

Letter from Superintendent Luna

Dear Superintendents and School Foodservice Directors,



This is an exciting time to be working with Idaho students! At the State Department of Education, we are striving to ensure all Idaho students not only succeed academically but also gain the nutritious habits they will need to live a full and healthy life. As part of this goal, the Child Nutrition Programs at the Department have worked with school foodservice personnel from across the state to develop new standards for the meals we serve to thousands of students each and every day.

The *New Nutrition Standards for Idaho School Meals* will encourage children to limit unhealthful foods and consume the foods and beverages that are recommended in the *2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. As adults in education, we serve as role models to the students around us. The *New Nutrition Standards for Idaho School Meals* are a great opportunity for us to pull together and encourage all students to enjoy healthier eating habits that they can carry with them through their lives.

We in Idaho are being proactive. USDA will be implementing more stringent requirements for school meals in the near future, and the Nutrition Standards for Idaho School Meals will give every Idaho school the chance to implement these standards gradually before USDA's new requirements are released. Child Nutrition Programs was careful to set standards that would not deter students from eating school meals. Some of these changes may require some acclimation, but with careful implementation, students will adapt very quickly. Let's work together to make these changes an exciting time for students by emphasizing the new, improved and healthier aspects of school meals. Try giving your students samples of the new products or recipes so they will feel more comfortable with the new foods and get excited about upcoming menus.

Other states that implemented new standards – some of which are more stringent than the new Idaho standards – noticed an increase in participation and parental support for schools meals because they effectively communicated these positive changes with students, parents, school personnel and the community at large. Let's keep that in mind as we go forward and do our best to ensure these changes are positive for everyone.

Thank you for all your hard work to help Idaho's children lead a healthier and happy life.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Luna". The signature is stylized and fluid, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Tom Luna
Superintendent of Public Instruction