



#089-22

**Commonwealth of Virginia
Virginia Department of Education
Superintendent's Memo #089-22**

DATE: April 22, 2022
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: Jillian Balow, Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: **Professional Standards for New School Nutrition Directors and the New Director's Academy**

The purpose of this memo is to inform school divisions of professional standards and required training for new school nutrition program directors. Regulations outlining the professional standards can be found at 7 CFR § 210.30. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) requires that *all newly hired school nutrition program directors must meet minimum hiring standards and complete annual training requirements. The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), Office of School Nutrition Programs requires attendance at the VDOE New Director's Academy.*

Requirements for New Directors

A newly hired school nutrition program director is defined as hired on or after July 1, 2021. **School Food Authorities (SFAs) must complete Attachment A** and submit the completed form to the VDOE Office of School Nutrition Programs within 30 days of employment of a new director. Documentation that the new director meets the minimum hiring standards must be included. The local school nutrition program director is responsible for the operation of the school nutrition program, must be the contact for all VDOE Office of School Nutrition Programs communications, and designated as the school nutrition program administrator in

the SNPWeb system. The VDOE Office of School Nutrition Programs will monitor compliance with the professional standards as part of the administrative review process.

Hiring Standards for New School Nutrition Program Directors

Hiring criteria depends 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. The USDA developed the [Guide to Professional Standards for School Nutrition Programs](#) as a resource for SFAs in 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 after their start date. The hiring criteria are detailed below.

Category 1 - 2,499 Students or Less

- Bachelor's Degree in a specific/related major* (experience preferred, not required);
OR
- Bachelor's Degree in any academic major AND one year of relevant food service experience; **OR**
- Associate's Degree in specific/related major* AND one year of relevant food service experience; **OR**
- High School Diploma (or GED) AND 3 years** of relevant food service experience.

Category 2 - 2,500 Students to 9,999 Students

- Bachelor's Degree in a specific/related major* (experience preferred, not required);
OR
- Bachelor's Degree in any academic major AND two years of relevant school nutrition experience; **OR**
- Associate's Degree in specific/related major* AND two years of relevant school nutrition experience.

Category 3 - 10,000 Students or More

- Bachelor's Degree in a specific/related major* (experience preferred, not required);
OR
- Bachelor's Degree in any academic major AND state recognized certificate for school nutrition directors***; **OR**
- Bachelor's Degree in any major AND five 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 hiring 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.

New Director's Academy

The New Director's Academy: *Introduction to School Nutrition Leadership* is designed for new directors, those aspiring to become directors, and staff responsible for school nutrition programs. There is no charge for the course or materials. Participants who attend the Academy will receive 30.5 units of professional development.

The VDOE Office of School Nutrition Programs will offer this training, hosted by the Institute of Child Nutrition, in-person at the VDOE on **June 27-July 1, 2022, in Conference Room B located on the first floor of the James Monroe Building, 101 North 14th Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219**. The agenda can be found in Attachment B to this memo. **Participants must register for the training by COB Thursday, May 12, 2022, by completing the [online registration form](#)**. Participants must attend all sessions to receive credit for the training.

For more information

Please direct any questions to the VDOE-SNP Training, Program Improvement, and Grants Supervisor, Kelly Shomo, via email at Kelly.Shomo@doe.virginia.gov.

SCC/KS/cc

- A. Attachment: [Certification of New School Nutrition Program Director](#) (DOCX)
- B. Attachment: [2022 New Director's Academy Agenda](#) (DOCX)