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Celebrate School Lunch Hero Day May 4

PIERRE, S.D. – May 4 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.

“Step into a South Dakota school at lunchtime, and you’ll see students enjoying healthy meals prepared by dedicated school nutrition professionals,” said Cheriee Watterson, director of Child and Adult Nutrition Services for the South Dakota Department of Education. “It’s a big job. Those professionals must navigate high nutrition standards, student food allergies and food safety. And of course, it all has to be tasty, too.”

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 17 million healthy lunches were served in South Dakota in school year 2016-17 with over 10 million going to low-income children across the state. Almost 5 million nutritious breakfast meals were also 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.