pre populated, We were able to just rollover last, this year's numbers next year to get that started.

10:29

So, take a look carefully at that number and determine if that is what you want to do again next year.

10:35

If it is perfect, you're done, you don't have to contact us if that number is good, that number just stays.

10:41

However, if you do want to change your DOD allotment for next year, you need to then follow the procedure, if right there perfect.

10:49

Thank you Fionnuala. You will see that you will contact Sybil Walton at SERC and her e-mail is right there and include your district name and then the amount you want that DOD number to be. Please include your district name, sometimes folks, e-mails, don't clearly outline what district you're from and this is Sybil helping us out with this data collection and it will save ever having to stop and look up where you're from.

11:13

If you would include that in your e-mail, so your district name and the amount you want for entitlement, please, if you are our Veterans, who've done this for many years. This is a little different, please don't assume it's just rolling over from last year. That's what you want. Go and

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: January 29, 2021

look at the number. There have been adjustments made this year for a variety of reasons that we normally don't do.

11:32

So open up the requisition, excuse me, the entitlement bonus summary report.

11:38

Take a look in for school year, 2020 to see what the numbers are, and then respond to Sybil if you want to change that DOD number, and that gives you an idea that we are moving full force, getting ready to start doing the regular ordering really soon, we need to have this done first.

11:55

So, we can then make sure those DOD numbers are accurate, and then we will be opening the catalog, we're getting ready to do that now.

12:02

If you have any questions, you can reach out to myself or Allison, we'll be happy to assist you with anything, if you still have questions with this.

12:10

Please note that the due date for letting Sybil know if you want a change in that DOD number is next Friday, a week, from today, on February fifth.

12:20

And, uh, I think that covers that piece, Fionnuala.

12:26

If we move forward, I know it's lengthy. I apologize, a lengthy information about the DOD program, as well, is in there.

12:34

And if we continue on, I think we had one other item.

12:43

Okay, and so this is very timely, actually, the DOD cancelations reminders. Again, it's a reminder that if you have a change in needing to cancel delivery, it needs to be done no less than 24 hours with HPC and there is the contact information for you.

12:59

And again, we always suggest folks have this contact information with them at all times, because we know sometimes decisions are made at office hours in order to, with the corporate situation that's been going on.

13:11

And that does bring us around to the fact that we've had some unprecedented changes in delivery this week due to apparently COVID concerned with, with their delivery team and therefore a lack of adequate drivers in order to meet some of our commitments.

13:29

I apologize for that, we found out when you found out and we are working with USDA and DOD because please remember this is a federal contract, we need to work through them on this, but we've shared your concerns. We've expressed our concerns. It's not just Connecticut if that makes you feel any better, because they do cover an entire region, and we are working diligently

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: January 29, 2021

to try to get an update as to what they're going to do moving forward. As of this morning, I believe, they're meeting this morning to talk more about it.

13:57

If we get any information that will impact you, we will certainly let you know, so That is we know at this point, unfortunately, so thank you, and I think I'm all set.

14:10

Speaker 2 - Okay, thank you so much, Monica, um, so again, you know, any questions for reach directly out to Monica Pacheco or Allison Calhoun-White, or Sybil as far as the way you're instructed there. But we are here to help you with that. And Susan Alston is ready to cover the food safety.

14:36

Thanks to Susan.

14:38

Speaker 5 - Good morning. So we know that, you know, we wanted to start kind of focusing a little bit on food safety each week over the next couple of weeks. So starting with the meals that are being sent home. You know that when you're at school, and that's meals are all being served in school. You have really good control over food safety, hot holding, cold holding.

14:58

You know, time and temperature, and all of that stuff.

15:02

You know, you get concerned when you're sending their meals home with the kids or the parents picking them up or and there are multiple meals at a time. So what we really want you to start focusing on if you haven't, it's thinking about food safety for those meals that are being sent home.

15:17

You know, as we've talked through, you know, this whole pandemic, if you have specific questions. You should be working with your local health department. They're there to help you.

15:25

I know they're very busy with other things, but, you know, questions about maybe strategies or ways to help you with this. You can definitely be directing to them. But some things that we want to make sure that you're doing for your parents and your families as you're sending home these meals is to give them the information they need to properly store and keep these items that you're sending home.

15:49

So, some of the things we've been talking about over the past couple weeks with our different venues, you know, at conferences, I think we mentioned it once before, in one, or the other table talk, is giving them the tools that the parents need to know.

16:04

First of all, what the menu is, how to safely store each particular item. You know, we've talked about refrigerating and freezing.

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: January 29, 2021

16:13

If you're using those types of options and providing them a list that tells them what items greater, which items can be kept out, which items need to be frozen. And for schools or sites that are providing meals that need to be reheated, or even you know, cooked from frozen to reaching them. You know, you really need to have instructions for them to how to do that. And this can be done in a multiple types of ways, where you can, if you're providing them a menu with the items that you're giving to have the instructions listed on there.

16:45

Um, some people, we have, we know, have, put little tags on, say, there are items that are frozen that say, you know, cook two at this temperature for this amount of time, to a temperature.

16:56

You know, whatever it is, you want to make sure that the food is specific. Mean the temperatures and the cooking times and all that are specific to whatever food you are doing. You know, we'd like to think that everybody knows how to properly reheat and properly cooked the items that we're giving. But, when you really start to think about it, you don't know.

