



Welcome!

USDA Nutrition Standards for Schools

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TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER





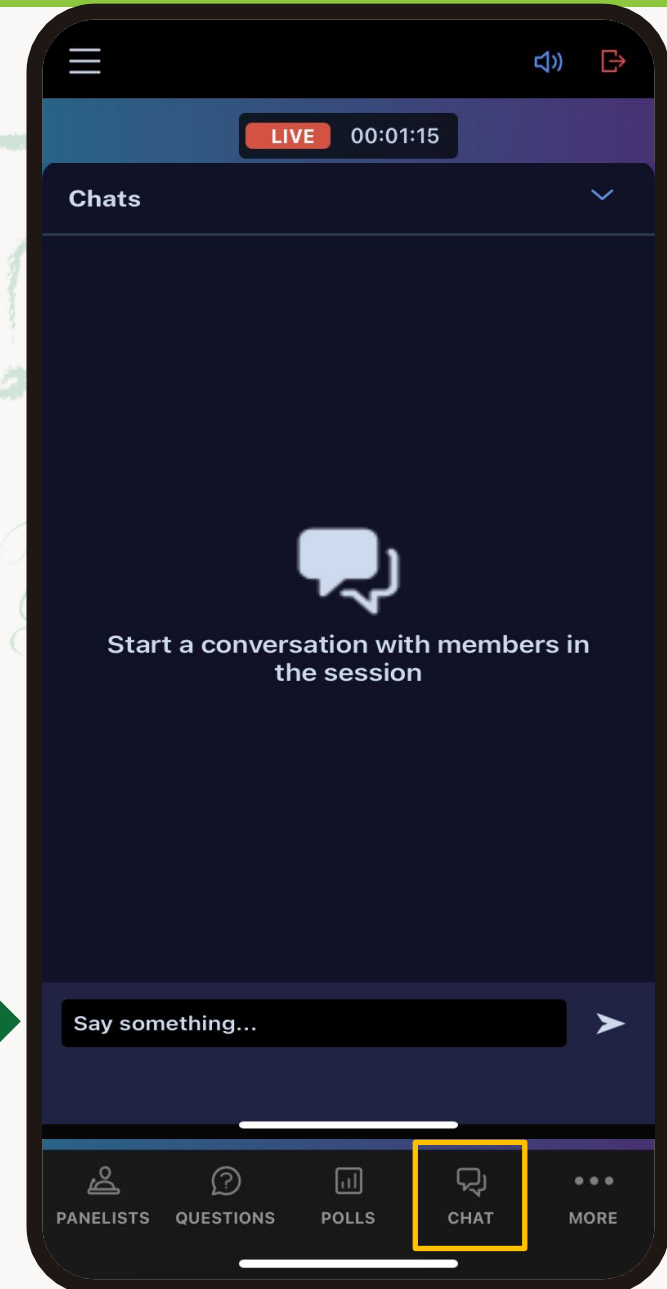
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Objectives

Nutrition Standards Final Rule

Current & SY 2025-26

Implementation Strategies

Tools & Resources



USDA Final Rule SY 24-25 Summary



Where are we now?

Fall 2024

Flavored Milk

No changes to flavored milk standards.

Additional Menu Options

Make it easier for schools to offer local, vegetarian, and culturally appropriate menu items.



Fall 2027

Added Sugars

No more than 10% of the weekly calories.

Sodium

10% reduction for breakfast.
15% reduction for lunch.

Spring 2024

USDA issues final rule on long-term school nutrition standards after listening to public feedback and following recommendations from the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans.



Fall 2025

Added Sugars

Limit on added sugars in cereals, yogurt, and milk.

Flavored Milk

Allow flavored milk with limits on added sugars.

Fall 2026

No required changes; schools can voluntarily continue to gradually reduce amount of added sugars and sodium.





Fall 2024

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SY 24-25

SBP Options

Vegetable Subgroups

Procurement

Other



USDA Final Rule Summary – SY 2024-25 Changes

School Breakfast Program

Meat/Meat Alternates

- Removed the 1 oz eq requirement for grains
- May offer Grain, Meat/Meat Alternate, or combo

Vegetable Substitutions

- SY24-25 Congressional Flexibility*
- ≥ 2 x week = 2 different subgroups



USDA Final Rule Summary – SY 2024-25 Changes

Vegetable Subgroups

Terminology

- Beans, Peas, and Lentils

Crediting

- M/MA meal component & meet weekly subgroup requirement at lunch
- *Can only count towards V or M/MA



