



NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Connecticut

**Food Service Task Force Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, March 13, 2024
Meeting held via Zoom**

I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4:00PM by Dr. Orlando Yarborough.

Attendees: Dr. Orlando Yarborough (Chair), Mr. Matt Wilcox (Vice-Chair), Mr. Thomas Lamb, Mr. Baron Young, Mr. Mike Degen, Mr. Billy Bromage, Ms. Susan Harris, Ms. Jennifer Punzo

**II. Introductions
And
Announcements:** There were no announcements.

III. Food Service Update: All state administrative reviews and recommendations are complete. Food Service is still awaiting feedback from the state. Food Service is working with Titan, the company that provides the POS software, to see if there are solutions for integrating information regarding students with food allergies into the system. A donation from Jeff's Granola for the amount of \$4,815.40 was sent the United Way of Greater New Haven on behalf of Food Service as a result of profits that Jeff's Granola received from purchases. United Way expressed their gratitude to Food Services for this donation. The USDA has submitted a bill that will be signed into law by President Biden on March 16, 2024. This law will include a 5-year plan to be implemented beginning the 2026-2027 school year and calls for a 10 percent reduction of sodium and sugar per each phase. These changes will present new challenges as options from vendors will become limited due to the new restrictions. Another concern is how this will impact the flavor of food and interests of students. Food Service remains committed to finding as many options as possible while adhering to USDA regulations. Mr. Young has met with Trifecta and a teacher from High School in the Community and will be visiting the school next week to discuss how vegetables from the school's garden can be served in the cafeteria and how this will encourage students to choose healthy options by eating food they have grown. Applications have started coming in for the summer meals program.



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IV. Update on Plan for Expanding Access to Locally-Grown Healthy, Sustainable Food, Decreasing Packaging Waste, and Increasing Opportunities For Food Donation, Food Rescue, and Composting

New Haven Public Schools is in the process of developing the climate resolution update which will come with a larger update from the superintendent's office that will include the sustainability aspect. To date, over five thousand pounds of materials have been composted over the last several months. Students are engaged and enjoying the process making the pilot a success. Data collection and cost analysis is being done as a means to figure out how to fund the program once the pilot ends. Information about the pilot, testimonials, and a 1-page report will be generated for Dr. Yarborough to present at the next Board of Education meeting.

V. Updates from School Break Groceries Subgroup:

Planning is in progress for the April 16th food distribution. Major focus is being placed on communication with school staff to get the information out to parents. With combined donations, the plan is to have approximately 1,200 bags prepared for distribution. The Yale Black Men's Union is sponsoring a charity challenge and will donate those funds to the United Way toward the April distribution. Witnesses to Hunger has formed a partnership with Dwight Hall on the Hunger Homeless Action Project which has started a GoFundMe in hopes of raising four thousand dollars and will donate all proceeds to the April Break Distribution. They have currently raised \$310.00. Witnesses to Hunger has received a request from a Yale student to conduct an interview to purposely spread awareness to the community addressing food insecurity and necessary funding for future success. The ultimate long-term goal is to create an annual funding program, develop partnerships, and establish future commitments to secure funding for food gaps. Planning for the August gap will begin immediately following the April distribution.

VI: Other Business:

"The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 ([PL 117-328](#)) (the Act) authorized a permanent, nationwide Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (Summer EBT) Program beginning in 2024 by adding Section 13A to the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA) ([42 USC 1762](#))."
Rothstein, M. (2024, January 29). Summer EBT Benefit Level Memo 2024. https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/SummerEBTBenefitLevelMemo2024_os.pdf
For the months of June, July, and August each eligible child will receive the \$40 per month benefit amount for 2024.

Mr. Wilcox brought to the committee's attention the concern of a parent who reported that their child, who has a life-threatening allergy, was not eating any alternative meals due to palatability.



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NEXT MEETING: The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 10, 2024. Agenda items are due to Chair (Dr. Orlando Yarborough, III) and Vice-Chair (Matt Wilcox) by 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, April 3, 2024.

Adjournment: On the Motion by Dr. Orlando Yarborough to adjourn at 4:36PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cheryl Myers

Cheryl Myers
Central Kitchen
Administrative Assistant