

Culinary/Creative Arts 2026

By Jessica Jones, Culinary/Creative Arts Co-Chair

General Information for all Participants

- Participant must be an SNA-NC member and pre-registered for the SNA-NC Annual Conference.
- Entries must be in the name of an individual member. School entries are not permitted.
- Entry forms must have the correct contact information (phone & email) and have legible print. (Please PRINT)
- There are 5 Culinary Categories and each category has 3 to 4 subcategories. There are 5 Creative Arts Categories. You can only select one subcategory out of each Culinary Category and can select all 5 Creative Arts Categories. *Ex: Dessert Category, you select cookies. Therefore, you can't select cakes as another option.*
- Entries are due by **May 4, 2026.**
- Only the individual competitor will be permitted into the setup area. Please give careful consideration to your entries this year and make sure you allow yourself enough time for setup.
- **Once you complete a successful submission, you will be emailed a confirmation and an optional virtual invitation for May 25, 2026, at 3:00 pm to go over competition rules and regulations.**

Before submitting your entry, please make sure you understand the requirements for the category you are entering. If you have any questions on a category, please email them to jjones6@wcpss.net or call 919-588-3502.

Some of the categories must follow the K-5 meal pattern. Below are the K-5 meal pattern requirements for your convenience. Please note that these are the required minimums per day.

K-5 Breakfast Meal Pattern 2025-2026	K-5 Lunch Meal Pattern 2025-2026
1 cup Fruit	½ cup Fruit
1 ounce Grain	1 ounce Grain
1 cup Milk	1 cup Milk
	¾ cup Vegetable
	1 ounce Meat/Meat Alternative

Division 1: Culinary Arts - 5 Categories: 17 Subcategories

Category 1: Complete School Lunch or Breakfast Plate Category

All entries should follow the K-5 Meal Pattern for 2025-2026 and must represent a complete reimbursable meal. An empty milk carton is acceptable to represent the milk component. Food components may be weighed or measured.

No recipe card needed.

- A. Lunch/Entree Meal** - A complete meal consisting of an entree meal along with appropriate fruit(s), vegetable(s), grain, and milk. *Examples: BBQ Chicken, Pizza, and Soup.*
MUST FOLLOW K-5 MEAL PATTERN.
- B. Sandwich or Wrap Plate** - A complete meal consisting of an entree that must be served in a bun, wrap, or between appropriate grain. The entree should include the meat and grain and be served with appropriate fruit(s), vegetable(s), grain, and milk. *Examples: Hot Dog, Cheeseburger, and Taco.*
MUST FOLLOW K-5 MEAL PATTERN.
- C. Ethnic Plate** - A complete meal consisting of an entree that must be ethnic food and is served with appropriate fruit(s), vegetable(s), grain, and milk. *Examples: Orange Chicken, Asian Meatballs, etc.*
MUST FOLLOW K-5 MEAL PATTERN.
- D. School Breakfast Plate** - A complete meal that features breakfast that is served with appropriate fruit(s) and milk. *Examples: Muffin, Breakfast Pizza, and Biscuit.*
MUST FOLLOW K-5 MEAL PATTERN.

Category 2: Entree Category

An entree is defined as a combination food item intended as the main component of the meal. All entries should follow the minimum USDA serving size for 2025-2026. **A recipe card, no card size limit, is required for the Meat/Meat Alternative Entree and Entree Salad.**

- A. Meat/Meat Alternative Entree** - Entree must contain an M/MA component and must include grain. *Examples: Fish Sandwich, Chicken Salad and Roll, Teriyaki Beef and Rice.* No pre-packaged items. **Must meet minimum K-5 meal pattern serving size for meat/meat alternative and grain.**
- B. Grab & Go/Second Chance Breakfast** - This entry must follow the K-5 breakfast meal pattern as well as emphasize convenience and marketability. It must be displayed the way it is served and then displayed on a tray. **MUST FOLLOW K-5 MEAL PATTERN.**
- C. Entree Salad** - Entree salad that meets the meal pattern contribution for K-5 for M/MA and salad mix. The salad must also include an additional ½ cup serving of any vegetable. *Examples: Taco Salad with Chips/Black Beans/Taco Meat, Grilled Chicken Salad on top of Salad Mix with Corn Salsa.* **Must meet minimum K-5 meal pattern serving size for meat/meat alternative, salad mix, and offer an additional ½ cup of any vegetable.**

