



SNA of Ohio
June 2025
Board Member Spotlight

Denise Zielske, Director of Child Nutrition, Perrysburg Exempted Village Schools

When it comes to school nutrition leadership, Denise Zielske is a powerhouse of purpose, passion, and people-centered progress. Now in her third year as Director of Child Nutrition at Perrysburg Exempted Village Schools, Denise brings warmth, innovation, and dedication to everything she does—from managing daily operations to building stronger networks across Ohio.

As the Membership Chair for the School Nutrition Association (SNA) of Ohio, Denise has made it her mission to create a more connected and inclusive community. *“Our goal is to remove any barriers that discourage member participation,” Denise explains. “We’re working to streamline communication, offer flexible ways for members to contribute, and improve outreach to both current and prospective members.”*

For Denise, membership is more than just maintaining a roster—it’s about helping others find belonging and opportunity. *“Ultimately, the Membership Committee isn’t just about managing a list of people—it’s about making SNA a stronger, more engaged group. It means we are listening to our members, growing, and evolving to make it easier for everyone to get involved and make an impact.”*

Her leadership is fueled by a genuine love for the work and the people she serves with.

“My favorite thing about SNA of Ohio is the people. It’s inspiring to be surrounded by individuals who are passionate, committed, and driven to make a difference. Everyone brings a unique set of strengths and perspectives—it’s energizing to be part of a team that cares not just about the mission, but about supporting each other.”

Among her most meaningful moments with SNA of Ohio is receiving the Sue Whitaker Award at the 2023 Annual Conference.

“Sue was a mentor and colleague who truly changed the course of my career—and in many ways, my life,” Denise shares. “It wasn’t just the recognition that meant so much, but the fact that it came from someone I deeply respected. She introduced me to the SNA and taught me the importance of training and professional growth. The friendships and mentors I’ve made thanks to Sue—and to Evelyn Hess—have been invaluable, both professionally and personally.”

Outside of board meetings and committee work, you might find Denise enjoying a tray of chicken and waffles—her favorite school meal.

With a heart for service and a gift for building connections, Denise continues to play a vital role in shaping the future of school nutrition in Ohio. We're lucky to have her leadership, insight, and energy on the SNA of Ohio Executive Board.

