# SNP Memo #2022-2023-35

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**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA   
Department of Education**

DATE: December 2, 2022

TO: Directors, Supervisors, and Contact Persons Addressed

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

## SUBJECT: Team Nutrition Readiness and Retention Training Program for School Nutrition Directors and Cafeteria Managers

The purpose of this memo is to inform school nutrition program directors of the opportunity to participate in the Team Nutrition Readiness and Retention Training Program and request the completion of an initial needs assessment. The needs assessment will not only inform the development of the training program, but also serves as the mechanism for opting into the program. **All directors who wish to participate in the program and/or for their cafeteria managers to participate in the program must complete the** [**online needs assessment**](about:blank) **by December 31, 2022**. A follow-up communication with additional details about participating in the program will be distributed to all directors who complete the needs assessment.

### Background

In February 2022, the USDA announced the release of the final rule for Transitional Nutrition Standards for milk, whole grains, and sodium. The Transitional Nutrition Standards apply to reducing sodium, providing a realistic requirement on whole grain products, and serving variable milk types. These standards were designed to assist school divisions with bridging the gap between pandemic operations, including a reliance on waivers and flexibilities, to future standards focused on childhood health and alignment with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

As such, there is a need to train Virginia school nutrition professionals on meal patterns, nutrition education, operations, and culinary skills to ensure that the new standards are met and that all Virginia children have access to good, healthy food. To address this need, the Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Nutrition Programs (VDOE-SNP) applied for and was awarded a FY 2022 USDA Team Nutrition Training Grant in the amount of $982,827 to implement the Team Nutrition Readiness and Retention Training Program.

### About the Program

The Team Nutrition Readiness and Retention Training Program will operate from early 2023 through June 30, 2024, and will include 40 hours of professional development for directors (18 hours of virtual training and 22 hours of in-person training) and eight hours of professional development for cafeteria managers (two hours of virtual training and six hours of in-person training). **All cafeteria managers who complete the training program will receive a $175 incentive.**

The online training for directors will be in the form of monthly one-hour webinars and the in-person training for directors will be in the form of two, two-day workshops. Some of the topics covered will include Dietary Guidelines for Americans, Transitional Nutrition Standards, culturally-inclusive meals, limiting sodium and sugar, utilizing USDA Foods, analyzing scratch cooked recipes, forecasting, procuring local foods, responding to distributor shortages, and using social media to promote healthy meals and provide nutrition education.

The online training for cafeteria managers will include 2–4 self-paced e-learning modules. The in-person training for cafeteria managers will be in the form of six-hour workshops, which will be paired with regularly scheduled Summer Managers Workshops. Some of the topics covered will include reading/following standardized recipes, receiving and storage, scratch and speed-scratch cooking techniques, reducing sodium using herbs and spices, knife skills, and utilizing Virginia Harvest of the Month.

### Needs Assessment

The needs assessment will enable the VDOE-SNP to implement a robust training program that will enhance the skills of the Virginia school nutrition workforce. **All directors who wish to participate in the training program and/or wish their cafeteria managers to participate in the program must complete the** [**online needs assessment**](about:blank) **by December 31, 2022.**

### For more Information

For questions or for more information, please contact Kelly Shomo, SNP Training, Program Improvement, and Grants Supervisor, via email at [Kelly.Shomo@doe.virginia.gov](about:blank).

SCC/KS/rd