

## Professional Standards for School Nutrition Program Employees

USDA has updated minimum professional standard requirements for school nutrition professionals who manage and operate the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. The changes aim to expand the pool of candidates for new local nutrition directors as well as ensure that school nutrition professionals can perform their duties effectively and efficiently.

### Required Training for School Nutrition Program Employees (All Local Educational Agencies)

#### Continuing education/training annually

- **Directors-** At least **12** hours
- **Managers-** At least **10** hours
- **Full-time staff-** At least **6** hours
- **Part-time staff-** At least **4** hours
- **Other staff** – Training as needed

#### Training Areas

All training will fit into one of these categories:

- Nutrition
- Operations
- Administration
- Communication & Marketing
- Additional topics if required by Secretary of USDA

- When one person is both the director and manager, the higher standards must be met.
- If hired after Jan. 1, an employee need only complete half of the required training hours.
- Find a database of training options at <https://professionalstandards.fns.usda.gov/>. or at <https://doe.sd.gov/cans/nslp.aspx>. (National School Lunch/Breakfast Programs, School Meal Program Requirements, Professional Standards)
- Documentation of individual training must be maintained at the school food authority.
- Providing/receiving training is an allowable use of the nonprofit school food service account.
- District determines which training categories employees need.

## Hiring Standards for NEW School Nutrition Program Directors

New Directors- those hired on or after July 1, 2015 – are subject to the new education requirements below. Existing directors will be grandfathered in their current positions as well as in the Student Enrollment category where they are currently working.

Minimum Requirements for Directors	Student Enrollment 2,499 or less	Student Enrollment 2,500-9,999	Student Enrollment 10,000 or more
<b>Minimum Education Standards (new director only)</b>	Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas*; OR Bachelor's degree in any academic major <u>and</u> state-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors or at least 1 year of relevant food service experience; OR Associate degree or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas*, <u>and</u> at least 1 year of relevant food service experience; OR High School Diploma (or GED) and <u>at least</u> 3 years relevant experience in food service (LEA's with less than 500 students; state agency may approve a candidate that meets the educational standards but has less than 3 years of experience.)	Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas*; OR Bachelor's degree in any academic major <u>and</u> state-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors; OR Bachelor's degree in any academic major <u>and</u> at least 2 years of relevant school nutrition program experience; OR Associate degree or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas*, <u>and</u> at least 2 years of relevant school nutrition program experience.	Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas*; OR Bachelor's degree in any academic major <u>and</u> state-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors; OR Bachelor's degree in any academic major <u>and</u> at least 5 years of experience in management of school nutrition programs.
<b>Minimum Prior Training Standards</b>	An employee must complete at least 8 hours of food safety training not more than 5 years prior to starting date or within 30 days of starting date.		

**\*Specific majors/areas of concentration:**  
Food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related field.

**School Nutrition Program Director-** those individuals directly responsible for the management of the day-to-day operations of school food service for all participating schools under the jurisdiction of the school food authority.

**School Nutrition Program Manager-** those individuals directly responsible for the management of the day-to-day operations of school food service for a participating school(s).

**School Nutrition Program Staff-** those individuals, without managerial responsibilities, involved in the day-to-day operations of school food service for a participating school(s).

