




STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Sponsors of the National School Lunch Program

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

DATE: February 6, 2017

SUBJECT: Operational Memorandum No. 5-17
New Process to Submit 2017-18 Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Statement

This memo summarizes the requirements for submitting the annual HFC Statement to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) and contains important information regarding changes to the HFC Statement submission process for school year 2017-18. 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 2017-18, the HFC period is July 1, 2017, through June 30, 2018. All public school districts participating in the NSLP must submit the *Healthy Food Certification Statement – Addendum to Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs (ED-099)* by **July 1, 2017**. The vote by the board of education or governing authority on whether to participate in HFC must occur by July 1, 2017, or the district/school is ineligible for HFC participation during school year 2017-18.

New HFC Application Process for 2017-18

Effective with school year 2017-18, the annual HFC Statement will be part of the CSDE's Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs (CNP System). Districts will no longer submit hard copies of the annual HFC Statement to the CSDE.

The CSDE expects that the online HFC application module of the CNP System will be completed by early May 2017. In the meantime, districts **must follow the procedures below** to ensure timely submission of the 2017-18 HFC Statement by the deadline of July 1, 2017.

1. Schedule the HFC vote at a meeting of your board of education or governing authority that occurs **before June 30, 2017**. The two considerations for the vote by the board of

education/governing authority are whether to implement the healthy food option and whether to allow food exemptions.

- **Consideration 1 – Healthy Food Option:** Pursuant to Section 10-215f of the C.G.S., 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, 2017, through June 30, 2018. 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.
 - **Consideration 2 – 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 for the two considerations outlined in step 1 above.
 3. When the CSDE notifies schools 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 notify all school nutrition programs by e-mail when the HFC application module of the CNP System is operational.*

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 sponsoring district to receive HFC payments for any recipient sites, the interschool agreement must be submitted to the CSDE by July 1, 2017.

Schools must still submit hard copies of the interschool agreements to the CSDE. They are not submitted through the CNP Online System. The interschool agreements for school year 2017-18 are available on the CSDE’s [Forms for School Nutrition Programs](#) Web page.

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 Web page. The CSDE's HFC Web page provides numerous resources to assist districts with implementing HFC including:

- Complying with HFC Presentation;
- Ensuring District Compliance with HFC;
- Fundraising with Food and Beverages;
- 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
- Requirements for Food and Beverages in 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 Web page.

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.

JF:sff

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.