




STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Sponsors of the National School Lunch Program

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

DATE: February 14, 2018

SUBJECT: Operational Memorandum No. 04-18
Process for Submitting the Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Statement for
School Year 2018-19

This memo summarizes the requirements for submitting the 2018-19 HFC Statement to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE). It also provides information on the Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS), HFC resources, and state beverage requirements.

Annual HFC Statement

[Section 10-215f](#) of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) requires that each local board of education or governing authority for all Connecticut public school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) must take action annually to certify whether all food items sold to students will or will not meet the CNS. This includes all public schools, regional educational service centers, the Connecticut Technical High School System, charter schools, interdistrict magnet schools, and endowed academies.

For school year 2018-19, the HFC period is July 1, 2018, through June 30, 2019. **All public school districts participating in the NSLP must submit the online *Healthy Food Certification Statement – Addendum to Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs (ED-099)* by July 1, 2018.** The vote by the board of education or governing authority on whether to participate in HFC must occur by July 1, 2018, or the district/school is **ineligible** for HFC participation during school year 2018-19.

HFC Application Process for 2018-19

The annual HFC Statement is completed **online** in the CSDE's Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs ([CNP System](#)), as part of the district's 2018-19 application module for Child Nutrition Programs. Please do not submit hard copies of the annual HFC Statement to the CSDE.

The 2018-19 application module for Child Nutrition Programs is expected to be available in the CNP System in May 2018. The CSDE will notify sponsors when the module is open and the HFC application module becomes available. In the meantime, districts **must follow the procedures below** to ensure timely submission of the 2018-19 HFC Statement by the deadline of July 1, 2018.

1. Schedule the HFC vote at a meeting of your board of education or governing authority that occurs **before June 30, 2018**. The board of education or governing authority for

each public school that participates in the NSLP must **vote** “yes” or “no” on whether to implement the healthy food option, as indicated below.

- **Healthy Food Option:** Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the board of education or governing authority certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2018, through June 30, 2019. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to, school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or by non-school organizations and groups.

If the board of education or governing authority votes “yes” for the healthy food option above, the board of education or governing authority **must also vote** on whether to allow food exemptions, as indicated below. *Note: If the board of education or governing authority votes “no” for the healthy food option above, a vote on whether to allow food exemptions is not required.*

- **Exemption for Food Items:** The board of education or governing authority will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An “event” is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The “regular school day” is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. “Location” means where the event is being held.
2. **Conduct the HFC vote** at the scheduled meeting of the board of education or governing authority. **Maintain a copy of the meeting minutes** indicating the results of the HFC vote outlined in step 1 above.
 - The minutes must indicate whether the board of education or governing authority voted “yes” or “no” to implement the healthy food option.
 - If the board of education or governing authority voted “yes,” for the healthy food option, the minutes must also indicate whether the board of education or governing authority voted “yes” or “no” to allow food exemptions.
 3. When the CSDE notifies districts that the HFC application module is available, **complete the online HFC application module and upload the meeting minutes** indicating the results of the HFC vote. *Note: The CSDE will e-mail school nutrition programs when the 2018-19 HFC application module of the CNP System is available. Instructions on how to access the HFC application module will be provided at that time.*

Interschool Agreements for HFC Schools

A public school or district (recipient site) that receives meals under contract from a HFC district (providing sponsor) can choose to certify for the healthy food option and follow the CNS. This must be indicated on the interschool agreement between the recipient site and the providing sponsor district. In order for the providing sponsor to receive HFC payments for any recipient sites, the interschool agreement must be submitted to the CSDE by July 1, 2018.

Schools must still submit hard copies of the interschool agreements to the CSDE. Interschool agreements are not submitted through the CNP Online System. The interschool agreements for school year 2018-19 are available on the CSDE's [Forms for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS)

A summary of the CNS is available in the CSDE's handout, [Summary of Connecticut Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools](#). Additional information on the CNS is available on the CSDE's [CNS](#) webpage. The CSDE's [HFC](#) webpage provides numerous resources to assist districts with implementing HFC including:

- [Complying with HFC Presentation](#);
- [Ensuring District Compliance with HFC](#);
- [Food and Beverage Requirements for Fundraisers](#);
- [Guide to Competitive Foods in Schools](#);
- [Questions and Answers on Connecticut Statutes for School Food and Beverages](#);
- [Requirements for Food and Beverages in Vending Machines](#); and
- [Food and Beverage Requirements for School Stores](#).

State Beverage Requirements

As a reminder, the beverage requirements of C.G.S. [Section 10-221q](#) apply to all public schools, regardless of whether the district certifies for the healthy food option under C.G.S. Section 10-215f. This includes all public school districts, interdistrict magnet schools, charter schools, endowed academies, and the Connecticut Technical High School System. Additional information on the beverage requirements is available on the CSDE's [Beverage Requirements](#) webpage.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Susan Fiore at 860-807-2075 or susan.fiore@ct.gov or Teri Dandeneau at 860-807-2079 or teri.dandeneau@ct.gov.

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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](#) webpage.