



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

DATE: February 23, 2018
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: Steven M. Constantino, Ed.D., Acting Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: **National School Breakfast Week - March 5-9, 2018**

The Virginia Department of Education, in partnership with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the School Nutrition Association (SNA), encourages local schools to recognize and celebrate March 5-9, 2018, as National School Breakfast Week (NSBW). This year's theme is "*I Heart School Breakfast.*"

School breakfast is an important component of the school day that can help students be ready to learn. Studies have shown that students who participate in the School Breakfast Program have improved overall diet quality, including greater consumption of grains, fruits, and milk; improved academic performance; and improved attendance. Increasing the number of students who eat a nutritious meal as part of the School Breakfast Program is an important step in improving the health of Virginia's students, as well as their academic achievement.

Nearly 53.1 million school breakfasts were served to students in Virginia last year; however, this is less than half the number of school lunches served. All schools in Virginia are eligible to participate in the USDA School Breakfast Program (SBP); 1,847 schools (or approximately 98.8 percent) are participating this year. In the 2017-2018 school year, state incentive funding was awarded to 460 schools to implement alternate breakfast service models, such as grab and go breakfast, breakfast in the classroom, and breakfast after the bell. Early data show increases in student breakfast participation in these. All SBP participating school divisions in Virginia are also eligible to receive a \$0.22 per meal incentive payment for new school breakfasts served above an established meals served per student baseline; last year nearly \$4.9 million in incentive funding was earned for increased breakfast participation. These divisions also leveraged additional federal reimbursement resulting from the increased breakfast meals served.

The Department of Education's Office of School Nutrition Programs has partnered with First Lady Pam Northam, No Kid Hungry Virginia, Virginia Hunger Solutions, Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth, Southeastern United Dairy Industry Associates, American Dairy Association North East and others to promote school breakfast and provide a NSBW 2018 toolkit of resources. The toolkit is provided in the link below.

Governor Northam will issue a proclamation for Virginia's School Breakfast Week. Virginia Hunger Solutions will be releasing their 2017 *Virginia School Breakfast Report* during NSBW to share school breakfast program best practices and recognize top performing schools and school divisions in Virginia.

A *Discover School Breakfast ToolKit* with additional resources is also available on the [USDA website at: https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/sbp-materials](https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/sbp-materials). A *Take the School Breakfast Challenge ToolKit* is available on the [SNA website at: http://schoolnutrition.org/Meetings/Events/NSBW/2017/](http://schoolnutrition.org/Meetings/Events/NSBW/2017/). School breakfast grants are available from [Action for Healthy Kids.org at: http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/tools-for-schools/apply-for-grants](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/tools-for-schools/apply-for-grants).

We would like to hear about any events or activities you are planning during NSBW. Please send this information to Tiffany Carter by email at tiffany.carter@doe.virginia.gov. If there are questions or if additional information is needed, contact Sandy Curwood, Director of School Nutrition Programs, by telephone at (804) 225-2074 or by email at sandra.curwood@doe.virginia.gov or contact the school nutrition program specialist assigned to your division.

SMC/SCC/tc

Attachment:

- A. [National School Breakfast Week Toolkit](#) (Word)

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