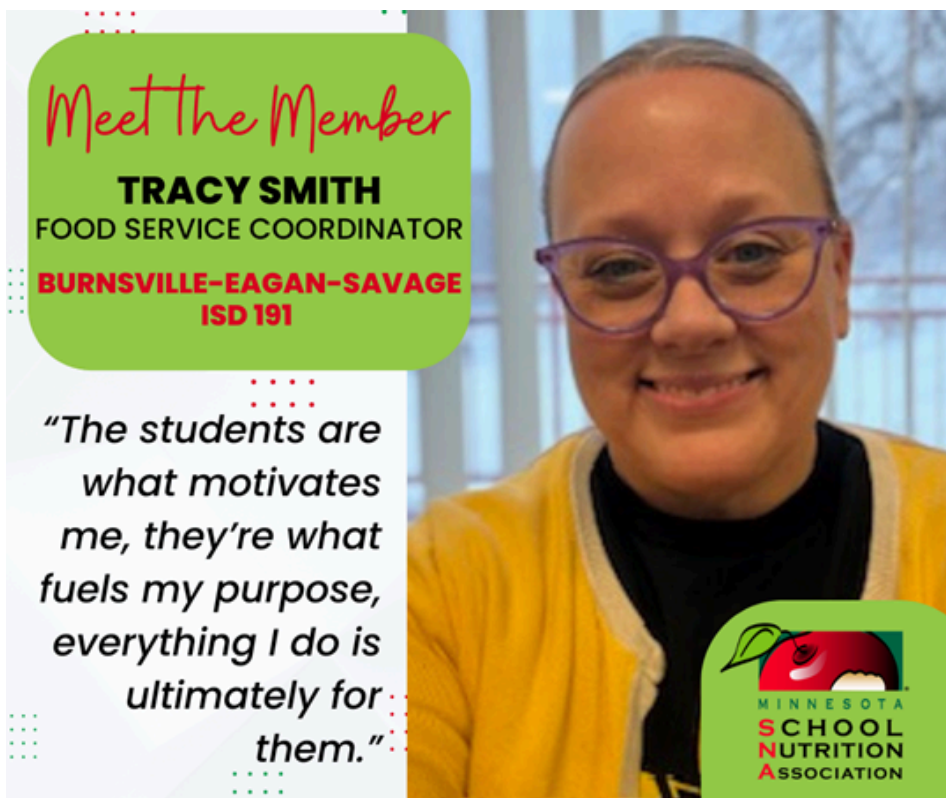




### In the Spotlight! 🌟 Learn About Tracy

Welcome to MSNA's newest member spotlight! We're featuring Tracy Smith, Food Service Coordinator at Burnsville-Eagan-Savage ISD 191. [Learn what Tracy loves about food service and her role.](#)



### Mark Your Calendars: 2026 Annual Conference 🎉

Join us for MSNA's 69th Annual Conference on August 2-5, 2026 at the River's Edge Convention Center in St. Cloud, MN. The conference theme is **"drum roll"** *"One in a Melon: Celebrating Skills, Sharing Successes & Learning Together."*

The Call for Presentation Proposals will be opening in the upcoming weeks. Presenters and those interested: please begin preparing your great proposals now! Conference registration and hotel reservations will open this spring.



### Know Someone Who Shines? ✨ Let Us Know!

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 Award
- MSNA Hero Site Award (team award)

[Learn More & Nominate Someone Who Shines](#)

### Lend a Helping Hand with Fellow School Nutrition Pros 🤝

Help support hungry neighbors on February 19 at Second Harvest Heartland in Brooklyn Park! Join fellow MSNA members to help sort, label, weigh and package various food items to meet immediate needs. This event is limited to members only and the cost is free!

Spots are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Packing is indoors, wheelchair-friendly, and up to 50 volunteers can participate. Happy hour is to follow at Mad Jack's Sports Cafe where complimentary happy hour bites are included. Signing up just takes two steps - [register today!](#)



### Let's Talk Menu Trends 🍏 The Webinar Series is Back!

Join us Tuesday, March 10 from 2:00 - 3:00 pm for our next edition of the MSNA Webinar Series: *Beyond the Kids Menu: The New Rules of Eating for Gen Z and Gen Alpha* by Taylor Heitzinger, RD LD CD, of Upper Lakes Foods.

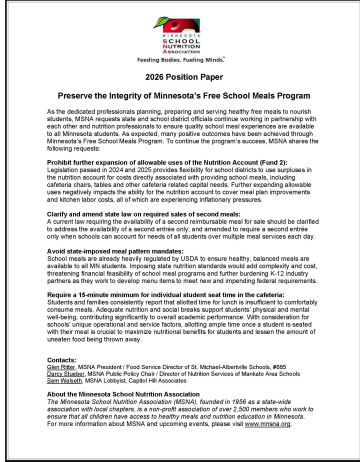
The price is free for members and \$10.00 for non-members. [Learn more about this webinar and sign-up today.](#) Please share with your staff members!



