

December 2017

MUSH-ON

Alaska School Nutrition Association

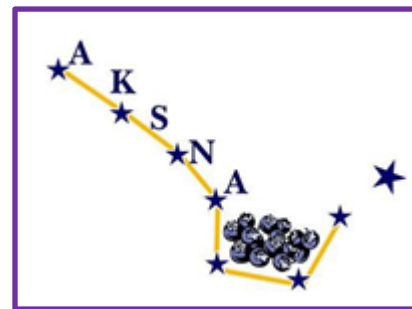
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State Agency Updates Submitted by Jo Dawson

It has been a busy month, I hope you are all well. I was able to present at the annual conference for the Alaska Association of School Business Officials (ALASBO) earlier this month; there is still a lot of interest in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). If you have any questions on how this initiative works, please contact Elizabeth Seitz at Elizabeth.seitz@alaska.gov.

ALASBO attendees were also very interested in the Unpaid Meal Policy requirements from USDA; as a reminder not only does each school have to have this policy, but during an administrative review, you must also provide documentation that the policy was communicated to staff and families.

Our team at Child Nutrition Programs is wishing you all a wonderful holiday season!



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Conference Updates

The registration form for the 50th Annual Alaska School Nutrition Conference is attached. Please note the Pre-Conference is scheduled for Monday, February 12, 2018 with options such as Food Safety Training and Certification exam and Nutrition 101. The full conference dates are February 13-15, 2018 with the vendor show on the 15th.

To celebrate our Golden Anniversary (50 years!), instead of the vendor social we will be holding an awards banquet on the evening of the 14th. Please plan to attend. There will also be an apron fashion show and auction at the banquet. This will be an AKSNA fundraiser, so please dust off your sewing machine and try to take 1st place honors!

“Yule” be Glad for SNAs New Year’s Webinars

It’s almost time for the holidays and in the coming New Year SNA will have webinars that you won’t want to miss!



The Power of Protein!

Wednesday, January 17, 2018, 10:00 am AK Time

Successful completion of the webinar and quiz is awarded 1 SNA CEU, or 1 CPEU for RDs/DTRs

Registration will be opening soon. Participation in Webinar Wednesdays will help you earn CEUs toward your USDA Professional Standards annual training requirements, along with your SNA Certificate or SNS Credential.

All webinars are held at 10 am Alaskan Time. For more information and to access the webinar archive, please visit www.schoolnutrition.org/webinars.

Save the Date: SNA’s Virtual Expo Launches on February 6, 2018

Get ready...SNA’s Virtual Expo launches on February 6, 2018. This free, virtual trade show will be accessible to attendees from February 6 –March 16, 2018.

This unique experience is open to all SNA members, and it will provide access to content twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Going virtual allows you to visit as often as you’d like from the comfort of your own computer. A few conference highlights include:

- Virtual Exhibit Hall: Explore products and services from up to 50 exhibitors
- Learning Center: Access education sessions you may have missed from SNA’s Annual National Conference in 2017

AKSNA Executive Board (Continued)

State Farm to School

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Dates to Remember

The 50th Annual Alaska School Nutrition Conference is coming!

Pre-Conference Monday,
February 12, 2018

Conference dates
February 13-15, 2018.

Upcoming Webinar Wednesdays

The Power of Protein
**Wednesday, January 17, 2018
10:00 a.m. (Alaskan Time)**

Community Eligibility Part 1
**Wednesday, February 7, 2018
10:00 a.m. (Alaskan Time)**

Community Eligibility Part 2
**Wednesday, March 14, 2018
10:00 a.m. (Alaskan Time)**

Community Eligibility Part 3
**Wednesday, April 11, 2018
10:00 a.m. (Alaskan Time)**

- Networking Lounge: Meet and chat with other attendees and easily exchange contact information

Free registration opens January 2018. Be on the lookout for the registration link on the SNA website and other Association communication outlets.

AKSNA Membership Update

Greetings AK Food Service Professionals!

It is that time of year when everyone is getting settled into a routine and preparing for the many fun events that take place over the next couple months.

The annual AKSNA conference is right around the corner (February 12-15 in Anchorage). This is the 50th annual conference ~ come celebrate AKSNA's golden anniversary! There will be lots of extra special fun and food nutrition highlights in celebration of this event. If you have not taken time to consider membership in AKSNA or attending the annual conference, now is a great time to think about it.

There are many benefits involved in AKSNA membership and/or attendance at the conference. In addition to the monthly magazine subscription and training opportunities, benefits of becoming an AKSNA member are far reaching. I am pretty certain that I made it through my first couple years in the school meal program with a "bit of luck and pixie dust." There were many late nights reading USDA federal regulations, early mornings reading the eligibility manual, afternoons reading the environmental conservation food safety and sanitation rules, and SO Many phone calls to our wonderful and famous AKDEED Child Nutrition Program office staff.

