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Steven L. Paine, Ed.D., State Superintendent of Schools
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Food Service Directors
County Collaborative Early Childhood Core Teams

FROM: Amanda Harrison, Executive Director, Office of Child Nutrition *AH*
Monica DellaMea, Executive Director, Office of Early Learning *MD*

DATE: November 15, 2017

RE: Clarification regarding the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Requirements and Pre-K Enrolled Children

Effective October 1, 2017, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) published the final rule, "Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010" (81 FR 24348) to update the School Meals Programs' meal pattern requirements for pre-k populations. This final rule results in changes to meals served to pre-k enrolled children in public school buildings. The updated CACFP Nutrition Standards, Regulations, and resources can be accessed at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/meals-and-snacks>. Meal pattern changes impacting pre-k programs include the following:

- Flavored milk is prohibited.
- Grain-based desserts/sweet grains cannot be counted towards the grain/bread component requirement.
- Yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of sugar per six ounces.
- Meat/meat alternate may replace a grain bread at breakfast up to three times per week.

Implementing the updated Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal patterns and the updated School Meal Programs' preschool meal patterns will greatly benefit participating children. The updated USDA meal patterns will help serve as a foundation for protecting the health of young children and improving the wellness of older adults.

Earlier this year, USDA-Food Nutrition Services recognized that some schools serve meals to preschoolers and grade K-5 students in the same food service area at the same time. Further, these co-mingled situations may create counting and claiming issues because it may be challenging to determine during a meal service if a child is in pre-k or K-5. **For the purposes of this guidance, "co-mingling" refers**

to those scenarios when preschoolers and K-5 students are present in the same meal service area at the same time. In recognizing potential integrity issues and operational challenges, USDA is granting flexibility for schools to offer a single menu, following the National School Lunch Meal Pattern (NSLP), when pre-k and K-5 students are co-mingled meal service areas/times.

To clarify, **when preschoolers are served meals in a different area or at a different time than K-5 students, schools MUST follow the CACFP meal pattern** as outlined in parts 7 CFR 210.10(o)(3), 210.10(p), and 220.8(o). The option to serve the K-5 NSLP meal pattern to preschoolers is only allowed when preschoolers are co-mingled with K-5 students during the meal service.

WV Board of Education Policy 2525, 11.3 states that: "Meals shall be served in a setting that encourages socialization and self-help skills, where the children and staff members are seated together when eating, and classroom staff members provide supervision and encourage positive eating habits and conversation." Further, mealtimes are an important part of the pre-k instructional day. Therefore, pre-k children must be seated with their group even in co-mingled scenarios.

The Office of Child Nutrition and the Office of Early Learning are available to address questions, concerns, and any technical assistance you may need in addressing meal service and meal patterns among Pre-K Enrolled Students. To best support local programs in implementing this revised rule, the 2017-2018 school year is being considered a transition year. During this time the WVDE Office of Child Nutrition and the WV Universal Pre-K Steering Team will provide technical assistance during site visits and by request. Please do not hesitate to contact Tracy Sayre, Coordinator in the Office of Child Nutrition, by phone at 304-558-3396 or e-mail at trcsayre@k12.wv.us or Janet Bock-Hager, Coordinator in the Office of Early Learning, by phone at 304-558-9994 or e-mail at jbockhager@k12.wv.us.

cc: Dr. Lou Maynus, Assistant Superintendent, Division of Teaching and Learning
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