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Celebrate School Lunch Hero Day May 7

PIERRE, S.D. – May 7 is School Lunch Hero Day, a special day to celebrate the hard work and dedication of school nutrition professionals. The South Dakota Department of Education invites students, school staff, parents, and communities to thank their local school lunch and breakfast staff.

“Throughout the pandemic, South Dakota’s School Lunch Heroes have worked so hard to ensure that South Dakota students maintained access to healthy meals,” said Cheriee Watterson, director of Child and Adult Nutrition Services for the South Dakota Department of Education. “For some schools this year, it was almost like adding an entire program to their meal service department as they managed meals for students in school buildings and for those learning remotely.”

School nutrition employees balance many roles and follow federal, state, and local regulations to ensure safe and healthy meals are available in schools. Federal nutrition standards ensure that school cafeterias offer students low-fat or fat-free milk, fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean protein. School meals also meet limits on calories, sodium, and unhealthy fats.

Over 13.9 million healthy lunches were served in South Dakota in school year 2019-20 and over 4.1 million nutritious breakfast meals were served.

Celebrated annually since 2013, School Lunch Hero Day was designated by the School Nutrition Association and Jarrett Krosoczka, author of the “Lunch Lady” graphic novel series. Find more information about School Lunch Hero Day at www.schoollunchheroday.com.