

Lunch Menu Planning Checklist for Five-day Week • Grades K-5

This checklist assists schools with planning meals to meet the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) meal pattern requirements for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). For detailed information on the NSLP five-day meal patterns, see the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [Meal Patterns for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage and [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).

Lunch	Yes	No ¹
Each meal includes all five components: meat/meat alternates, grains, fruits, vegetables, and milk.		
Milk	Yes	No ¹
All milk offered is low-fat (1%) unflavored or fat-free unflavored or flavored.		
At least two different varieties of milk are offered.		
Whole and reduced fat (2%) milk are not served.		
Fruits Component	Yes	No ¹
Each meal includes at least ½ cup of fruit. ²		
The weekly menu includes at least 2 ½ cups of fruit. ²		
If served, 100% fruit juice does not exceed half of the weekly fruits component, i.e., no more than 1 ¼ cups. (Indicate "N/A" if fruit juice is not served.)		
Vegetables Component	Yes	No ¹
Each meal includes at least ¾ cup of vegetable ²		
The weekly menu includes at least 3 ¾ cups of vegetables ²		
The weekly menu meets all vegetable subgroups (3 ¾ cups total):		
<input type="checkbox"/> Dark Green: ½ cup dark offered weekly		
<input type="checkbox"/> Red/Orange: ¾ cup offered weekly		
<input type="checkbox"/> Beans and Peas (Legumes): ½ cup offered weekly		
<input type="checkbox"/> Starchy: ½ cup offered weekly		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: ½ cup offered weekly (or dark green, red/orange, beans/peas, or starchy)		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 cup of additional vegetables offered weekly to reach 3 ¾ cups total (choose from any of the five vegetable subgroups)		
If served, 100% vegetable juice does not exceed half of the weekly vegetables component, i.e., no more than 1 7/8 cups. (Indicate "N/A" if vegetable juice is not served.)		
Leafy greens such as romaine lettuce and fresh spinach are counted as only half of the actual portion size served, i.e., 1 cup of leafy greens equals ½ cup of vegetable.		
Grains Component	Yes	No ¹
Each meal includes at least 1 ounce equivalent (oz eq) of grains.		
The weekly menu includes 8-9 oz eq of grains. ²		
All grains are whole grain-rich. For more information, see Criteria for Whole Grain-rich Foods .		
Grain-based desserts are limited to no more than 2 oz eq per week.		
Meat/Meat Alternates (M/MA)Component	Yes	No ¹
Each meal includes at least 1 oz eq of M/MA.		
The weekly menu includes 8-10 oz eq of M/MA. ²		

Offer versus Serve	Yes	No ¹
Students are required to select at least ½ cup of fruit or vegetable for a reimbursable meal.		
In addition to ½ cup of fruit or vegetable, students are required to select the full portion of at least two other components for a reimbursable meal.		
Dietary Specifications (Nutrient Standards) for Weekly Menus ³ (Indicate "unknown" if you do not conduct your own nutrient analysis.)	Yes	No ¹
Calories are within the allowable range of 550-650 calories.		
Saturated fat is less than 10% of total calories.		
Sodium does not exceed 1,230 milligrams. <i>This first sodium target is extended through June 30, 2018.</i>		
All nutrition labels and manufacturer specifications indicate zero grams of trans fat per serving.		

- ¹ If "no" is checked for any of the statements above, the menu does not comply with the meal pattern requirements. Check the menu and revise accordingly.
- ² Larger amounts of milk, fruits, vegetables, grains, and meat/meat alternates may be served only if meals do not exceed the weekly limit for calories, saturated fat, and sodium.
- ³ Schools are not required to conduct a nutrient analysis of menus. The CSDE will conduct a nutrient analysis as part of the state administrative review.

Menu Planning Resources

Crediting Foods: www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=333796
 Meal Patterns for School Nutrition Programs: www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=336544
 Menu Planning Guide for School Meals: www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=334320
 USDA Food Buying Guide: www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-school-meal-programs
 Vegetable Subgroups: www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/nslp/7daympchecklistK-5.pdf

This form is available at www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/nslp/7daympchecklistK-5.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: https://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, 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) jasc: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: 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 State Department of Education does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability (including, but not limited to, intellectual disability, past or present history of mental disorder, physical disability or learning disability), genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws. The Connecticut State Department of Education does not unlawfully discriminate in employment and licensing against qualified persons with a prior criminal conviction. Inquiries regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to: Lery Gillespie, Equal Employment Opportunity Director/Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator, Connecticut State Department of Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 607, Hartford, CT 06103, 860-807-2071, Lery.Gillespie@ct.gov.