



**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA**  
**Department of Education**

**DATE:** November 30, 2018

**TO:** Division Superintendents

**FROM:** James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT: Professional Standards for Hiring New School Nutrition Directors –  
REVISED**

The purpose of this memo is to provide clarification to the previous guidance issued in Superintendent's Memo #202-18 on July 24, 2018, regarding 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, including hiring standards for new school nutrition directors. 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. A newly hired school nutrition program director is defined as hired on or after July 1, 2018. SFAs must complete Attachment A for any new director hired on or after July 1, 2018, and the form must be submitted to VDOE school nutrition program office within 30 days of date of employment. For newly hired school nutrition program directors hired between July 1, 2018 and November 30, 2018, Attachment A must be completed and submitted by December 31, 2018. Documentation that the new director meets the minimum hiring standards must be attached. 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. In each enrollment category, 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.

### Hiring Standards for New School Nutrition Program Directors

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
<b>Minimum Education Standards (required new directors only)</b>	Bachelor's Degree in a specific/related major* (experience preferred, not required) <b>OR</b> Bachelor's degree in any academic major, <i>AND</i> 1 year of relevant school nutrition programs experience <b>OR</b> Associate's Degree in specific/related major* <i>AND</i> 1 year of relevant school nutrition experience <b>OR</b> 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) <b>OR</b> Bachelor's Degree in any academic major <i>AND</i> 2 years of relevant school nutrition experience <b>OR</b> 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) <b>OR</b> Bachelor's Degree in any academic major <i>AND</i> State Recognized certificate for school nutrition directors*** <b>OR</b> Bachelor's Degree in any major <i>AND</i> 5 years of school nutrition program management

\*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.

\*\*\* Virginia does not currently have a certificate that meets this requirement. The School Nutrition Association's certificate or credential (School Nutrition Specialist) cannot be used in lieu of this requirement.

If you have questions, please contact the school nutrition program specialist assigned to your school division, or Dr. Sandy Curwood, RDN, Director of School Nutrition Programs, at [sandra.curwood@doe.virginia.gov](mailto: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

#### **Attachment**

##### **A. Certification of New School Nutrition Program Director**