

Guidance for Four-day Lunch Menu Planning Form 4 – Grades K-8 (School Year 2014-15)

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) menu planning worksheets are intended only for menu planning purposes. They are not the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) certification worksheets and cannot be used for six cents certification or as the USDA Menu Worksheets for the CSDE Administrative Review of the USDA school nutrition programs. To access the USDA certification worksheets, visit the CSDE's [Six Cents Certification Web page](#).

The CSDE menu planning forms help schools determine whether lunches meet the USDA meal patterns for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Form 4 is an Excel worksheet that calculates whether a four-day lunch menu for grades K-8 meets the required daily and weekly servings for the five meal pattern components: milk, fruits, vegetables, meats/meat alternates and grains. If the menu does not meet the requirements, the worksheet will identify which components should be adjusted.

This worksheet should be used only for schools with unusual grade configurations that prevent students from being separated into the required grade groups at lunch. Examples include a school with grades K-8 or grades 5-8 where students from different grade groups eat together during the same lunch period. *If students can be served separately in their appropriate grade groups, schools must use the required meal patterns for grades K-5 and 6-8.*

This worksheet is only for four-day menus for grades K-8. Worksheets for grades K-5, 6-8 and 9-12 are available on the CSDE [Meal Patterns](#) Web page.

This worksheet is intended to evaluate **one individual menu**. If the facility serves multiple daily menu choices, each lunch menu option must be evaluated individually.

Directions

For each meal pattern component, use the columns “Food and Amount” and “Meal Pattern Contribution” to enter information for each food *item* in the meal.

- Food and Amount (columns 1, 3, 5, and 7):** Enter each food item and the serving size, based on the actual planned amount, for example, “apple, 1 medium” or “hamburger, 2 oz.” Use the USDA’s [Food Buying Guide](#) to determine the amount of purchased food that meets the meal pattern serving size requirements. For

A food *component* is one of the five food groups (milk, fruits, vegetables, meats/meat alternates and grains) that make up the reimbursable meal. A food *item* is a specific food offered within the five food components.

processed foods, use the [Child Nutrition \(CN\) label](#) or manufacturer’s [product formulation statement](#) to determine how to credit the food toward the USDA meal pattern components and serving sizes.

- Meal Pattern Contribution (columns 2, 4, 6 and 8):** Enter the meal pattern contribution for each food item based on the planned serving size. For example, ½ cup of cooked brown rice equals 1 ounce equivalent of grains; ½ cup of sweet potatoes equals ½ cup of red/orange vegetables; 1 cup of romaine lettuce equals ½ cup of dark green vegetables; ¼ cup of raisins equals ½ cup of fruit; 2 tablespoons of nut butters equal 1 ounce equivalent of meat/meat alternate; and 1 ounce of lean meat, poultry or fish equals 1 ounce equivalent of meat/meat alternate.

Enter the meal pattern contributions as either fractions or decimals. The chart below summarizes common fraction and decimal equivalents.

Fraction	Decimal
1/8	0.125
1/4	0.25
3/8	0.375
1/2	0.5

Fraction	Decimal
5/8	0.625
3/4	0.75
7/8	0.875

Reviewing Menu Compliance

The bottom row of each meal pattern component indicates whether the menu meets the daily requirements (see “Meets Daily Minimum” at the bottom of columns 1, 3, 5 and 7). Column 10 (“Summary of Compliance with Weekly Requirements”) displays “meets requirements” if all weekly components and serving sizes are correct. If the weekly menu does not meet all requirements, this column will identify which components should be adjusted.

The chart on the next two pages provides additional guidance on meeting the meal pattern requirements for each component and includes tips for completing the worksheet. For more information, see the [sample completed worksheet](#) for grades K-8.