### Stay In-the-Know About State & National Advocacy 🗳️

#### MSNA's 2026 Position Paper Released

Learn about MSNA advocacy priorities to as they relate to our shared mission: **ensuring all Minnesota students have access to healthy, nourishing meals.** The MSNA Public Policy Committee, led by Chair Darcy Stueber, Director of Nutrition Services for Mankato Schools, is pleased to announce the 2026 MSNA Position Paper.



Stay tuned for the press release and talking points!

#### SNA's Position Paper & Trends Report

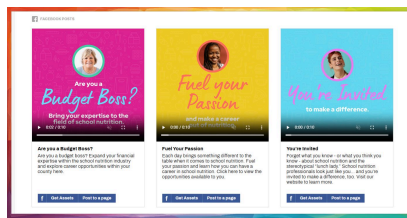
SNA released their 2026 Position Paper and the SY 2025-26 School Nutrition Trends Report, ahead of the release of the [2025-2030 Dietary Guidelines for Americans \(DGA\)](#), which calls for a reduction in highly processed foods.

📄 **The 2026 SNA Position Paper**, outlining the Association's advocacy priorities for the year, urges Congress to:

1. Increase investments in school meal programs to cover rising costs, expand scratch cooking, and provide students more fresh, local produce.
2. Protect and expand access to healthy school meals for all students.
3. Ensure updates to federal school nutrition standards are feasible for schools.

📊 **The Trends Report**, an analysis of survey responses from 1,240 SN Directors nationwide, provides evidence to support the Paper's request.

#### New Website Feature: Better Promote Your School's Meals 🍴



Communication resources are available to help promote your delicious school meals, discuss why school meals are important, assist in hiring, and more!

[Check out the free resources available to you.](#)

#### Could Your School be a Winner? Yes! 🏆



MDE's third annual "Say Yes! to School Meals" Photo Contest is accepting your great lunch and breakfast photos. Choose meals that are unique, colorful, and reflect the preferences of your student population All entries must be received by February 9. [Learn more and view the 2025 winners.](#)

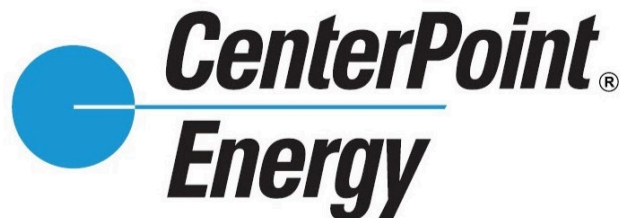
#### Posting a Job or Searching for Your Next Adventure?



Our [free job board](#) is available to members to post and browse career openings.

School nutrition and industry members, take the next step in your career or promote your job openings here. Take advantage of this great membership benefit!

### Thank You for Supporting MSNA! Our Industry Spotlight 🌟



#### SNIP Conference Breakfast Sponsor

CenterPoint Energy is Minnesota's largest natural gas utility, serving more than 930,000 residential and business customers in over 260 communities. We've proudly provided safe, reliable and cost-effective energy to the state for more than 150 years, including rebates on high-efficiency natural gas appliances to support our foodservice customers. [Learn more.](#)

[CenterPointEnergy.com/Foodservice](#)



#### SNIP Conference Refreshment Sponsor

Advanced Commercial Kitchens provides the tools you need to beautify your kitchen. We meet the special needs of your commercial kitchens, providing service, maintenance, repair, and installation on the specialized equipment including: food warming equipment, cold storage, proofers, exhaust hoods, dishwashers, food processing, walk-in coolers and freezers, garbage disposals, and more. [Learn more.](#)

## 2026 SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Available to Industry Members



### MSNA Members in the News 📰



January 15-16

Board members Glen Ritter, Ashley Schneider and Ross Larson attended the Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) conference, where they joined St. Michael-Albertville School District Superintendent Dr. Ann-Marie Foucault hosting a roundtable on "Stretching Your School Lunch Dollar."

[View Photos on LinkedIn and Facebook](#)



January 22

MSNA Vice President and Nutrition Services Specialist for ISD 196 Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan, Ross Larson, kicked off the new year with WCCO, sharing popular meals from their district and what makes their program unique.

[Watch Ross' Interview](#)

### Upcoming Events 📅

**February 4:** [Annual Commodity Food Expo](#) | St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center

**February 19:** [MSNA Volunteer Event](#) | Second Harvest Heartland, Brooklyn Park, MN

**March 2-6:** [National School Breakfast Week](#)

**March 8-10:** [SNA's Legislative Action Conference](#) | Washington D.C.

**April 13:** [MSNA's Day at the Capitol](#) | Minnesota State Capitol | Registration Opening Soon

[See the Full Events Calendar Here](#)

### MSNA's 2025 Year-in-Review 📸



[View MSNA's 2025 in Photos](#)



#### Minnesota School Nutrition Association

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