# SNP Memo #2021-2022-37


**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: May 3, 2022

TO: Directors, Supervisors, and Contact Persons Addressed

FROM: Sandra C. Curwood, PhD, RDN, ***Sandy***

## SUBJECT: Celebrate School Lunch Hero Day on May 6, 2022

The Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Nutrition Programs (VDOE-SNP) and the School Nutrition Association (SNA) encourage schools and nutrition program sponsors to celebrate School Lunch Hero Day on May 6, 2022. School Lunch Hero Day provides an opportunity to recognize the hard work and dedication of school nutrition professionals across the Commonwealth. Between preparing healthy meals for students, navigating student food allergies, and offering service with a smile, school nutrition professionals are true heroes.

The [SNA website](https://schoolnutrition.org/SLHD/) offers a variety of resources and graphics for celebrating school nutrition professionals. Some ideas for honoring school lunch heroes in your school or division include:

* hosting a reception to recognize nutrition staff,
* giving nutrition staff a shout-out during morning announcements,
* hanging signs and/or banners in front of the school, in hallways, and/or in the cafeteria,
* asking students to write thank you cards, and
* honoring nutrition staff with School Lunch Hero Day swag.

Schools are encouraged to share School Lunch Hero Day celebration details with the VDOE-SNP via the [Virginia School Nutrition Events Form](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/snp-events) and join the celebration online by sharing photos of their events on social media and tagging @VDOESNP.

**Marketing School Nutrition Programs**

In addition to celebrating school nutrition professionals, School Lunch Hero Day provides an opportunity to market your school meal programs. Marketing is vital for engaging the community and changing the perception of school meals. Utilizing effective marketing and communication strategies will improve the visibility of school meal programs and may assist with maintaining or increasing participation.

The [NutriStudents K-12](https://nutristudentsk-12.com/index.php?cID=807) website offers templates for communicating through a variety of channels such as newsletters with customizable text fields. [The Lunch Box](https://www.thelunchbox.org/marketing) from the Chef Ann Foundation provides resources for marketing school nutrition programs including rebranding and communication guidelines and a social media toolkit. The [School Nutrition Association](https://schoolnutrition.org/learning-center/communications-marketing/) has resources for positive promotion of school nutrition programs and the [Institute for Child Nutrition Programs](https://theicn.org/icn-resources-a-z/marketing-your-SNP) provides an online guide for marketing your school nutrition program and developing a brochure.

### For more information

Please direct any questions about School Lunch Hero Day to Laura Burns, VDOE-SNP Wellness Policy Specialist, via email at Laura.Burns@doe.virginia.gov.

SCC/LB