**[INSERT DISTRICT] Official to Lobby Congress in Support of School Meal Programs & Students**

[INSERT DATE], 2023 – Next week, [INSERT NAME, TITLE, DISTRICT] will participate in School Nutrition Association’s (SNA) 51st annual [Legislative Action Conference (LAC)](https://schoolnutrition.org/Meetings/LAC/2023/) in Washington, D.C. During the conference (March 5-7), [INSERT NAME] will join 800 school nutrition professionals from across the country in urging Congress to permanently increase federal funds for school meals, allow all schools to offer free school meals to all students as they did during the pandemic, and maintain current school nutrition standards.

“[Research](https://now.tufts.edu/news-releases/study-finds-americans-eat-food-mostly-poor-nutritional-quality-except-school) shows students eat their healthiest meals at school,” said [INSERT NAME]. “We need Congress’ full support as school meal programs across the country struggle with rising costs, persistent supply chain challenges and unpaid student meal debt. I’m looking forward to telling our local representatives about the nutritious meals we serve in our cafeterias, and how Congress can help to sustain this progress and ensure all of America’s students are nourished and ready to learn.”

SNA's [2023 School Nutrition Trends Survey](https://schoolnutrition.org/sna-news/sna-survey-shows-school-meal-programs-face-critical-challenges/) found that virtually all (99.8%) responding school meal program directors are challenged by increasing costs and supply chain issues, including menu item and staff shortages, which impact more than 90% of programs. Respondents also reported numerous negative impacts from the loss of free school meals. Among programs that must now charge for meals, 96.3% report unpaid meal debt is a challenge.

LAC will allow [INSERT NAME] and other attendees to meet with their Members of Congress to discuss the importance of school meal programs and share SNA’s [2023 Position Paper](https://schoolnutrition.org/resource/2023-position-paper/).

[INSERT DETAILS ABOUT SCHEDULED MEETINGS WITH LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES]

“School meal programs are at a tipping point as rising costs, persistent supply chain issues and labor shortages jeopardize their long-term sustainability," said SNA President Lori Adkins, MS, SNS, CHE. "Congress has an opportunity to protect this critical lifeline by making reimbursement increases permanent and allowing us to offer free meals to ensure all students are nourished during the school day."

***About School Nutrition Association:***The School Nutrition Association (SNA) is a national, non-profit professional organization representing 50,000 school nutrition professionals across the country. Founded in 1946, SNA and its members are dedicated to making healthy school meals and nutrition education available to all students. To find out more about SNA’s Legislative Action Conference, visit [*www.schoolnutrition.org/LAC*](http://www.schoolnutrition.org/LAC).