

Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Food Service

School Lunch Service

Professional Standards for Food Service Personnel

The Board of Education (Board) recognizes that students require adequate, nourishing food and beverages in order to grow, learn and maintain good health. Therefore the Board provides a food service program for ~~{ }~~ ~~school breakfasts; { }~~ school lunches that meet the dietary specifications in accordance with the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, as periodically amended, and applicable state laws and regulations.

This service shall be under the supervision of the Food Services Director who shall be responsible to the ~~{ }~~ ~~Superintendent { }~~ Business Manager/Director of Finance ~~{ }~~ ~~Assistant Superintendent~~. The Food Services Director shall be hired under specific job specifications and approved by the Board.

The Board shall comply with the minimum professional standards for school nutrition personnel who manage and operate the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs which are contained in the regulations to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA), Public Law 111-296. These regulations, effective July 1, 2015, as amended, effective April 30, 2019, establish hiring standards for the selection of State and local school nutrition program directors, and requires all personnel in the school nutrition programs to complete annual continuing education/training.

The Board believes that the fulfillment of these professional standards for food service personnel will result in consistent, national professional standards that strengthen the ability of school nutrition professionals and staff to perform their duties effectively and efficiently. Requiring proper qualifications to serve in the District's Child Nutrition Programs is expected to improve the quality of school meals, reduce errors, and enhance Program integrity.

Flexibility for districts with 2,499 students or less, subject to the prior approval of the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), allows such districts to accept food service experience as a substitute for school nutrition experience when hiring new school nutrition program directors. This shall include volunteer or unpaid work as relevant food service experience.

The Superintendent is directed to develop administrative regulations which detail the required hiring standards and continuing education training for all District food service personnel.

(cf. 3542.31 - Participation in the Nutritional School Lunch Program)

(cf. 3542.33 - Food Sales Other Than National School Lunch Program)

(cf. 3542.34 - Nutrition Program)

(cf. 3542.43 - Charging Policy)

(cf. 6142.101 - Student Nutrition and Physical Wellness, School Wellness)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-215 Lunches, breakfasts and other feeding programs for public school children and employees.

10-215a Nonpublic school and nonprofit agency participation in feeding programs.

10-215b Duties of State Board of Education re feeding programs.
10-216 Payment of expenses.
10-217 State Board of Education Regulations.
10-215b-1 School lunch and nutrition programs.
10-215b-11 Requirement for meals.
10-215b-12 Reimbursement payments. (including free and reduced price meals)
Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, 42 U.S.C. Section 1751.
School Lunch and Breakfast Programs 42 U.S.C. Section 1751 et seq.
National Food Service Programs, Title 7 Code of Federal Regulations, 7 CFR Part 210, Part 220, Part 215, Part 245.
42 U.S.C. Sec. 1758(h)/7 CFR Sect 210.13, 220.7 (School Food Safety Inspections).
Federal Register (74 Fed. Reg. 66213) amending federal regulations (7CFR Part 210 and 220).
Federal Register (80 Fed No 40) Professional Standards for State and Local Nutrition Programs Personnel as Required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, as amended effective 4/30/19.
P.L. 111-296 Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA), 42 U.S.C. 1751.
7 CFR Parts 210 & 220 - Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch & School Breakfast Programs.
Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Assistance, 7 C.F.R. Part 15b (2001).
U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Final Rule 84 FR6953

Policy adopted: ~~November 20, 2023~~

WOODBRIIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Woodbridge, Connecticut

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Food Service

School Lunch Service

Professional Standards for Food Service Personnel

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA), Public Law 111-296 requires significant changes in the Child Nutrition Programs to prevent and reduce childhood obesity, give eligible children access to nutrition benefits, and enhance the ability of nutrition professionals to operate the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) efficiently. Section 306 of the HHFKA amended section 7 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (CNA) (42 U.S.C. 1776) by adding "Professional Standards for School Food Service." This provision is intended to ensure that school nutrition professionals that manage and operate the NSLP and SBP have adequate knowledge and training to meet Program requirements. Requiring proper qualifications to serve in the Child Nutrition Programs is expected to improve the quality of school meals, reduce errors, and enhance Program integrity.

Definitions:

School food authority (SFA) is the local governing body that has the legal authority to operate the school meal programs.

School nutrition program directors are those individuals directly responsible for the management of the day-to-day operations of school food service for all participating schools under the jurisdiction of the school food authority.

School nutrition program managers are those individuals directly responsible for the management of the day-to-day operations of school food service for a participating school(s).

School nutrition program staffs are those individuals, without managerial responsibilities, involved in day-to-day operations of school food service for a participating school(s).

School Nutrition Program Professional Standards

School food authorities that operate the National School Lunch Program or the School Breakfast Program must establish and implement professional standards for school nutrition program directors, managers, and staff.

Minimum Standards for All School Nutrition Program Directors

Each school food authority must ensure that all newly hired school nutrition program directors meet minimum hiring standards and ensure that all new and existing directors have completed the minimum annual training/education requirements for school nutrition program directors, as set forth below:

Hiring standards: All school nutrition program directors hired on or after July 1, 2015, must meet the following minimum educational requirements, as applicable:

1. *School nutrition program directors with local educational agency enrollment of 2,499 students or fewer.* Directors must meet the following requirements:

- a. A Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with an academic major or concentration in food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related field; **or**
- b. A Bachelor's degree or equivalent educational experience with any academic major or area of concentration, *and* either a State-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors or at least one year of relevant food service experience; **or**
- c. An Associate's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with an academic major or concentration in food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related field *and* at least one year of relevant school nutrition program experience; **or**
- d. A high school diploma or equivalency (such as the general educational development diploma), *and* at least three years of relevant food service experience.
- e. Subject to the prior approval of the CSDE, the district may accept relevant food service experience as a substitute for school nutrition program experience when hiring new school nutrition program directors. (The CSDE may consider volunteer or unpaid work as relevant food service experience.)
- f. A local educational agency with less than 500 students may accept less than the required years of food service experience when an applicant for a new school nutrition program director position has the minimum required educational requirement.