Category 3: Single Component Fruit/Vegetable/Grain Category

Serving size must be at least ½ cup and meet the meal pattern contribution for K-5. **A recipe card, no card size limit, is required for this category.**

- A. Commodity Fruit** - Entry must include at least two ingredients (spices do not count as second ingredient), with one being a commodity fruit, that could be served as part of a reimbursable meal. **Must meet minimum K-5 meal pattern serving size.**
- B. Commodity Vegetable** - Entry must include at least two ingredients (spices do not count as second ingredient), with one being a commodity vegetable, that could be served as part of a reimbursable meal. **Must meet minimum K-5 meal pattern serving size.**
- C. NCDA Farm to School Fruit or Vegetable** - Entry must include at least two ingredients (spices do not count as second ingredient), with the main ingredient being a fresh fruit or vegetable product, that could be served as part of a reimbursable meal. The Farm to School fruit or vegetable must be from the most recent Farm to School product calendar. Delivery Calendar NC Farm to School. **Must meet minimum K-5 meal pattern serving size.**
- D. Whole Grain (Non-Bread) Side Dish** - A grain product that could be served as part of a reimbursable meal. *Examples: Rice Pilaf, Couscous, Pasta Salad.* **Must meet minimum K-5 meal pattern serving size.**

Category 4: Bread Category

Entries do not have to meet meal pattern contributions. **A recipe card, no card size limit, is required for this category.** A serving should be displayed for sampling and should be cut from or part of the original entry.

- A. Yeast/Sweet Yeast Breads** - *Examples: Cinnamon Rolls or Buns, Yeast Rolls*
- B. Muffins & Biscuits** - *Examples: Blueberry Muffins, Buttermilk Biscuits*
- C. Quick Breads** - *Examples: Banana Bread, Zucchini Bread*

Category 5: Dessert Category

Entries do not have to meet meal pattern contributions. **A recipe card, no card size limit, is required for this category.** A serving should be displayed for sampling and should be cut from or part of the original entry.

- A. Cookies** - *Examples: Rolled, Dropped, Bar Cookies, Brownies, Peanut Butter Delights*
- B. Cakes** - Any style of cake with minimal decorations
- C. Cupcakes** - Any kind of cupcake

Division 2: Creative Arts - 5 Categories

Entries should be less than or equal to 25" wide x 25" long x 36" high. Size is important and entries will be disqualified if the incorrect theme or size is used. All entries must be original concepts and cannot be purchased from florist, craft supplier, or bakery as those will not be eligible.

- A. National School Lunch Week Decoration** - Use the 2025 National School Lunch Week Theme "Taste the World: Your School Lunch Passport!"

- B. National School Breakfast Week Decoration** - Use the 2026 National School Breakfast Week Theme “The Quest for School Breakfast”.
- C. Decorated Special Occasion Cake** - Sheet or tiered cakes where emphasis is on decoration. Cake must be entirely edible with the exception of support for tiered cakes.
- D. President’s Theme Cakes** - Sheet or tiered cakes where emphasis and decorations are on the 2025-2026 President’s theme. Cake must be entirely edible with the exception of support for tiered cakes.
- E. Farm to School Display** - Any display using Farm to School products from the most recent Farm to School product calendar at: [Delivery Calendar | NC Farm to School](#) along with 2 additional farm products grown in North Carolina. *(Participation in the Farm to School program by the LEA is not a requirement for this category. Fresh produce items used in the display are limited to those grown in North Carolina. Bananas and oranges are not allowed since they are grown in North Carolina and are not on the Farm to School product calendar.)*