



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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### SNP Memo #2012-13-06

TO: Directors, Supervisors, and Contact Persons Addressed

FROM: Catherine Digilio Grimes, MS, RD, LDN, SNS, *Catherine Digilio Grimes*  
Director, Office of School Nutrition Programs

DATE: December 12, 2012

SUBJECT: Flexibility in the Maximums for the Meats/Meat Alternates and Grains Components for School Year 2012-2013.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has received feedback and comments from school divisions and state agencies regarding the significant operational challenges in meeting the maximum requirements for the Grains and Meats/Meat Alternates components in the school lunch meal pattern. In response to the comments, USDA is offering additional flexibility in menu planning for these components.

- For the remainder of school year 2012-13, the weekly maximums for the Grains and Meats/Meat Alternates under the new meal pattern for the National School Lunch program (NSLP) are eliminated. A school division will be considered compliant with the component requirements for grains and meats/meat alternates if the menu is compliant with the daily and weekly minimums for these two components, regardless of whether they have exceeded the maximums for the same components.
- There is no change in the method of measuring the required daily minimum quantities for grains or meats/meat alternates.
- Calorie maximums for school meals will remain in place for each grade group.

### **Certification:**

- Previously submitted: If school divisions have previously submitted documents for Certification to the Virginia Department of Education, there is no need to resubmit. These documents fit within this additional flexibility approach to the meal pattern.

- To be submitted:
  - Component requirements on the Weekly Report tab of the USDA Certification Tool submitted within this new flexibility may indicate **RED (NO)** in the box under the column “*Weekly Requirement Check*” for grains and meats/meat alternates components which exceed the weekly maximums. A school division may submit certification documents with this exception and be considered in compliance.
  - Simplified Nutrient Assessment Report of Results- All requirements for calories and saturated fat must be met. A **RED box** in this section is **NOT ACCEPTABLE**, indicates non-compliance, and will not be eligible for certification.

USDA will update the instructions that accompany the USDA Certification Tool to reflect this new flexibility and will update the Certification Questions and Answers to include this information.

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

CDG/idl