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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Maryland State Department of Education, Office of School and Community Nutrition Programs Awarded 2021 Team Nutrition Training Grant

BALTIMORE (October 21, 2021) - The Maryland State Department of Education's (MSDE) Office of School and Community Nutrition Programs (OSCNP) was awarded \$300,000 through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Team Nutrition Training Grant for School Meal Recipe Development.

The grant focuses on the development of at least four new standardized recipes for Maryland schools using local agricultural products. The recipes will be developed in collaboration with Maryland Local Education Agencies (LEAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program. By engaging a broad range of people within the school community during project development, the recipes will adopt a variety of cultural food preferences. Additionally, recipes will prioritize flavor and presentation, and enhance the overall appeal of school meals. Local foods featured may include kale, collards, mushrooms, radishes, bok choy, sweet potatoes, cucumbers, carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, chicken, and blue catfish.

“During school year 2020-2021, over 98 million meals were served by Maryland schools through the USDA child nutrition programs,” said State Superintendent of Schools, Mohammed Choudhury. “Essential lunch, breakfast, supper, and snack programs offer students the opportunity to try a wide variety of foods in their school day and to build lifelong healthy nutrition habits.”

School districts interested in participating will receive sub-grants to facilitate both student and staff involvement in the development, evaluation, and modification of recipes. The OSCNP has created a strong grant team and is excited to partner with the Prince George's County Community College Health, Wellness & Hospitality Department, Maryland Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) Program, and Maryland Department of Agriculture. Grant partners will provide expertise, oversight, and training to LEAs across the State. Maryland farmers, fishers, and University of Maryland Extension Educators will participate in educational opportunities at schools to expand student knowledge of local foods served on their school menu.

For more information on Maryland's Team Nutrition Training Grant, please contact Sara Booker at the MSDE's Office of School and Community Nutrition Programs at 410-767-0204 or Sara.Booker@Maryland.gov.

The Maryland State Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Agriculture are equal opportunity employers and providers.

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