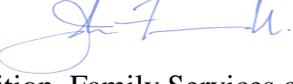




STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Sponsors of the School Child Nutrition Programs

FROM: John Frassinelli, Chief 
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education

DATE: September 2, 2016

SUBJECT: Operational Memorandum No. 13-16
Connecticut Procedures for Early Implementation of the New Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Infants in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) final rule, *Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010*, revises the NSLP and SBP meal patterns to reflect the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal patterns for infants (birth through 11 months) and preschoolers (ages 1-4).

This memorandum describes the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) procedures for early implementation of the NSLP and SBP meal patterns for preschoolers and infants required by the final rule. CSDE's early implementation procedures are based on USDA memo [SP 42-2016](#) and [CACFP 14-2016](#), *Early Implementation of the Updated Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Pattern Requirements and the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs' Infant and Preschool Meal Patterns*, issued June 24, 2016.

In the NSLP and SBP, the preschool grade group includes ages 1-4. If a 5-year-old is in preschool or a 4-year-old is in kindergarten, the final rule allows school food authorities (SFAs) to continue serving the appropriate meal pattern for that grade. The final rule maintains the flexibility to serve a single menu when preschool and elementary school students are in the same cafeteria at the same time. (For information on the current meal pattern requirements for schools with grade configurations where ages 3-4 and elementary students (grades K-5) eat together during the same meal period, see "Multiple Grade Groups" in section 3 and appendices I and K of the CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals*.) It also eliminates the option of offer versus serve (OVS) for children younger than age 5.

The new NSLP and SBP meal patterns for preschoolers and infants are effective **October 1, 2017**. They include some provisions that are consistent with the current NSLP and SBP meal patterns for preschoolers and infants, and other provisions that are not currently allowed. The USDA allows state agencies to determine when SFAs can begin to implement certain provisions of the updated preschool and infant meal patterns that are not allowed in the current meal patterns.

The CSDE's early implementation procedures are summarized in this memorandum and in the attached documents, *Options for Early Implementation of the New Preschool Meal Patterns* and *Options for Early Implementation of the New Infant Meal Pattern*. A summary of the three implementation options follows.

Option 1: Specific Provisions

With option 1, the SFA continues to implement the current NSLP and SBP preschool and infant meal patterns, plus any provisions of the new preschool and infant meal patterns that are consistent with the current meal patterns. Consistent provisions can be implemented by the SFA whenever feasible. These include the ten provisions for preschoolers and five provisions for infants below.

Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)

1. Prohibiting flavored milk for ages 1-5.
2. Allowing fat-free flavored milk for ages 6 and older. *Note: USDA best practice recommends serving only unflavored milk.*
3. Requiring at least one daily serving of whole grain-rich foods. Whole grain-rich foods are grain products that contain at least 50 percent whole grains, any other grain ingredients are enriched, and any noncreditable grains such as bran, germ, and modified food starch are less than two percent of the product formula. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, "[Criteria for Whole Grain-rich Foods](#)."
4. Allowing meat and meat alternates in place of the entire grains component at breakfast up to three times per week.
5. Allowing tofu and soy yogurt to credit as meat alternates.
6. Tofu and soy products must meet the requirements outlined in USDA Memo [SP 53-2016](#) and [CACFP 21-2016](#).
7. Eliminating grain-based desserts from the grains component. Grain-based desserts are those items in USDA's [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#) Exhibit that are denoted as desserts with superscripts 3 and 4. This includes cakes, cookies, sweet pie crusts, fruit turnovers, doughnuts, granola bars, grain-fruit bars, cereal bars, toaster pastries, sweet rolls, and brownies.
8. Requiring breakfast cereals to contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce.
9. Requiring yogurt to contain no more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces.
10. Limiting juice to no more than one meal per day, including snack.
11. Prohibiting deep-fat frying foods on-site, i.e., cooking by submerging food in hot oil or other fat.

