

We're NEA ESPs and Proud of It!

ESP: EQUAL AND ESSENTIAL PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

Together We Can Make Things Happen.

How Can We Help Restore Public Confidence in Public Education? Food Services Members Speak Out:

- “Work closely with parents and teachers. Volunteer in school service projects. Be positive.”
- “Have a closer relationship with our students and their families. Let them know how important a part we all play in education.”
- “Help others understand that public education is only as good as we, the public, make it.”



*Great
Public
Schools
for
Every
Child*



NEA ESP Quality Department
1201 16th St., NW
Washington, DC 20036-3290
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www.nea.org/esphome

FOOD SERVICES



2/04-49555



Nourishing students

About Us and Our Work

- **48%** of us work in central food facilities, and **50%** work in school buildings.
- **38%** of us work in preschool, kindergarten, or elementary schools; **23%** in junior high or middle schools; **21%** in senior high schools; and the remainder at multiple work sites.
- **96%** of us have job responsibilities that involve promoting school safety.
- **69%** of us work full time.
- **98%** of us are female.
- **82%** are married.
- Our average age is **51**.
- **60%** of us had to meet specific job requirements, **32%** of us had to have special certificates, and **47%** needed special training. **30%** of us must pass examinations or coursework on a regular basis.
- On average, we have been NEA ESP members for **8.8** years.

We are committed: **11.3** years is the average we have been working in our field. **90%** of us plan to stay in the ESP field, and **76%** plan to stay in our current jobs until retirement.

We are many: Over **322,000** food services ESPs work in the nation's K-12 public schools. We're the fourth largest of the nation's K-12 ESP job groups, making up **14%** of the U.S. K-12 ESP work force.

Helping children grow and stay healthy

Our Workplace Conditions and Issues

We have job titles that are not clearly differentiated, which makes it difficult to advance from one food service job to another. **26%** of us do not have a job description at all. Among those of us who do have a job description, **30%** feel that it does not accurately describe the amount of work we do. **60%** of us have no input into updating or changing our job descriptions.

We are worried about privatization: **25%** of our members report that food service work is being contracted out in their districts.

Our first responsibility is to be sure that we serve safe and nutritious food to the students and staff. Food preparation involves the ever-present risk of burns, cuts, falls, and similar mishaps.

We are pleased with the personal fulfillment we get from our work and the freedom we have to decide how to do our jobs. We want more access to training and professional development opportunities so we can increase our chances for advancement. We'd like better wages and job benefits, such as health insurance and pensions.



Keeping dining areas safe and clean

Food Services ESPs: Who We Are

Cooks and Food Preparation Workers
Cashiers, Dietitians, and Dietary Technicians
Food Service Workers
Nonmanagerial Supervisors

For additional information, please contact:

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