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Component	Meeting the Four-day Meal Pattern Requirements for Grades K-8	Tips for Completing the Worksheet
Milk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Servings are indicated in cups. Menus must provide a minimum of 1 cup daily and 4 cups weekly. Larger amounts of milk may be served if meals do not exceed the weekly limit for calories, saturated fat and sodium. Schools must offer at least two different varieties (fat content and/or flavor) of unflavored low-fat (1%) milk or fat-free milk (unflavored or flavored). Whole, reduced-fat (2%) and flavored low-fat milk cannot be served. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List all choices of milk provided, e.g., “Choice of low-fat plain, fat-free plain, fat-free chocolate milk and fat-free strawberry milk.”
Fruits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Servings are indicated in cups. Menus must provide a minimum of ½ cup daily and 2 cups weekly. Larger amounts of fruits may be served if meals do not exceed the weekly limit for calories, saturated fat and sodium. Schools can serve ½ cup of one fruit or smaller amounts of several different fruits that total ½ cup. A minimum of 1/8 cup of fruit must be served to count toward the total requirements. Fruits include fresh, frozen, canned in light syrup, water or juice and dried. Frozen fruits can contain added sugar through June 30, 2015. All fruits are credited based on volume except dried fruit counts as twice the volume served, e.g., ¼ cup of dried fruit counts as ½ cup of fruit. All fruit juice must be pasteurized 100 percent full-strength juice and cannot count for more than half of the weekly fruits component, i.e., counts for no more than 1 cup. The CSDE recommends serving whole fruits instead of juice. For more information, see Crediting Juice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the Food Buying Guide and CN labels to determine proper crediting information for fruits. If the menu does not meet the daily or weekly requirements, adjust the meal components and serving sizes. Enter the total amount of fruit juice served for the week under “Weekly Fruit Juice Served.” Check to be sure that the total amount does not exceed 1 cup.
Meats/Meat Alternates (M/MA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Servings are indicated in ounce equivalents (oz eq). Menus must provide a minimum of 1 oz eq daily. Weekly M/MA cannot be less than 7 oz eq. Weekly M/MA can exceed 8 oz eq if meals do not exceed the weekly limit for calories, saturated fat and sodium. A minimum of 1/8 ounce of meat or meat alternate must be served to count toward the total daily requirements. The serving size refers to the edible portion of cooked lean meat, poultry or fish as served, e.g., cooked lean meat without bone. All amounts must be rounded down to the nearest one-quarter (¼) serving, e.g., enter 1.49 ounces as 1.25 ounces. A 1-ounce equivalent equals 1 ounce of lean meat, poultry or fish, 1 ounce of cheese (low-fat recommended), ¼ cup cooked beans and peas (legumes), ½ large egg, 2 tablespoons of nut butters, 1 ounce of nuts or seeds, ¼ cup (2.2 ounces) of commercial tofu (containing at least 5 grams of protein), ½ cup of yogurt or soy yogurt and 1 ounce of alternate protein products (APP). APP must meet the USDA requirements specified in Appendix A to Part 210 of the NSLP regulations. Meat and meat alternates must be served in a main dish or a main dish and only one other food item. Nuts and seeds that may be used as meat alternates include almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, filberts, macadamia nuts, peanuts, pecans, walnuts, pine nuts, pistachios and soynuts. Nuts and seeds cannot meet more than 50 percent of the M/MA requirement. They must be combined with another M/MA to meet the requirement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the Food Buying Guide and CN labels to determine proper crediting information for meats and meat alternates. Menus are not required to comply with the weekly maximum for M/MA, but it provides a guide to help schools plan age-appropriate meals that meet the calorie, saturated fat and sodium requirements. If the menu does not meet the daily or weekly requirements, adjust the meal components and serving sizes.
Grains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Servings are indicated in ounce equivalents (oz eq). Menus must provide a minimum of 1 oz eq daily. Weekly grains cannot be less than 6.5 oz eq. Weekly M/MA can exceed 7 oz eq if meals do not exceed the weekly limit for calories, saturated fat and sodium. A minimum of 1/8 ounce of grains must be served to count toward the total daily requirements. All amounts must be rounded down to the nearest one-quarter (¼) serving, e.g., enter 1.49 ounces as 1.25 ounces. All grains must be whole grain-rich (WGR), i.e., the product contains at least 50 percent whole grains, any remaining grains are enriched and any noncreditable grains are less than 2 percent (¼ ounce equivalent) of the product formula. For best nutrition, serve 100 percent whole grains most often. For more information on identifying WGR products, see Criteria for Whole Grain-rich Foods. All grains must meet the minimum serving sizes specified in Whole Grain-rich Ounce Equivalents Requirements for School Nutrition Programs. Up to 2 oz eq per week may be a grain-based dessert. However, the CSDE does not recommend this practice because grain-based desserts are generally high in fat and added sugars. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check labels and product formulation statements to determine if foods are WGR. Non-WGR foods cannot count toward the grains component. Menus are not required to comply with the weekly maximum for grains, but it provides a guide to help schools plan age-appropriate meals that meet the calorie, saturated fat and sodium requirements. If the menu does not meet the daily or weekly requirements, adjust the meal components and serving sizes.

