

INSPIRES

INFORMS

INSTRUCTS

K-12 FOODSERVICE

A network of white circular icons representing people, connected by thin white lines, set against a blue background with light bokeh effects. The icons are scattered across the page, with some appearing larger than others.

From “**Help Wanted**” to “**Talent Found**”

Social media can be a highly effective recruitment tool for school nutrition programs.

BY LIZ WHITEMAN ROESEL



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Kershaw
County
Nutrition
Services
Recruitment
Campaign
SY2021-22

In *School Nutrition's* May/June 2023 issue, "Fear Not the Trolls!" provided readers with a comprehensive overview on how to harness the power of social media without becoming paralyzed by concern for negativity from your audience posting in the comment section. (And if you *do* receive negative comments, you'll discover great advice for handling them!) Social media has become a highly impactful communications tool for strategic marketing campaigns, recognition and appreciation of your team, highlights of new menu items and updates when supply chain issues require a last-minute change. My philosophy is that if it's educational or entertaining, you should post it!

Now, I want to help you take a deeper dive into something that I have developed accidental expertise in: using social media to recruit for the vacancies on your nutrition team. A Spring 2022 survey of SEA Level Social clients revealed some surprising benefits of sharing their stories on social media, among them the effectiveness of staff recruitment campaigns. Indeed, Misha Lawyer, Foodservices Coordinator at **Kershaw County (S.C.) School District**, credited social media for starting SY2021-22 with the fewest vacancies she's seen in her entire child nutrition career. Wow! That really illustrated the power of such campaigns, and since then, we've

helped most of our clients develop and conduct recruitment campaigns on social media at least once a year. It's not just our clients; if you follow other school nutrition departments on social media, you're probably seeing an uptick in posts announcing: "We're Hiring!" Maybe you've tried this yourself!

To make a social media-based recruitment campaign truly effective, you need to take a strategic approach, rather than a check-it-off-the-to-do-list, one-and-done post. Using the example of Kershaw County Nutrition Services, let's break down the elements involved. (Visual learners, check out Kershaw's Facebook, Instagram and/or X feeds using @KCSNDNutrition.)



All In

Start with the “All the Details Post.” You want to grab their attention with information that will inspire action. “We’re Hiring” and a link is less likely to compel someone to actually click on that link. Instead, in this first post, we summarize the position(s) available, along with noting the hours, compensation, key benefits (like bonuses!) and where to apply. With all those details covered, you might be tempted to post that once, maybe twice, and stop—especially if it *doesn't* seem to be working, with few applications coming in as a result.

Divide and Conquer

Lawyer provided our team with truly comprehensive information about the available positions in her department. This was wonderful! The more details you start with, the more ways you can divide them up, delivering essentially the same message in multiple ways. The “all the details” graphic was followed up with a post that featured a bare minimum of information. This approach was designed to capture the attention of someone quickly scrolling through their feed who might be interested, but will glaze over any post that has a lot of text.

A third post in the campaign highlighted the department’s hiring bonus—money is a powerful incentive for action! A fourth post was addressed to current employees who also are eligible for a bonus when they refer a friend. And because there were several open positions, one post homed in on those, promoting that full-time *and* substitute positions were available.

Remember that, in addition to the text used with your artwork, you can include more information in the post’s caption. We also kept to a limited color palette, so that there was consistency within the various posts of the campaign. But we also repeated some posts using the same statements while switching up the colors—again, all in an effort to attract new eyes scrolling through a feed. You can see examples from the Facebook version of this campaign on page 2 and from the SY2023-24 campaign on page 5.

Check the results graphic at left. You’ll see that each time we posted a graphic from the SY2021-22 series, we reached at least 1,500 people on Facebook. **Reach** relates to how many people saw your post in their social media news feed. The number of **Engaged** people are those who liked,

Hiring? Don't just say it once...
repetition is key on social media!

Initial Post

Reached 3,182 people
162 people engaged

"Now Hiring!"

Reached 4,340 people
222 people engaged

"Hiring Bonus"

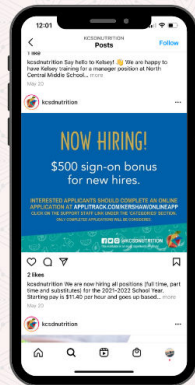
Reached 2,113 people
106 people engaged

"Referral Program"

Reached 1,751 people
46 people engaged

"Hiring all Positions"

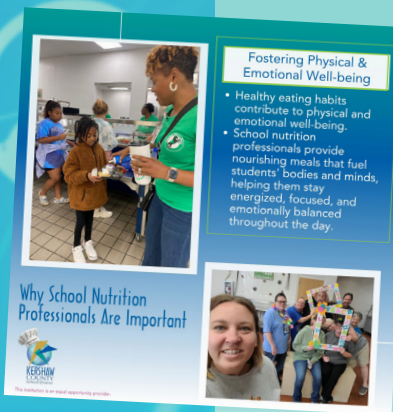
Reached 1,623 people
68 people engaged



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But as any social media expert will advise you, reminders are your friend! Not everyone in your audience will see all of your posts; the algorithms of different social platforms *don't* show you everything about every friend, family member or entity that you follow. Exacerbating that reality is the fact that not everyone is on social media at the same time. And, most important, not everyone will respond to the same marketing message. So, we started with “all the details,” then broke those down to develop a *series* of posts.



