

FOR RELEASE

Contact: Elizabeth Cowles/Brie Barash  
The Kotchen Group/860-521-2266  
[ecowles@kotchengroup.com](mailto:ecowles@kotchengroup.com)  
[bbarash@kotchengroup.com](mailto:bbarash@kotchengroup.com)

## **Students “Vote for School Lunch” in National Election, Learn More About Healthy Meal Options**

***Patty Mac ‘n’ Cheese, Jesse Wrap, Biff Burger Among Candidates Vying  
to be Named Favorite After National School Lunch Week: Oct. 15-19***

**August 2007, Alexandria, VA** – The non-profit School Nutrition Association (SNA) invites students nationwide to cast their ballot and participate in this year’s ‘Vote for School Lunch’ campaign to learn more about healthy meal choices at school. Marking the second round of lunchroom elections in the three-year national campaign, this year’s candidates include *Jesse Wrap, Pippa Potato, Patty Mac ‘n’ Cheese, Biff Burger* and *Yumi Rice Bowl*.

The candidates are campaigning on their platform of sound dietary values, great taste and lunchroom versatility to be announced this year’s favorite school lunch on Monday, October 22. Students can learn more about candidates and cast their vote online now through National School Lunch Week, October 15-19, at [www.VoteForSchoolLunch.org](http://www.VoteForSchoolLunch.org). The 2007 winner will go on to compete in the 2008 Presidential election against *Pete Pizza* – the 2006 and first-ever ‘Vote For School Lunch’ campaign winner – and three student-designed ‘Design a Candidate’ contest winners.

The ‘Vote’ campaign and activities will help educate parents and students on the nutritional programs available in schools and reveal the many ways school lunches have evolved. In addition to getting students excited about making healthy choices in the lunchroom, the campaign will relay facts on what balanced school meals consist of today.

The campaign will be supported by incentive giveaways such as signs, buttons, stickers, mugs, t-shirts and hats during National School Lunch Week (NSLW). Additional programs can include:

- Design a Candidate: students draw, sketch or design new candidates and submit to their school contests. Up to three winners from each school can be submitted to a national panel to be judged and three national winners will be professionally re-created to run in the 2008 ‘Vote’ campaign
- Election day: schools set up voting booths and establish a voting day
- Costume contests: students and staff create fun costumes and dress up as their favorite characters.
- Cafeteria debates: members of the student government represent each candidate
- Essay contests: invent a Cafeteria Bill of Rights or amend the Cafeteria Constitution
- Recipe write-ins: solicit entries for creative versions of each candidate
- Media campaigns: Get school paper/broadcast journalism department to “follow the campaign trail”

SNA's nationwide membership of 55,000 school nutrition professionals work in schools and in communities to provide balanced, nutritious school meals and information on proper portion sizes and nutrition education for children.

Within the federally funded National School Lunch Program:

- Nationwide, 95% of schools participate and 30 million children are served daily
- Dietary guidelines dictate no more than 30 percent of calories can come from fat and less than 10 percent from saturated fat
- Over the course of one week, lunches must provide 1/3 of the Recommended Dietary Allowances of protein, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, iron, calcium and calories
- Well-balanced school lunches include protein, fruits and vegetables, grains and low-fat milk and are served in age-appropriate portions

Signed into law by President Harry Truman, the National School Lunch Program provides nutritionally balanced low-cost and free meals to students. Today, healthful options are available in schools nationwide. According to *The State of School Nutrition 2007 Report*, out of 1,200 school districts surveyed a majority of schools offer fat-free or low-fat milk (97%), fresh fruits and vegetables (96%), salad bars or pre-packaged salads (88%), yogurt and yogurt drinks (81%), from-scratch baked items (63%) and vegetarian meals (52%).

National School Lunch Week was established in 1963 by a proclamation from President John F. Kennedy. It is designed to help raise awareness for the important role that school nutrition programs play in the lives of America's children. Each year, the School Nutrition Association helps schools celebrate NSLW with an official theme, suggested menus and recipes, promotional resources, activity sheets, decoration ideas and more.

**About School Nutrition Association:**

The School Nutrition Association (SNA), [www.schoolnutrition.org](http://www.schoolnutrition.org), is a national, non-profit professional organization representing more than 55,000 members who provide high-quality, low-cost meals to students across the country. The Association and its members are dedicated to feeding children safe and nutritious meals. Founded in 1946, SNA is the only association devoted exclusively to protecting and enhancing children's health and well being through school meals and sound nutrition education.

###