



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, October 12, 2026

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ST. MARY'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO CELEBRATE NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK - OCTOBER 12-16, 2026

National School Lunch Week Campaign
"Cafeteria Circus: Where Healthy Choices Take Center Stage"

LEONARDTOWN, MD – To recognize the National School Lunch Program, serving nearly 30 million children each day, St. Mary's County Public Schools will celebrate National School Lunch Week from October 12-16, 2026. The fun campaign theme, "Cafeteria Circus: Where Healthy Choices Take Center Stage," creates an exciting experience that transforms the week into a special event that students look forward to. The theme also highlights the importance of a healthy school lunch to a student's success both in and out of the classroom.

Throughout the week, students will be transported to a colorful circus where they will have the opportunity to enjoy nostalgic foods as well as new choices for school lunch. The excitement will continue with fun giveaways and educational activities.

In St. Mary's County Public Schools, over 7,000 students participate in our lunch program daily. Studies show that school lunches are healthier than typical packed lunches and that balanced nutrition throughout the day contributes to student success in and out of the classroom. "School lunches offer students a colorful variety of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and milk while meeting federal nutrition standards limiting fat, calories, sodium, and added sugar," said Megan Doran, Director of Food and Nutrition Services.

The federally funded National School Lunch Program (NSLP) has been fueling students for success for more than 80 years. Some students may qualify for free or reduced-price meals during the year. To apply for meal benefits online, visit our website, <https://www.smcps.org/offices/food-nutrition-services>. Log in to Food and Nutrition Services,



Meal Benefit Information. You will find the “My School Apps” button. Meal Benefit applications submitted online are effective immediately.

The “Cafeteria Circus: Where Healthy Choices Take Center Stage” campaign is made possible by the nonprofit School Nutrition Association. Parents and students can follow the fun on social media using the hashtags #NSLW26, #SchoolNutrition, and #SchoolLunch. For more information on National School Lunch Week, visit <https://schoolnutrition.org/nslw/>.