



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA  
Department of Education

October 5, 2012

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Patricia I. Wright, Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT: School Nutrition Programs: Requirements for Certification of Compliance with the New Meal Patterns and Nutrition Standards**

Section 201 of the federal Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 required the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to update the regulations governing the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs to establish new standards for school meals and align them with the latest nutrition science. One provision of these new regulations created performance-based cash assistance for each reimbursable lunch served in school divisions certified to be in compliance with the new meal standards regulation. The intended effect is to provide additional funding for school divisions to implement new meal pattern requirements, thus increasing the healthfulness of meals served to schoolchildren. In school year 2012-2013 an additional six cents per lunch becomes available for meals served after October 1, 2012, and certified to be in compliance with these new standards.

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) conducted training for all school divisions over the past several months on the new meal pattern regulations and the certification process. School divisions are required to request certification of meal pattern compliance following the process outlined in the training.

A summary of the certification process and the information that must be submitted by the school divisions on behalf of all of their participating schools is outlined below. USDA guidance and certification tools were previously sent by e-mail to the school nutrition program (SNP) director, supervisor or contact person in all divisions. All documents and guidance will also be posted to the School Nutrition Programs Web page on the VDOE Web site at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/nutrition/regulations/index.shtml>.

**I. STEP #1: School division requests certification. Requests may be submitted any time during SY 2012-2013. The following documents are required:**

- a. **Request/Attestation form** - signed by the school nutrition programs director, supervisor or contact person and superintendent. **Original** signatures are required. (Attached)
- b. **Menus for both breakfast and lunch.**
  - One week (five full days) of **lunch** menus for each of the USDA established grade groups (K-5, 6-8, 9-12) for the current meal pattern
  - Additionally, if more than one *distinct* lunch menu is served to students within a grade group, these additional menus must be submitted
  - One week (five full days) of **breakfast** menus for the current K-12 meal pattern or alternate meal pattern if previously approved by VDOE.
  - Menus must reflect current practice for each menu type offered. This means meals served in the calendar month for which the certification materials are submitted or meals served in the

month preceding the calendar month. The first month for which menus may be certified is October 2012.

- c. **USDA developed Certification Tool** completed certification worksheet which includes a Menu Worksheet Module and a Simplified Nutrient Assessment Module for each distinct menu planned for each grade group.
- Lunch Certification Worksheet, Grades K-5
  - Lunch Certification Worksheet, Grades 6-8
  - Lunch Certification Worksheet, Grades 9-12
  - Lunch Certification Worksheet, Grades K-8
  - Breakfast Certification Worksheet, Grades K-12

Save each completed certification tool with the file name as follows:

School Division Name-Div Number-Date of menus -Meal- Grade Group Certification Worksheet

**For Example:**

**Alexandria-101-Nov 5-7 2012 Lunch-K-5 Certification Worksheet**

**Alexandria-101-Nov 5-7 2012 Lunch-6-8 Certification Worksheet**

**Alexandria-101-Nov 5-7 2012 Lunch-9-12 Certification Worksheet**

**Alexandria-101-Nov 5-7 2012 Breakfast-K-12 Certification Worksheet**

d. **Where to submit the documents**

- Menus and Certification Tool: **Submit electronically** to [SNPWEDOC@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:SNPWEDOC@doe.virginia.gov).
- Attestation Form: Two hard copies with **ORIGINAL** signatures are required.

**Submit by mail to:**

Virginia Department of Education

Office of School Nutrition Programs

Attention: Catherine Digilio Grimes, Director

P.O. Box 2120

Richmond, VA 23218-2120

II. **STEP #2: VDOE receives, reviews, and approves/denies certification.** The State Agency has 60 days to make a determination from the time a complete certification package is received. If approved, school divisions will receive additional reimbursement effective for all lunches served from the first day of the month for which the menus were certified. If denied, school divisions must reapply.

III. **Step #3: Validation reviews** are conducted by VDOE-SNP in at least 25 percent of the certified school divisions.

IV. **Step #4: Attestation.** Certified school divisions must annually attest to compliance with the meal pattern requirements, as new requirements are phased-in (through SY 2014-15). The attestation will be an addendum to the Annual Agreement to Participate in the School Nutrition Programs. Ongoing compliance will be determined by regularly scheduled on-site compliance reviews.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact the school nutrition program specialist assigned to your division or the Office of School Nutrition Programs staff at (804) 225-2074.

PIW/CDG/idl

Attachment:

- a. [Request/Attestation Form](#) (Word)

