



**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: July 27, 2018
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: James F. Lane, Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: Professional Standards for Hiring New School Nutrition Directors

The purpose of this memo is to provide guidance for School Food Authorities (SFAs) in meeting the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) professional standards and Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) requirements when hiring a new director to manage school nutrition programs. The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 required that USDA create professional standards for state and local school nutrition program personnel. Regulations outlining the professional standards can be found at 7 CFR § 210.30.

SFAs must ensure that all newly hired school nutrition program director’s meet the minimum hiring standards, complete the minimum annual training requirements, and attend the VDOE sponsored new director training. SFAs must also notify the VDOE school nutrition program office of the newly hired director within thirty days of hire. The notification must include documentation that the new director meets the minimum hiring standards. The director (or designated person responsible for the operation of the school nutrition program) must be designated in SNPWeb and will be the contact for all VDOE SNP communications. VDOE will monitor compliance with the professional standards as part of the Administrative Review Process.

The professional standards:

- Assist SFAs in recruiting, hiring, training, and retaining qualified school nutrition staff;
- Enhance the image of school nutrition professionals and their influence in the community; and
- Build skills and empower staff to lead and efficiently operate school nutrition programs.

There are three job categories for professional standards: directors, managers, and staff. This memo focuses on directors. The director is the person that plans, administers, implements, monitors, and evaluates all district-wide aspects of the school nutrition programs. Regardless of its size, an SFA only has one director.

Hiring Standards for New School Nutrition Program Directors

Hiring criteria depend on Local Education Agency (LEA) enrollment size. As enrollment increases, program demands and complexity increase as well. Minimum requirements are higher for LEAs with enrollments of 10,000 or more students than for smaller divisions. At all enrollment categories, the standards encourage directors with the minimum education degree to pursue advanced coursework toward the next higher degree in a related field. USDA developed the *Guide to Professional Standards for School Nutrition Programs* as a resource for SFAs for hiring and training staff. Along with the hiring standards below, the new director must acquire eight hours of food safety training within five years prior or within 30 days of their start date. The hiring criteria are detailed in the chart below.

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Student Enrollment Categories

Category 1 2,499 or less	Category 2 2,500-9,999	Category 3 10,000 or more
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Category 2,499 or less	Category 2 2,500-9,999	Category 3 10,000 or more
Bachelor's Degree* in a specific/related major** (experience preferred, not required) OR Bachelor's degree in any academic major, <i>AND</i> 1 year of relevant school nutrition programs experience; OR Associate's Degree* in specific/related major** <i>AND</i> 1 year of relevant school nutrition experience OR High School Diploma (or GED) <i>AND</i> 3 years*** of relevant school nutrition experience	Bachelor's Degree* in a specific/related major** (experience preferred, not required) OR Bachelor's Degree in and major <i>AND</i> 2 years of relevant school nutrition experience OR Associate's Degree* in specific/related major** <i>AND</i> 2 years of relevant school nutrition experience	Bachelor's Degree* in a specific/related major** (experience preferred, not required) OR Bachelor's Degree* in and major <i>AND</i> 5 years of school nutrition program management

*Or equivalent education experience; Consult the VDOE School Nutrition Office for more information.

**Specific/related major: Academic major or concentration in food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related field.

***For LEA enrollments less than 500, the VDOE may approve the hire of a candidate with a high school diploma (or GED) and less than the required years of experience, if the best qualified candidate.

If you have questions, please contact the school nutrition program specialist assigned to your school division, or Sandy Curwood, Ph.D., RDN, Director of School Nutrition Programs, at sandra.curwood@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 225-2074. Your attention to and compliance with these required hiring standards will help maintain high quality school nutrition programs in Virginia.

JFL/SCC/lj