USDA Final Rule Summary – SY 2024-25 Changes

Procurement

Buy American Exceptions

- Products listed on the FAR Non-available list and/or
- Not produced or manufactured in US in sufficient or reasonably available quantity or quality;
- Cost of a US product is significantly higher

Geographic Preference

- Procurement specification for unprocessed or minimally processed foods - “Locally Grown”, “Locally Raised”, “Locally Caught”



USDA Final Rule Summary – SY 2024-25 Changes

Other

Nuts & Seeds Crediting

- 100% of M/MA component

Bean Dip

- Smart Snacks – Total fat limits do not apply

Whole Grain-Rich

- Adds current WGR definition into regulation



USDA Final Rule Summary – SY 2024-25 Changes

Other

Potable Water

- “Plain”

Synthetic Trans Fat

- Removed dietary specification requirement

Fluid Milk Substitutes

- Vitamin A & D – micrograms (mcg)

Medical Statements

- State licensed healthcare professionals



Let's Test Your Knowledge!





Vegetable Substitution Is this allowed?

Starting SY 25-26, at least
2 different vegetable
subgroups are required to
be offered when
substituting vegetables
for fruit ≥ 2 times per week



SY 2024-2025

- Substituting Potatoes for Fruit
2X this week at Breakfast



SY 2025-2026

- Substituting Potatoes for Fruit
2X this week at Breakfast



Beans, Peas, and Lentils

How would you count the credits in this meal?



Lunch

- Black Bean Burrito Bowl
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ c Black Beans
 - 0.5 oz Cheese
 - 1 cup Brown Rice
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ c Steamed Corn
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ c Fresh Watermelon
 - 1 c Milk
- Crediting $\frac{1}{2}$ c Beans as M/MA
- Counting towards $\frac{1}{2}$ c weekly veg subgroup requirement
- Added vegetable to meet daily requirements



Expanded Geographic Preference

Identify the 3 Final Rule Procurement Specifications



Locally Harvested

Locally Grown

Locally Raised

Locally Farmed

Locally Purchased

Locally Caught



SY 2025-26

Final Rule School Meal Standards
Nutrition Standards



Where are we going?