17:15

Who's at home with the child. If the child is looking at this and thinking, okay, what do I do with this? I don't know how to reheat. It. Does the child or that the household have someone at home?

17:25

Supervise the oven while they're cooking these things?

17:29

So, you definitely need to give instructions and how you do that.

17:32

Might it depend on your population, your students. You know, the area that you're in. So, look at all of those things. What are, you know, you put it, something we've heard of people say, Oh, they remind everybody all the time, but they also have a list. You, know, a note that they give them when they hand out their meals every week. It could be listed with your menu on the website, and you prefer people to always be looking back at as they pick up the meals. So, really start to be thinking about these things.

18:01

And, you know, if you're providing meals for multiple days, you really need to be informing their parents of how to keep them safe over that period of time.

18:11

So what we also wanted to do is just give some examples of how you can do this.

18:17

Um, Fionnuala can you scroll down just a little bit, and we'll go to the first example.

18:25

So these are just some examples of how you could do it. You know, of course, you always want to remind families, household students when they're picking up their meals that the meals are for the students that are 18 years of age and younger, and that it's one records and one lunch per child, and we've been saying this absence getting unmet needs the science that you have up, just reminding those people that are coming, that the intent of the program.



## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: January 29, 2021

18:48

It can be a very general information sheet that you give them, like, the first one, you know, that's just, kind of giving them some general statements. Consuming. Hot Foods opened two hours, you know, refrigerating them within two hours, discarding after seven days, and then it can also be as complicated as the next to scroll down to where you're actually for the items that you're giving, giving specific heating and reheating items for that.

19:15

So, again, think about what your menu is and how to best communicate to the families, how to properly heat, store and reheat the items that you're giving them. If you have questions, you could reach out to us or look at our food safety page on the website. But also be working with your health department for the best ways and the safest ways to get this information out to your family.

19:45

Speaker 2 - Okay, great, thank you so much.

19:48

Um, I'm waiting for a tree to drop at my house, here at my house these winds are unbelievable. That information is keen and as Susan mentioned, we're going to have some on items in the next few School Lunch Trays that really focus on and help support providing new resources with food safety and sanitation. So that was that was great. I don't think there.

20:12

I believe there might be one question in the School Lunch Tray?

20:22

Speaker 1 - You know, that, that was already answered.

20:24

So, this is a great time for folks to be able to enter in any questions that they may have outstanding, but we add, Monica. Monica, I already covered the DOD question, so.

20:38

We are, we have a few minutes left of the webinar, so if you have any burning questions, you want to ask now, is the chance for you to do that. We'll give it just a few minutes, in case you have that, um.

20:52

We also, for our February series to we will likely you have an opportunity for using the hand raising feature, as well, as they're more comfortable being able to speak with us.

21:06

Um, but right now, we're just keeping it to the question box, so that we have an opportunity to be able to review those questions, and then answer those. But we actually have the information for us, so.

21:16

Thank you so much for your understanding.

21:27

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: January 29, 2021

Alright, I'm not seeing any other questions come on, oops. We have one additional question that we'll give everybody else tends to be able to do that. So, I believe that this is also for you.

21:42

So the question is, is there any update on the commodity timeline, not DOD.

21:49

Previously you mentioned early February. Great question. I alluded to it.

21:54

Speaker 4 - I alluded to it briefly that this was the first step of that process.

21:57

So yes, as soon as we get the change requested by next Friday and get that entered into web supply, which is unfortunately a manual process. So we have to get changed the numbers for you. We're hoping to open up that catalog and allow for the ordering and provide the worksheets that you utilize to plan your orders and all the information you need.

22:17

So I would anticipate probably the second full week of February, so very quickly, we will have the catalog opening with us a few weeks, probably close to a month of time for you to be able to place your orders. We had a slow start, but it has kicked into gear. So I think we're going to be pretty close to our normal timeline with the catalog opening up pretty soon.

22:40

Speaker 1 - Thank you so much.

22:43

Alright, not seeing any other questions come in. So it is a happy Friday. We will give you a whole seven minutes back to start your, your entree into the weekends, but thank you so much for all you're doing out there.

22:56

And thank you so much to my team who has tirelessly been working to try and make sure that you have what you need great times, though, certainly, have a great weekend, everybody. Hopefully it's, it's restful and restorative and we are all set for next Monday.

23:16

With that, thank you. Speaker 2 - Thank you.

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: January 29, 2021



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\\_01\\_29\\_2021\\_Transcript.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Training/School_Lunch_Tray_Table_Talk_01_29_2021_Transcript.pdf).

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

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

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The Connecticut State Department of Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The Connecticut Department of Education does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of age, ancestry, color, criminal record (in state employment and licensing), gender identity or expression, genetic information, intellectual disability, learning disability, marital status, mental disability (past or present), national origin, physical disability (including blindness), race, religious creed, retaliation for previously opposed discrimination or coercion, sex (pregnancy or sexual harassment), sexual orientation, veteran status or workplace hazards to reproductive systems, unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in any of the aforementioned protected classes.

Inquiries regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to: Levy Gillespie, Equal Employment Opportunity Director/Americans with Disabilities Coordinator (ADA), Connecticut State Department of Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 505, Hartford, CT 06103, 860-807-2071, [levy.gillespie@ct.gov](mailto:levy.gillespie@ct.gov).