



As we dive into the new year, we hope you're staying warm and energized through these chilly January days. There's no better time to look ahead to relevant happenings in our organization. This month, we have important updates at the federal level. Keep scrolling for a special Member Spotlight, plus, nominations for awards are now open, and check out contests and event registrations to get you involved!

Impacts on School Meal Programs' Federal Funding

MSNA closely followed updates this week on the White House's proposed temporary pause on federal financial assistance. While the proposal has since been rescinded, we will continue to stay apprised of federal and state policy issues that impact member programs and provide pertinent updates. Please also follow [advocacy updates and action alerts from SNA](#).



Mark Your Calendars: We're Going to Rochester!

Join us for MSNA's 68th Annual Conference on August 3-6, 2025 at the Mayo Civic Center in Rochester, MN. The conference theme is "*Scratching the Surface: The Future is Unlimited.*" Conference registration and hotel reservations will open this spring.

Check out this [Experience Rochester, MN](#) video to see what's in store!

SAVE THE DATE

2025 Annual Conference

AUGUST 3-6, 2025 | MAYO CIVIC CENTER, ROCHESTER, MN

In the Spotlight! ✨ Learn About Malachi



SCRATCHING THE SURFACE:
THE FUTURE IS UNLIMITED

Welcome to MSNA's January member spotlight! We're excited to feature Malachi Thompson, Food Service Associate at ISD 191 Burnsville-Eagan-Savage. [Learn about Malachi's experience and get to know him.](#)

Meet the Member

MALACHI THOMPSON
FOOD SERVICE ASSOCIATE
EDWARD NEILL
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

BURNSVILLE-EAGAN-SAVAGE
SCHOOL DISTRICT 191

"The most rewarding part of my job is receiving personal compliments on the food that I prepare for the students and [seeing] their smiles."



Nominate Individuals and Teams You Admire

Nominations for the SNA and MSNA awards are being accepted online through March 1. Submit your award-winning nomination(s) for:

- SNA Employee of the Year
- SNA Manager of the Year
- SNA Director of the Year
- MSNA Hero Site Award (team award)
- MSNA Hero Award **It's even easier to nominate with our updated requirements!**



[Learn More and Apply](#)

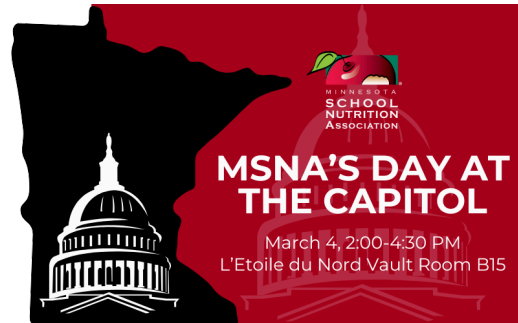
Say Yes! to School Meals Photo Contest



MDE is excited to announce the second annual *Say Yes! to School Meals* Photo Contest. The contest is intended to celebrate and showcase the delicious and unique meals that Minnesota schools are serving. Each School Food Authority may submit one breakfast photo and one lunch photo. All entries must be received no later than **5 p.m. on February 10**.

[Submit Your Photos](#)

Advocate for Minnesota K12 Lunch Programs



Join other Minnesota school nutrition professionals as we advocate for school nutrition programs with our state legislators.

MSNA's Day at the Capitol event will be held on Tuesday, March 4 from 2:00 - 4:30 PM at the Minnesota State Capitol. This is a members-only event and the fee to attend is \$30. Get registered by clicking the button below.

[Register for Day at the Capitol](#)

Next up in the MSNA Webinar Series...



Join us on February 18th at 3:00 PM for "How Are Your Listening Habits?" with Beth Mincemoyer Egan, MEd, RDN, SNS, Associate Teaching Professor at Emerita, School of Hospitality Management at Penn State University. This 1-hour training will explore participants' listening habits and provides tools and techniques to help improve conversations in the workplace.

[Learn More & Register](#)

The Minnesota Farm to School Roadshow: *Making Regional Farm to School Connections* 🚜🍎

The Farm to School Roadshow is on the move again for 2025! The Roadshow is an opportunity to make new connections and learn how to build successful Farm to School relationships. These in-person events will bring together Minnesota school nutrition professionals, early care providers, producers, and farmers for networking and training opportunities.

The Roadshow is a full day event with options to attend for the full day or half day. [Download the flyer](#) to check out the registration options and to sign up.



MSNA Members in the News



January 3

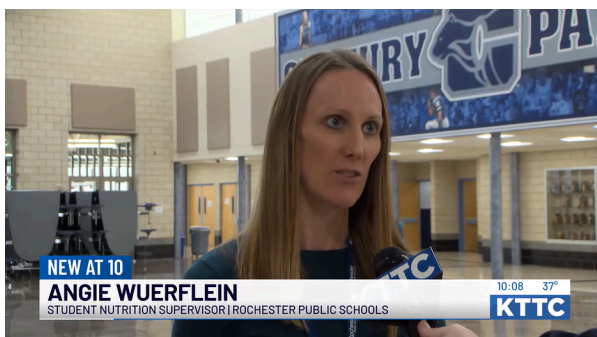
MSNA President-elect Glen Ritter, Food Service Director for St. Michael-Albertville School District, helped kick off the new year with WCCO & CBS News Minnesota, sharing tips for healthy meals in schools and at home.

[Watch Glen's Interview Here](#)

January 7

What pointers can we give our children to encourage healthy eating? Jess Peña, School Nutrition Director for Red Wing Public Schools and MSNA Secretary/Treasurer, explains in an interview with FOX9 News.

[Watch Jess' Interview Here](#)



January 28

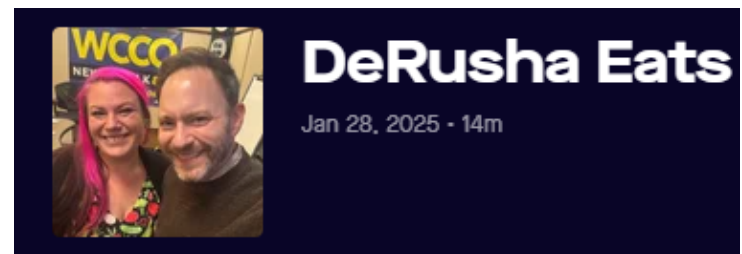
Free meals in Minnesota has meant great things for the students in Rochester Public Schools. Hear what students have to say and learn more about what's new in the program from Angie Wuerflein and Virginia McCosh of Student Nutrition Services on KTTN News.

[Read the Story Here](#)

January 28

WCCO Radio's Jason DeRusha learned more about the great things happening in MN cafeterias from Ashley Schneider, Director of Nutrition Services at Moorhead Area Public Schools and MSNA Vice President. If you didn't catch it live on Drivetime with DeRusha, hear the DeRusha Eats podcast on Audacy.

[Listen to Ashley's Interview Here](#)



Upcoming Events

February 5: [Annual Commodity Food Expo](#), St. Cloud, MN

March 3-7: [National School Breakfast Week](#)

March 4: MSNA's [Day at the Capitol](#), Minnesota State Capitol



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