A Great Place to Work

followed, clicked a link in your caption or shared the post—essentially anyone that took action on your post. Imagine if we posted the first two posts and stopped—we would have missed out on reaching thousands and engaging hundreds of people!

Subtly Plays, Too!

Your overall social media presence plays an indirect role in recruitment efforts, as well. When you regularly share posts that celebrate your team members, you are sending positive messages to prospective employees, promoting the fact that your department is a great place to work! The images above represent a broad spectrum of opportunity, from “Meet Our Team” mini staff profiles to employees having fun with special cafeteria promotions to our series showcasing the valuable role school nutrition professionals play in supporting students.

You can (and should) feature these types of posts all year long. And remember that School Lunch Hero Day is right around the corner on May 3! But also consider the added boost your direct recruitment campaign will receive if you time such fun workplace images in the days or weeks before and after your recruitment appeal.

Fair Share

Posting on your own school nutrition department social media accounts is important, but sharing recruitment posts in different local Facebook Groups is one of the easiest and most effective ways you can organically get your posts in front of *more* people in your community. (Turning your posts into Facebook Ads is another option to increase potential views, but you do have to pay for those.) In fact, I would say that sharing in Facebook Groups is not just a suggestion, but a requirement that will be crucial to your success.





Hopefully, you've already started exploring Facebook Groups dedicated to local news and events, neighborhoods, parents and parent-teacher organizations. Be sure to add the words "job" and "hiring" to your search for appropriate Groups. In some communities, there are Facebook Groups specifically established to share employment leads. [Editors' Note: "Fear Not the Trolls" in SN's May/June 2023 issue includes more details about how to find, join and participate in these Groups.]

Ask your school nutrition team to share the department's recruiting posts on their own social media accounts, as appropriate within their own comfort level. You can explain that they are helping to reach a wider audience to find qualified coworkers. And if your department offers a referral bonus, their own social media shares can help facilitate the likelihood of earning one!

Campaign Considerations

One or more of the posts in your recruitment campaign should show the kind of work that new hires will be doing (cooking, serving, cashiering) and who they will be working with. Action shots of staff preparing meals and team photos incorporated into graphics make an impact. I especially love

showing a team photo when you are hiring for a specific position at a particular school.

A review of some of the recruitment posts shared by other school nutrition departments (*see page 6*) reveals a few other suggestions to keep in mind:

- Don't forget to include your department's branding (name, hashtag, logo).
- Consider using a QR code, especially if the link for more information or to the online application is long and unwieldy.
- Use a recruitment post as the cover image for your department's page for a specific period of time.
- As appropriate, translate your recruitment posts into other languages that are predominant in your community.
- Emphasize the positive impact of working in school cafeterias.
- If you have an auto response that sends initial replies to direct messages from Facebook sent to your program on any topic, consider adding wording about hiring. For example: "Good Day! We will respond to your request as soon as possible. If you're interested in joining our team, click this link."

I'm going to close with a recruitment tip that has nothing to do with social media strategy, but is a critical step: I challenge you to personally complete the application

WE'RE HIRING

FULL TIME LUNCH ROOM STAFF

1. Weekends and Holidays off!
2. Great health benefits.
3. Must love children.
4. Kitchens experience is a plus!

APPLICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE AT OUR CENTRAL OFFICE.

J.H. WELLS CENTER,
1081 BARWICK RD. QUITMAN, GA 31603

Greely-Evans School District & Nutrition Services
KITCHEN STAFF JOB FAIR

July 19th, 2023
8:00 AM – 2:00 PM
D6 Administration Building
1025 9th Ave., Greeley, CO 80631

Positions Available

- Roving Kitchen Specialists
- Roving Kitchen Managers
- Production Specialists

Starting Wage: \$15.76

Applications open NOW!
Priority will be given to those with previous experience.

WE ARE HIRING!

JOIN OUR CREW, MAKE LUNCHTIME DREAMS COME TRUE.

Thank you BERRY much for all you do!

CAFETERIA AIDE
JOB ID 6386

Apply Online at: www.meridenjobs.com

WE ARE HIRING!

COME JOIN OUR TEAM!

- FLEXIBLE SCHEDULE
- NO NIGHTS
- NO WEEKENDS
- SUMMERS OFF
- SCHOOL HOLIDAYS AND BREAKS OFF
- MAKE A POSITIVE IMPACT!