2. *School nutrition program directors with local educational agency enrollment of 2,500 to 9,999 students. Directors must meet the following requirements:*

- a. A Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major or concentration in food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related field; **or**
- b. A Bachelor's degree or equivalent educational experience, with any academic major or area of concentration, *and* a State-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors; **or**
- c. A Bachelor's degree in any academic major and at least two years of relevant experience in school nutrition programs; **or**
- d. An Associate's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with an academic major or area of concentration in food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related field *and* at least two years of relevant school nutrition program experience.

3. *School nutrition program directors with local educational agency enrollment of 10,000 or more students. Directors must meet the following requirements:*

- a. A Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with an academic major or area of concentration in food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related field; **or**
- b. A Bachelor's degree or equivalent educational experience, with any academic major or area of concentration, *and* a State-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors; **or**
- c. A Bachelor's degree in any major *and* at least five years' experience in management of school nutrition programs.
- d. School food authorities are strongly encouraged to seek out individuals who possess a master's degree or are willing to work toward a master's degree in the fields listed in this section. [At least one year of management experience, preferably in school nutrition, is strongly recommended. It is also strongly recommended that directors have at least three credit hours at the university level in food service management and at least three credit hours in nutritional sciences at the time of hire.]

Food safety training for school nutrition program directors for districts of all sizes: All school nutrition program directors must have completed at least eight hours of food safety training within five years prior to their starting date or completed eight hours of food safety training within 30 calendar days of their starting date. [At the discretion of the State agency, all school nutrition program directors, regardless of their starting date, may be required to complete eight hours of food safety training every five years.]

Continuing Education/Training Standards for All School Nutrition Program Directors

Each school year, the school food authority must ensure that all school nutrition program directors, (including acting directors, at the discretion of the State agency) complete annual continuing education/training. Twelve hours of annual training are required for Program Directors. The annual training must cover administrative practices (including training in application, certification, verification, meal counting, and meal claiming procedures), as applicable, and any other specific topics identified by FNS, as needed, to address Program integrity or other critical issues. Continuing education/training required is in addition to the food safety training required in the first year of employment.

Continuing Education/Training Standards for All School Nutrition Program Managers

Each school year, the school food authority must ensure that all school nutrition program managers have completed annual continuing education/training. Program managers must complete ten hours of annual training. The annual training must include, but is not limited to, the following topics, as applicable:

- Administrative practices (including training in application, certification, verification, meal counting, and meal claiming procedures);
- The identification of reimbursable meals at the point of service;
- Nutrition;
- Health and safety standards; and
- Any specific topics identified by FNS, as needed, to address Program integrity or other critical issues.

Continuing Education/Training Standards for All Staff with Responsibility for School Nutrition Programs

Each school year, the school food authority must ensure that all staff with responsibility for school nutrition programs that work an average of at least 20 hours per week, other than school nutrition program directors and managers, completes annual training in areas applicable to their job. Staff must complete six hours of annual training. Part-time staff working an average of less than 20 hours per week must complete four hours of annual training. The annual training must include, but is not limited to, the following topics, as applicable to their position and responsibilities:

- Free and reduced price eligibility;
- Application, certification, and verification procedures;
- The identification of reimbursable meals at the point of service;
- Nutrition;
- Health and safety standards; and
- Any specific topics identified by FNS, as needed, to address Program integrity or other critical issues.

The annual training requirements for school nutrition program managers, directors, and staff became effective July 1, 2015. Program managers, directors, and staff hired on or after January 1 of each school year must complete half of their required annual training hours before the end of the school year. At the discretion of the State agency:

- Acting and temporary staff, substitutes, and volunteers must complete training in one or more of the topics listed in this section, as applicable, within 30 calendar days of their start date; and
- School nutrition program personnel may carry over excess annual training hours to an immediately previous or subsequent school year and demonstrate compliance with the training requirements over a period of two school years, provided that some training hours are completed each school year.

Use of Food Service Funds for Training Costs

Costs associated with the required annual continuing education/training are allowed provided they are reasonable, allocable, and necessary in accordance with the cost principles set forth in 2 CFR part 225, Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments (OMB Circular A-87). However, food service funds must not be used to pay for the cost of college credits incurred by an individual to meet hiring requirements.

School Food Authority Oversight

Each school year, the school food authority director must document compliance with the training requirements for all staff with responsibility for school nutrition programs, including directors, managers, and staff. Documentation must be adequate to establish, to the State's satisfaction during administrative reviews, that employees are meeting the minimum professional standards. The school food authority must certify that:

- The school nutrition program director meets the hiring standards and training requirements; and
- Each employee has completed the applicable training requirements no later than the end of each school year.

(cf. 3542.31 - Participation in the Nutritional School Lunch Program)

(cf. 3542.33 - Food Sales Other Than National School Lunch Program)

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