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SY 25-26

Added Sugar

Sodium Targets



USDA Final Rule Summary – SY 2025-26 Changes

Added Sugars



Cereal

- 6g added sugar per dry oz

Yogurt

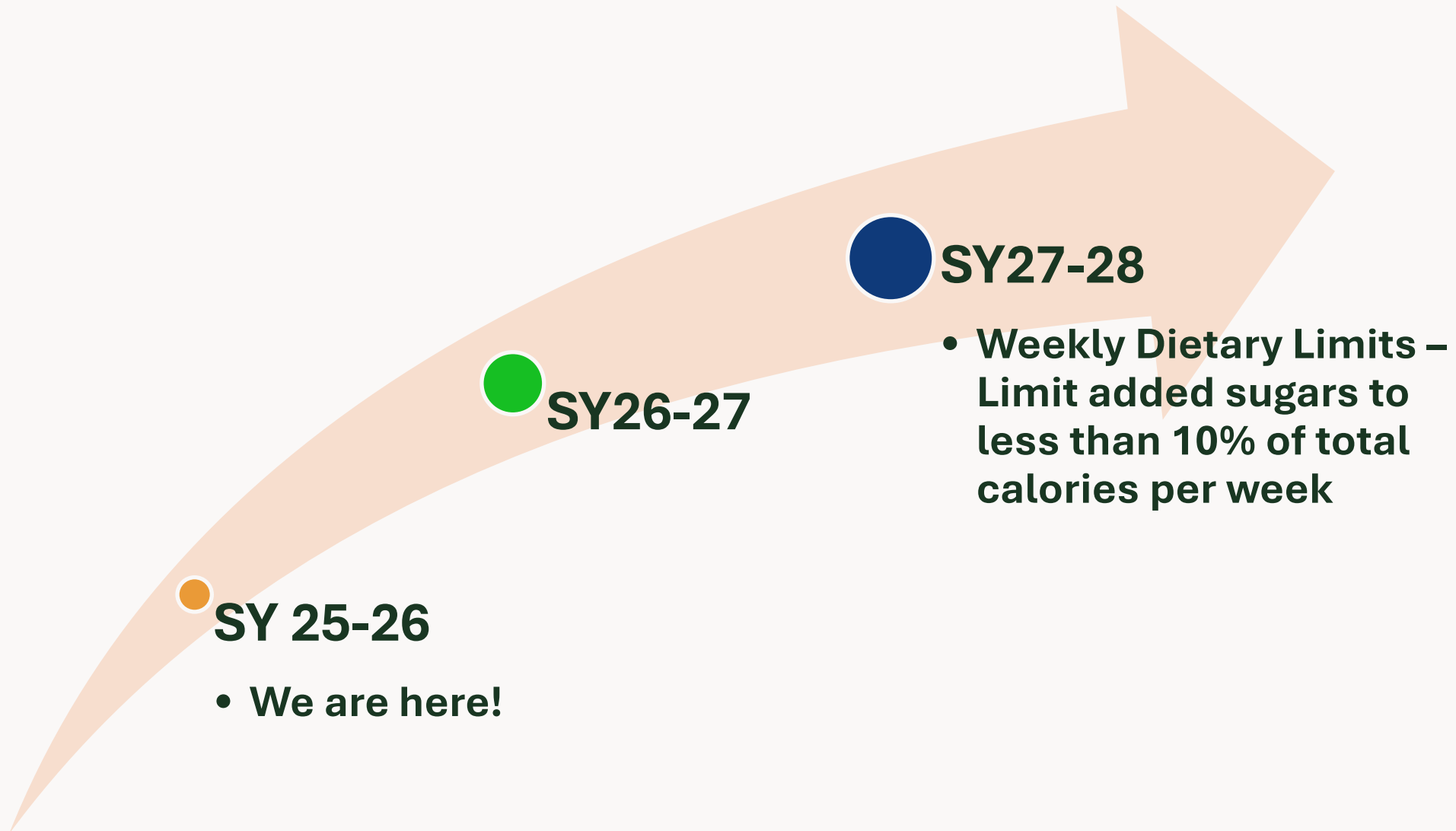
- 12g added sugars per 6 oz

Flavored Milk

- 10g added sugars per 8 fl oz
- Competitive Foods
 - Middle & HS: 15g added sugars per 12 fl oz



Added Sugars – Looking Ahead





USDA Final Rule Summary – SY 2025-26 Changes

Sodium

Breakfast

Age/Grade Group	Current Limit
K-5	≤ 540 mg
6-8	≤ 600 mg
9-12	≤ 640 mg

Lunch

Age/Grade Group	Current Limit
K-5	$\leq 1,110$ mg
6-8	$\leq 1,225$ mg
9-12	$\leq 1,280$ mg



Sodium – Looking Ahead

SY 2027-28

2025-26

• We are here

2026-27**2027-28**

• Sodium reductions

Breakfast

Age/Grade Group	Current Limit	Future Limit
K-5	≤540 mg	≤485 mg
6-8	≤600 mg	≤535 mg
9-12	≤640 mg	≤570 mg

Lunch

Age/Grade Group	Current Limit	Future Limit
K-5	≤1,110 mg	≤ 935 mg
6-8	≤1,225 mg	≤1,035 mg
9-12	≤1,280 mg	≤1,080 mg



Let's Test Your Knowledge!





Added Sugar

Would this cereal be acceptable in school year 2025-2026?

Example: Breakfast Cereal

Nutrition Facts		Amount/serving	% Daily Value*	Amount/serving	% Daily Value*
1 serving per container		Total Fat 3g	4%	Total Carbohydrate 22g	8%
Serving size 1 cup (28g)		Saturated Fat 0g	0%	Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Calories per serving 120		Trans Fat 0g		Total Sugars 8g	
		Cholesterol 0mg	0%	Includes 8g Added Sugars	16%
		Sodium 160mg	7%	Protein 1g	2%
		Vitamin D 1.2mcg 6% • Calcium 78mg 6% • Iron 1.8mg 10% • Potassium 0mg 0%			

*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

1 cup of this cereal provides
8 grams (g) of added sugars.





Added Sugar

Do these yogurts meet added sugar requirements?

Brand A Greek,
Non-Fat Yogurt, Strawberry 4 oz

Nutrition Facts	
1 serving per container	
Serving size	4 oz (113g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	100
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 6mg	2%
Sodium 45mg	2%
Total Carbohydrate 16g	5%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 13g	
Includes 8g Added Sugars	
Protein 9g	18%

Brand B Greek,
Non-Fat Yogurt, Strawberry 4 oz

Nutrition Facts	
1 serving per container	
Serving size	4 oz (113g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	100
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 8mg	1%
Sodium 45mg	2%
Total Carbohydrate 15g	6%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 14g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	
Protein 10g	20%



Added Sugars

What would you swap to reduce sugar?

