



NEWS RELEASE

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OCTOBER 1, 2018

NDE NUTRITION SERVICES HONORS NEBRASKA SCHOOL NUTRITION PROFESSIONALS

Between preparing healthy food, adhering to strict nutrition standards, navigating student food allergies, and offering service with a smile, Nebraska school nutrition professionals have a lot on their plate. To celebrate their hard work and commitment, the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) Nutrition Services and Nebraska schools will celebrate School Lunch Hero Day on May 4, Nebraska School Food Service Employee Appreciation Day on May 9, and the national School Nutrition Employee Week, May 7-11.

School Lunch Hero Day has been celebrated annually since 2013 and was designated by the School Nutrition Association and Jarrett Krosoczka, author of the "Lunch Lady" graphic novel series. In 1990, the Nebraska State Board of Education adopted a resolution establishing the second Wednesday in May as Nebraska School Food Service Employee Appreciation Day. These designations provide an opportunity for parents, students, school staff and communities to thank those who provide healthy meals to 30 million of America's students each school day.

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. Federal nutrition standards ensure that school cafeterias always offer low-fat or fat-free milk, fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean protein. School meals also meet limits on calories, sodium, and unhealthy fats. In October 2017, the 387 Nebraska schools districts and institutions that participate in the National School Lunch Program, served 4.7 million lunches to approximately 350,000 students.

Please join NDE Nutrition Services in thanking the many school nutrition professionals throughout the state for a job well done. Students, school staff, parents, and the community can show recognition to school lunch professionals by honoring them with thanks, cards, signs, high-fives, and kind words of appreciation.

Get the details about School Lunch Hero Day at www.schoollunchheroday.com. To learn more about the school nutrition program contact your local school district or institution or visit NDE Nutrition Services' website at <https://www.education.ne.gov/ns/>.

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The School Nutrition Association (SNA) is a national, non-profit professional organization representing more than 57,000 school nutrition professionals across the country. Founded in 1946, SNA and its members are dedicated to making healthy school meals and nutrition education available to all students. To find out more about school meals, visit www.schoolnutrition.org/SchoolMeals.

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