EASY APPLY:

SCAN QR CODE WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA TO OPEN THE APPLICATION OR CALL (781) 314-5495

CALL US @ 720-886-7139

Join Our Team!
CHERRY CREEK SCHOOLS FOOD & NUTRITION

TALENT SEARCH TUESDAY

- Every Tuesday throughout the year
- Anytime between 8:00 AM- 2:00 PM
- On the spot interview!

COME SEE US!

We are located at:
14270 E Briarwood Ave.
Centennial, CO 80112

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

- Starting pay adjusted with experience
- Kitchen Manager II starting @ \$20.67
- Asst. Managers starting @ \$16.84
- Food Service Workers starting @ \$15.93
- Relief Staff starting @ \$15.93

APPLY @ <https://www.cherrycreekschools.org/Page/4040>

WE ARE hiring!

Join our team!

- No nights or weekends
- Interact with students everyday
- Multiple positions available

Questions? Email brittany.sevigg@bsd7.org

BOZEMAN
FOOD SERVICES

CURRENT JOB OPENINGS

- Bozeman High School - Cook
 - 6:30-2:30 Monday-Friday
 - \$19.43-21.03/hour. Benefits available.
- Morning Star Elementary - Cook
 - 9:00-1:30 Monday-Friday
 - \$18.90-20.06/hr. Benefits available.

apply online @ bsd7.org or email brittany.sevigg@bsd7.org

Join Our Team!
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APPLY @ <https://www.cherrycreekschools.org/Page/4040>

OPEN INTERVIEWS!

FULTON COUNTY SCHOOL NUTRITION IS HIRING FOOD SERVICE WORKERS IN NORTH FULTON COUNTY

JANUARY 4, 2024
9:00A.M – 12:00 P.M.
FULTON COUNTY NORTH LEARNING CENTER
450 NORTHRIDGE PKWY, ATLANTA, GA 30350

- ✓ Competitive wages starting at \$17.67/hour
- ✓ 5.0- 9.0 hour benefited positions available in NORTH Fulton County (Johns Creek, Roswell, Alpharetta, and Sandy Springs)
- ✓ Interviews and on the spot job offers
- ✓ Prepare & serve nutritious meals to support student achievement

TO APPLY & LEARN MORE VISIT <https://bit.ly/snapply>

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

FERIA DE TRABAJO

FEBRERO 17, 2024 8:00 AM- 12:00 PM
14270 E BRIARWOOD AVE. CENTENNIAL, CO 80112

SALARIOS INICIALES A TIEMPO COMPLETO Y PARCIAL

- KITCHEN MANAGERS \$19.74- \$23.23
- ASSISTANT MANAGERS \$15.44
- KITCHEN WORKERS \$15.93
- RELIEF WORKERS \$15.93

Martes de Búsqueda de Talento

- Martes de Búsqueda de Talento
- Entrevistas sobre el terreno
- No es necesaria cita

APPLY @ <https://www.cherrycreekschools.org/Page/4040>

Esta institución es un proveedor de igualdad de oportunidades

WE ARE HIRING!

OPEN POSITIONS:

- PART TIME ASSISTANT COOK - WHS
- 27.5 HOURS PER WEEK

Apply @ www.schoolspring.com

Other Examples Seen on Social

We are hiring!

PERMANENT POSITION: EHS Cook/Baker, 8 Hours

Benefits include:

- Health insurance & retirement
- Weekends, nights, summers, and holidays off
- Complimentary meal with each shift

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

NOW HIRING!

Fulton County is Hiring Food Service Workers in NORTH Fulton County.

Apply online at <https://bit.ly/snapply>

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Now hiring

EPISD Food & Nutrition Services is looking for a

KITCHEN & REFRIGERATION EQUIPMENT TECHNICIAN

Open Until Filled Apply at: <https://www.episd.org/jobs>

process to determine if it's straightforward and easy.

I have seen district hiring websites that are quite complicated to navigate, especially if applicants must create an account simply to access details about the position or if they have to use multiple filtering options to find foodservice-specific positions in the sea of openings across the district. If you can provide a more direct link to your open position(s) or to the application process, make sure this is the one used in your marketing.

Also, if it's possible, create a landing page that provides clear instructions on the process. Take into account that you may have applicants who are not technically savvy or who have language barriers. You want to create an easy user experience with the fewest amount of clicks required

in order to increase the number of candidates. If the link is long and therefore difficult to share on an image/flyer/graphic, use a QR code (as noted previously) and/or a URL-shortening website like *tinyurl.com* to create an option that is simple to use.

Labor shortages continue to prove challenging across many business segments, including school foodservice operations. I hope you find some helpful takeaways in this article that you can put into action when crafting your next hiring campaign! **SN+**

Liz Whiteman Roesel is President and Co-Founder of SEA Level Social, providing social media services and strategy exclusively to school nutrition programs. Learn more about their team and services at www.sealevelsocialmedia.com and contact Whiteman Roesel directly at liz@sealevelsocialmedia.com.



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COMING SOON IN 2024!



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Contact us at:

800-357-6543

Or: conagrafoodservice@ibidata.com



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to go directly to the
Conagra Foodservice website