Breakfast Meal 1A



1 oz eq Breakfast Muffin



1 cup Mixed Berries



8 fl oz Milk, Flavored, Fat Free

Calories: 412

Saturated Fat: 1 g

***Sodium:** 390 mg

Added Sugars: 21 g

Breakfast Meal 1B



4 oz Greek Yogurt With
4 g of Added Sugars



2 oz eq
Hard-Boiled Egg



1 cup Mixed Berries



8 fl oz Milk, Unflavored, Low Fat

Calories: 355

Saturated Fat: 2.8 g

***Sodium:** 285 mg

Added Sugars: 4 g



Added Sugars

What would you swap to reduce sugar?

Breakfast Meal 2A



2 oz eq Cinnamon Buns



8 fl oz Flavored, Fat-Free Milk



1 cup Grapes

Calories: 540

Saturated Fat: 5 g

***Sodium:** 560 mg

Added Sugars: 18 g

Percent (%) of Calories

From Added Sugars: 13%

Breakfast Meal 2B



2 oz eq Whole Grain-Rich Bagel With
Light Cream Cheese



8 fl oz Unflavored, Low-Fat Milk



1 cup Grapes

Calories: 450

Saturated Fat: 4.3 g

***Sodium:** 533 mg

Added Sugars: 0 g

Percent (%) of Calories

From Added Sugars: 0%



SY 2025-26

Final Rule School Meal Standards
Operational Standards



Fall 2025

SY 25-26

Afterschool Snacks

Buy American

Meal Modification



Afterschool Snacks

Current:

Must contain 2 of the 4 components:

- Fluid Milk
- Meat/Meat Alternates
- Vegetables or Fruits
- Grain

Align with CACFP Snacks

- Fruit and Vegetables – 2 separate components
- Grain-based desserts do not count toward grain component
- Deep-fat foods fried on site = not reimbursable

Weekly Requirements

- No more than half the weekly fruit or vegetable offerings may be in the form of juice
- At least 80% of grains offered must be whole grain-rich



Buy American

Current:

Exceptions Allowed: No Limits

Buy American exceptions allowed for non-domestic products not produced in sufficient quantity or satisfactory quality in the US

Exceptions Allowed: Limits

- Gradually phases in a 5% cap on non-domestic food purchases:
 - July 1, 2025 – 10% cap
 - July 1, 2028 – 8% cap
 - July 1, 2031 – 5% cap



Meal Modifications

Current: Medical Statements

“State licensed healthcare professionals” may write medical statements to request modifications on behalf of students with disabilities

Medical Statements

- Registered Dietitians – expands the authority to write medical statements



Let's Test Your Knowledge!





Afterschool Snacks

Does this meet snack standards?



Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Strawberries
Graham
Crackers

Blueberry
Muffin
Apple Juice

Nut Butter
Crackers
Milk

Cinnamon
Roll
Orange Juice

Cheese Stick
Apple Juice





Afterschool Snacks

Which snack does not meet standards?

Granola Bar and Milk



Carrot Sticks and Hummus



Cucumber Slices w/ Ranch Dip and Strawberries



Best Practices and Resources



Added Sugar: What
are some of your
best practices?





Added Sugar

Operational Best Practices

Milk

- Only Unflavored Milk

Grain-Based Desserts

- Less frequently or not at all

Meat/Meat Alternate

- Offer more M/MA at breakfast

Fruit

- Options that have no or few added sugar



Lower Sodium:
What are some of
your best practices?





Lower Sodium Operational Best Practices

Scratch Cooking

- Incorporate
>2x/week

Balanced Menu Planning

- Pair high & low items

Whole Foods

- Reduce pre-packaged or processed items

Spice it Up!

- Use sodium free seasonings



Resources

USDA – Food & Nutrition Service

- [Updates to the School Nutrition Standards](#)
- [Best Practices for Reducing Added Sugars at School Breakfast](#)
- [Webinar on Final Rule - Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 DGAs | Food and Nutrition Service](#)
- [Meal Talk Webinar series](#)
- [Back to School graphics](#)
- [Reducing Added Sugars – 15 min On-Demand trainings](#)



Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN)

- [Shaking It Up! \(Sodium Training\)](#)
- [USDA Creating your Road Map to School Menu Planning Success](#)



Resources

TDA – Food & Nutrition

- www.squaremeals.org
- [Meal Appeal Toolkit](#)
- Administrators Reference Manual (ARM): Sections 7, 8, and 9
- Buy American Webinar

COMING SOON: TDA's SPICE Grant

- SPICE – Supporting Professionals in Innovation and Culinary Education
- In-person culinary trainings, digital resources

