



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

April 26, 2013

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Patricia I. Wright, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: School Nutrition Employee Appreciation Week, May 6-10, 2013

School Nutrition Employee Appreciation Week is May 6-10, 2013. Please join the Department of Education (VDOE) in recognizing the important contributions that school nutrition employees provide to the success of Virginia's students. Celebrate the professional commitments made every school day by school nutrition employees across the Commonwealth. The importance and nutritional value of school meals are well documented. For many children, school lunch is the most important and nutrient-rich meal of their day.

Between preparing healthy meals for Virginia's students, adhering to strict nutrition standards, navigating student food allergies, and offering service with a smile, school nutrition professionals are integral to the success of our students. To kick off School Nutrition Employee Appreciation Week, Friday, May 3 is designated as School Lunch Superhero Day. The day aims to highlight the ways in which school nutrition professionals make a difference for every child who comes through the cafeteria. School nutrition employees must balance many roles and follow numerous federal, state, and local regulations to ensure safe and healthy meals are available in schools. They provide nutrition education to students and use their creativity to make the cafeteria a fun and welcoming place. The new federal nutrition standards for school meals went into effect this school year. These new standards are intended to ensure that every school lunch provides students a well-balanced meal offering low-fat or fat-free milk, fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean protein. School meals also meet limits on calories, sodium and unhealthy fats. The professionals in school nutrition have embraced these changes with enthusiasm.

School Nutrition Employee Week is designated to remind the school community that school nutrition employees are critical staff that deserve recognition. It is the perfect opportunity to recognize the hardworking professionals in school cafeterias. Let these professionals know you appreciate their work by celebrating School Nutrition Employee Appreciation Week.

For more information, please contact the school nutrition program specialist assigned to your division or Catherine Digilio-Grimes, director of school nutrition programs, at (804) 225-2074 or Catherine.digilio-grimes@doe.virginia.gov.

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