



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 2120

RICHMOND 23218-2120

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TO: Directors, Supervisors, and Contact Persons Addressed

FROM: Catherine Digilio Grimes, MS, RD, LDN, SNS
Director, Office of School Nutrition Programs

Catherine Digilio Grimes

DATE: March 1, 2013

SUBJECT: National School Breakfast Week - March 4-8, 2013 and
National Nutrition Month - March 2013

March is National Nutrition Month and a time to “*Eat Right*” and focus on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. What better way to begin than with a healthy school breakfast. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), in partnership with the School Nutrition Association (SNA), recognizes March 4-8, 2013, as National School Breakfast Week. This is a weeklong celebration aimed at increasing awareness of the School Breakfast Program among students and parents. This year’s theme is “*Be a Star with School Breakfast.*” Eating breakfast every school day can help students become shining stars by maximizing their learning potential and academic performance.

The School Breakfast Program is available to all students. In Virginia, 44 million school breakfast meals were served last year; however, this is only a small percentage of the number of lunches served to students. In addition to offering school breakfast in the cafeteria, there are many innovative programs that schools can choose to implement to help increase student participation in breakfast, such as “Breakfast After the Bell,” “Grab and Go Breakfast,” and “Second Chance Breakfast.”

As finances become tighter for families and schools, eating breakfast at school is a great bargain economically and nutritionally.

School breakfast is an important component of the academic process. Studies have shown that students who participate in the School Breakfast Program have improved overall diet quality, including greater consumption of grains, fruits, and milk; improved academic performance; and improved attendance. Increasing the number of students who eat a nutritious meal as part of the School Breakfast Program is an important step in improving the health of Virginia’s students, and their academic achievement as well. By eating school breakfast every day, children get the food they need to fuel their learning.

Plan a school wide celebration to highlight the importance of school breakfast to help the students “*Be a Star with School Breakfast.*”

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact the school nutrition program specialist assigned to your division or the Office of School Nutrition Programs at the Department of Education at (804) 225-2074.

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