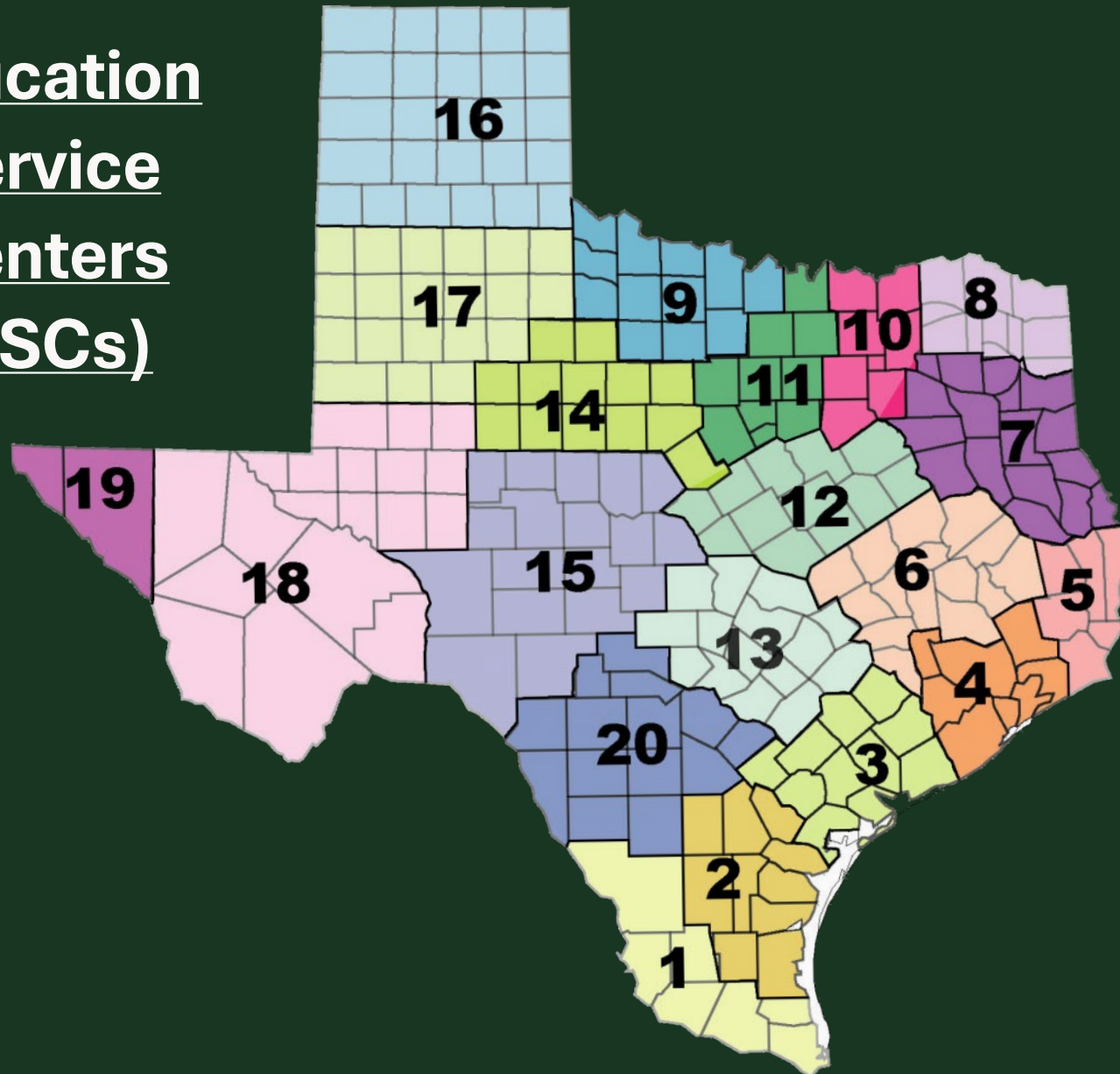
COMING SOON: TDA Resources

- Collection of resources based on responses to Final Rule Survey





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1. Session Rating *



2. The content is relevant to my current role and applicable to my daily work

- ☐ Agree
☐ Disagree

3. I feel confident in applying the knowledge gained in this presentation. *

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☐ Disagree

4. The presenter's delivery of the content was effective. *

- ☐ Agree
☐ Disagree

5. The session was engaging and interactive.

- ☐ Agree
☐ Disagree

6. The presenter encouraged questions and discussions.

- ☐ Agree
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Thank you!



Questions?

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