

How to use the SNA

Legislative Tool Kit

The School Nutrition Association (formerly the American School Food Service Association) Public Policy and Legislative Committee is pleased to present this Legislative Tool Kit. It contains a wealth of information that we hope will provide you with a better understanding of the process of making and passing laws in your state capitol as well as in Washington, D.C. The loose-leaf format was chosen to facilitate necessary updates. It will also make it possible for you to remove and copy sections for distribution to various audiences. For example, you may want to use some of the history and facts for presentations to school boards, allied groups, state and federal elected officials, and to your own membership. By adding other sections, you can customize your own information packets and presentations to meet the needs of a variety of audiences.

As you review the tabbed sections, you may wish to select information from several, creating specialized information packets. The following is an overview of each section in the Tool Kit and the audience you can target.

SNA Legislative Goals: Much of SNA's legislative success can be attributed to visionary planning by its leaders and the intensive grassroots work of its members and allied organizations. An important step is the development of multi-year public policy needs and issues, along with SNA policies on these issues. SNA leaders have identified eight legislative core tenets: Meals at No Charge to

Students, Access, Funding, Agriculture, School Nutritional Environment and Fiscal Integrity, Regulations, Nutrition, Food and Education, and Nutrition Integrity. Each tenet was extensively screened and evaluated and developed into a policy.

History: This section is suitable for all audiences. You may wish to condense and/or use highlights to support or focus attention on specific issues. For example, you may wish to create a history of the school breakfast program if you are lobbying for breakfast funding.

Program Facts: This section is appropriate for all audiences. Facts about the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs may be included in your state and chapter publications. This information is useful when preparing presentations for elected officials, school boards, community groups, etc.

Nutrition Research: The background information and bibliography included in this section are valuable resources. The materials provide a quick reference for research into the links between learning and child nutrition programs. This is especially valuable when working with elected officials and school administrators.

Economic Impact: This section requires work on your part. It provides an outline to be used to determine the economic impact of child nutrition programs in your local area. It is appropriate for use with elected officials and industry partners in your state.

National Legislation: This section provides lists of the Senate and House

Leadership as well as members of some of the most important committees that influence issues critical to children. You can check to see if members from your state serve on any of these important committees. In addition, learn how a bill becomes a law and the basics of the budget and appropriations processes. Finally, a glossary of legislative terms will acquaint you with the unique terminology used in the governing process.

State Legislation: Your legislative team and committee can use this section to identify and clarify issues; the information must then be shared with association members in order to be effective.

Issue Papers: Information is provided to assist you in developing your own Issue Paper, as well as an example of an Issue Paper. SNA's Issue Paper and Talking Points should be inserted in this section.

Resolutions: A sample resolution, in this case, supporting the elimination of the reduced price meal category.

Partnerships: Use this area to identify and keep track of individuals and organizations in your state that are sympathetic to SNA's issues. Share this information with others so they know the right people to contact when the need arises.

Meeting with Legislators: The state legislative team can use this information to train association members on how to make effective presentations to elected officials. Parts of this section may be included in state and chapter publications.

Campaign: Here you will find a questionnaire you can use with your state and national candidates to find out who will best represent the interests of school food service and child nutrition. There are also questions you can use if you have the opportunity to ask a question in person.

Blank Tab: By adding your own section, you can customize your Tool Kit and provide information to others that is most relevant to your region or state.

This tool kit is only effective if you use it. Its usefulness is multiplied when you share it with others. We encourage you to use this information, and we hope it will increase your effectiveness and interest in the legislative process.