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Component	Meeting the Four-day Meal Pattern Requirements for Grades K-8	Tips for Completing the Worksheet
Vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Servings are indicated in cups. Menus must provide a minimum of ¾ cup daily and 3 cups weekly. Larger amounts of vegetables may be served if meals do not exceed the weekly limit for calories, saturated fat and sodium. A minimum of 1/8 cup of vegetable must be served to count toward the total daily requirements. • All vegetables are credited based on volume except that leafy greens count as half the volume served (e.g., 1 cup equals ½ cup of vegetables) and tomato paste and puree are credited based on the volume as if reconstituted (see the <i>Food Buying Guide</i>). • Vegetable juice must be pasteurized 100 percent full-strength juice and cannot count for more than half of the weekly vegetables component, i.e., counts for no more than 1 ½ cups. The CSDE recommends serving whole vegetables instead of juice. For more information, see <i>Crediting Juice</i>. • The vegetables component contains five subgroups (dark green, red/orange, legumes, starchy and other). Daily minimums of each subgroup are not required but the weekly menu must meet the following requirements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ ½ cup of dark green, e.g., bok choy, broccoli, collard greens, dark green leafy lettuce, kale, mesclun, mustard greens, romaine, spinach, turnip greens and watercress. ▶ ¾ cup of red/orange, e.g., acorn squash, butternut squash, carrots, pumpkin, tomatoes, tomato juice and sweet potatoes. ▶ ½ cup of legumes, e.g., black beans, black-eyed peas (mature, dry), garbanzo beans (chickpeas), kidney beans, lentils, navy beans, soy beans, split peas and white beans. ▶ ½ cup of starchy, e.g., black-eyed peas (not dry), corn, cassava, green bananas, green peas, green lima beans, plantains, taro, water chestnuts and white potatoes. ▶ ½ cup of other, e.g., all other vegetables such as artichokes, asparagus, avocado, bean sprouts, beets, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, cucumbers, eggplant, green beans, green peppers, iceberg lettuce, mushrooms, okra, onions, parsnips, turnips, wax beans and zucchini. ▶ ¼ cup of additional vegetables, which include additional servings of any of the above vegetable subgroups to meet the total weekly vegetable requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List each vegetable in the appropriate subgroup. For more information, see <i>Vegetable Subgroups</i>. • Use the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> -and CN labels to determine proper crediting information for vegetables. • If the weekly menu includes a total of 3 cups of vegetables from the five subgroups, then the menu meets the weekly requirement and no vegetables are needed in the “additional” category. • If the menu does not meet the daily or weekly requirements, adjust the meal components and serving sizes. • Enter the total amount of vegetable juice served for the week under “Weekly Vegetable Juice Served.” Check to be sure that the total amount does not exceed 1 ½ cups.
Other foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other foods do not contribute to the meal pattern, e.g., condiments and potato chips. For more information, see <i>Noncreditable Foods in School Nutrition Programs</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not count other foods toward any meal pattern component.



For more information, see the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#) and the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns](#) Web page and [Crediting Foods](#) Web page or contact the [school nutrition programs](#) staff in the CSDE Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT 06457.

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