

Happy Spring, MSNA Members!

As I write this, a mix of snow and hail is tapping against my window – a true Minnesota welcome to spring! While the season may be unpredictable, one thing remains certain: the incredible dedication of school nutrition professionals like you. As we move past spring break and head toward the final stretch of the school year, I encourage you to take a moment to reflect on the impact you've made. Amidst the many uncertainties facing school nutrition programs at both the state and national levels, please remember that your work is invaluable. Every meal you serve, every smile you share, and every effort you make to nourish students makes a difference. Your commitment does not go unnoticed, and our students rely on you more than ever. Let's continue to focus on the good we are doing – because it truly matters.



Your Executive Board has been working hard all year to reach our [Strategic Plan](#) goals; here are just a few highlights:

CAREER AND DEVELOPMENT GROWTH: This year, we expanded our professional development offerings significantly, matching last year's total of four webinars in just the first half of 2025, the goal to double by year's end. Each webinar provides valuable, accredited CEUs at no cost to our members. Additionally, our 68th MSNA Annual Conference committee is hard at work planning another outstanding event, offering members the chance to learn, grow, and strengthen connections with colleagues and industry partners. I'm thrilled to share that, back by popular demand, our hands-on Spice Class will return at this year's annual conference on Sunday! Registration is required, so be sure to reserve your spot early.

STAKEHOLDER COMMUNITY: This year, I've had the privilege of attending several enriching conferences and providing MSNA updates to various partner affiliates. It is always rewarding to connect with others who share our commitment to feeding Minnesota students. Most recently, we met with the Minnesota Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (MAND), an organization with which we share common goals and members. This collaboration provided a valuable opportunity to exchange best practices, strengthen our support for nutrition professionals, and explore ways to encourage more individuals to join our field.

THRIVING ORGANIZATION: With elections right around the corner, we have an outstanding slate of officers ready to lead. Be sure to vote and make your voice heard! MSNA continues to be a strong advocate for Minnesota students and child nutrition programs, and our expertise is increasingly sought after by outside organizations for training and guidance. I am incredibly proud to be part of an organization that stands for such meaningful work. As I mentioned earlier, we are all accomplishing incredible things, please continue sharing your successes so we can celebrate and amplify them through our social media and newsletters. Check out some recent highlights [here](#).



VOICE OF SCHOOL NUTRITION: As strong advocates for school nutrition, MSNA board members and other school nutrition professionals took important steps in March to engage with policymakers. On March 4th, during our *Day at the Capitol*, we hosted a school lunch line in the Vault Room of the Minnesota State Capitol, inviting legislators to enjoy a meal while discussing the complexities of school nutrition programs. Key topics included preserving the integrity of the Nutrition Fund 2 account, avoiding state-imposed meal pattern requirements, and advocating for a minimum of 15 minutes of seated lunchtime for students to eat.

Later that month, a delegation of Minnesota school nutrition professionals and industry partners joined colleagues from across the country at the SNA Legislative Action Conference in Washington, D.C. Advocating at the national level reinforced that feeding kids and supporting farmers is a broadly bipartisan issue, and it was encouraging to find common ground with legislative staff on both sides of the aisle.

Beyond legislative efforts, we continue to strengthen our presence with key education stakeholders. We once again hosted a booth at the Minnesota School Board Association (MSBA) Conference in Minneapolis in January, and we look forward to engaging with school business leaders at the upcoming Minnesota Association of School Business Officials (MASBO) Conference in Duluth this May.

I am looking forward to celebrating *National School Lunch Hero Day*, a time to recognize the incredible impact school nutrition professionals have on our communities. I hope you have something special planned in your districts – you deserve to be celebrated! Take pride in the work you do each day, knowing that you are making a meaningful difference. Wishing you a wonderful spring and a strong finish to the school year!

I look forward to seeing you in Rochester!

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Event on March 4 at the Minnesota State Capitol