Infants (Birth through 11 months)

1. Reimbursing infant meals when the mother breastfeeds on site.
2. Allowing yogurt, whole eggs, and ready-to-eat cereals with no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce for developmentally ready infants.
3. Requiring a vegetable or fruit, or both, to be served at snack for infants ages 6-11 months.
4. Eliminating fruit juice as a creditable component in the infant meal pattern.
5. Eliminating cheese food and cheese spread as creditable components in the infant meal pattern.

SFAs may begin to implement any or all of the above provisions for preschoolers and infants as part of reimbursable meals at any time, as long as they are in place by October 1, 2017.

Option 2: Entire Meal Pattern

This option will only be available beginning in winter 2017, after the CSDE has provided training for school nutrition programs on the new NSLP and SBP preschool and infant meal patterns. ***This option can only be implemented after the SFA's staff has attended training and the SFA has received prior CSDE approval for early implementation.*** For more information, see "Training on the New Meal Patterns" below.

With option 2, the SFA must implement all provisions of the new NSLP and SBP preschool and infant meal patterns. After attending the CSDE training, SFAs may request approval from the CSDE to implement the **entire** updated meal pattern requirements (all 13 provisions for preschoolers and all 8 provisions for infants) prior to October 1, 2017, including all provisions described in option 1 (ten provisions for preschoolers and five provisions for infants) and the additional three provisions for preschoolers and three provisions for infants below that are not allowed under the current meal patterns.

Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)

12. Allowing juice to fulfill the entire vegetable component or fruit component.
13. Permitting parents and guardians to provide one meal component for participants with nondisability medical or special dietary needs.
14. Extending OVS to at-risk afterschool programs.

Infants (Birth through 11 months)

6. Requiring breast milk and infant formula for infants from birth through 5 months.
7. Requiring two age groups in the infant meal pattern instead of three: 0-5 months and 6-11 months.
8. Requiring solid foods to be gradually introduced around 6 months of age, as developmentally appropriate.

CSDE approvals of option 2 will be on a case-by-case basis, and only for SFAs that can demonstrate their capacity to successfully implement all updated NSLP and SBP preschool and infant meal pattern requirements, fully train staff, and monitor all updated meal pattern requirements.

Option 3: No Changes

With option 3, the SFA continues to implement the current NSLP and SBP preschool and infant meal patterns without any changes through September 30, 2017, and begins full implementation of all provisions of the new preschool and infant meal patterns on October 1, 2017.

Training on the New Meal Patterns

Beginning in winter 2017, the CSDE will conduct training on the new meal pattern requirements for preschoolers and infants in the NSLP and SBP. Information on the training schedule will be distributed to school nutrition programs later this fall. In the meantime, information on the new NSLP and SBP preschool and infant meal patterns under the final rule are available on the USDA's [Nutrition Standards for CACFP Meals and Snacks](#) Web page.

Questions may be directed to your school nutrition consultant.

Consultants for School Nutrition Programs	
County	Consultant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairfield County (Includes Region 9) • Litchfield County (Includes Regions 1, 6, 7, 12 and 14) • New London County (Lebanon, Ledyard, Lisbon, Lyme, Montville, New London and North Stonington) 	<p>Fionnuala Brown fionnuala.brown@ct.gov 860-807-2129</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hartford County (Includes Region 10) • New London County (Bozrah, Colchester, East Lyme, Franklin, Griswold and Groton) 	<p>Teri Dandeneau teri.dandeneau@ct.gov 860-807-2079</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middlesex County (Includes Regions 4, 13 and 17) • New London County (Preston, Quaker Hill, Salem, Sprague, Stonington, Voluntown and Waterford) • Tolland County (Includes Regions 8 and 19) • Windham County (Includes Region 11) 	<p>Susan Alston susan.alston@ct.gov 860-807-2081</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Haven County (Includes Regions 5, 15 and 16) • New London County (Norwich, Old Lyme, and includes Region 18) 	<p>Jackie Schipke jackie.schipke@ct.gov 860-807-2123</p>

JF:sff

Attachments: (2)

Important: This is a numbered Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) operational memorandum that contains important program information. Please read carefully and retain in a binder for future reference. All CSDE operational memoranda are posted on the CSDE's [Operational Memoranda for School Nutrition Programs](#) Web page.