Then, lo and behold, someone told me about the AKSNA conference. It sounded like a dream come true. I was told tales of how I would meet all of these amazing school district Food Service Professionals from across our glorious state of Alaska. Tales of how these professionals would share all of their best kept secrets with me if only I became an AKSNA member and attended the annual conference.

I became a member and attended my first conference and the rest is history! I am very thankful that I became a member and made connections with many incredible school meal program food service staff across our great state. It is one of the best professional decisions that I have made during my time as a school meal program director.

If you would like more information or have questions about becoming an AKSNA member, please contact me anytime or visit <https://schoolnutrition.org/membership/> to join/renew your membership.

If you would like to register for the 2018 - 50th annual AKSNA conference online, you can do so at <http://www.aksna.org/Member%20Info/>

Adrienne Schwartz, AKSNA membership chair

Farm to School Update

In early November, Alaska Farm to School Coordinator Jodie Anderson traveled to Southwest Alaska to begin the process for gathering information and working with community members on a USDA grant to develop farm to school agriculture in the Bristol Bay Region. Two community meetings were held, one in Nakenk and the other in Dillingham at the Bristol Bay Campus.

The meetings provided an open discussion where participants could share their knowledge and ideas about growing and connecting local agriculture to schools in the Bristol Bay region. The community discussion also focused on increasing school gardens, connecting local agriculture to school meals and student nutrition educational opportunities. Overall, the community was very supportive of incorporating local agriculture into area schools, and local farmers were very excited about the opportunity as well.

Jodie will be returning to the region in March to further explore spring growing and gardening opportunities for schools and producers.

STEPS December Challenge: Stress-Less Holidays!

For many, the winter holidays—beginning with Thanksgiving and ending after the New Year can be a long, stressful few months. Try a few of these suggestions to keep calm during the holiday season. Give yourself five (5) points for occasion where you take time for personal relaxation. At the end of the month, be sure to add up your points and enter them online at www.schoolnutrition.org/STEPS – you could win a prize!

USDA Issues Interim Final Rule on School Meal Flexibility

On November 29, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) released an [interim final rule](#) to extend current regulatory flexibility for school meal programs through School Year (SY) 2018-19. The interim rule maintains Target 1 sodium limits for school meals. USDA “anticipates” extending this deadline through SY 2020-21. State agencies can continue to offer waivers to schools demonstrating hardship in procuring or preparing specific whole-grain rich foods that are acceptable to students (e.g. whole grain tortillas or brown rice). Finally, the rule provides schools the option to offer flavored 1% milk. USDA requests public comment on the interim rule and the sodium reduction timeline to inform the development of a final rule, effective in SY 2019-20.

In response, SNA issued a [press release](#) commending USDA for the extension and expressing support for greater flexibility under whole grain and sodium mandates to address challenges while maintaining strong standards to benefit students. SNA is assembling a member working group to develop detailed recommendations to improve a final rule.

Update on H.R. 3738, the “Healthy Breakfasts Help Kids Learn Act of 2017”

Since the “Healthy Breakfasts Help Kids Learn Act of 2017” was introduced on September 12, 2017, by Rep. James McGovern (D-MA-2), [SNA has been urging](#) other Members of Congress to support the bill. The bill provides 6 cents in commodity support for every breakfast served through the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and, thanks to the letters advocates have sent out to their representatives, the bill now has a total of 18 cosponsors!

Those cosponsors include: Representatives Rodney Davis (R-IL-13), Barbara Lee (D-CA-13), Peter Visclosky (D-IN-1), Peter Welch (D-VT-At Large), Donald Payne (D-NJ-10), Gene Green (D-TX-29), John Garamendi (D-CA-3), Tim Ryan (D-OH-13), Dwight Evans (D-PA-2), Gwen Moore (D-WI-4), Earl Blumenauer (D-OR-3), Michelle Lujan Grisham (D-NM-1), Sanford Bishop (D-GA-2), Ro Khanna (D-CA-17), Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX-18), Chellie Pingree (D-ME-1) Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ-9) and Alan Lowenthal (D-CA-47). The more cosponsors a bill has, the more likely it is to get passed by Congress, so please continue to reach out to your Representatives and ask them for their support. If you see your Member of Congress’ name listed here, your action alert letter will go out as a letter thanking them for their support, so, regardless of your Representative’s stance, [take action](#) today!

SNA Leadership Draft 2018 Position Paper

On December 4, the SNA President and President-Elect, alongside the Public Policy & Legislation Committee (PPL), met to draft the Association's *2018 Position Paper*. The *Position Paper* reflects the Association's top legislative/regulatory priorities and will serve as the roadmap for SNA's 2018 advocacy efforts. SNA and members will advocate for these positions to Congress, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Trump Administration during the 2018 Legislative Action Conference's (LAC) "Charge to the Hill" and throughout the year. In early November, an online survey was distributed via email to all SNA members in order to collect feedback on the issues that members feel are most important to include in the *Position Paper*. The survey was conducted from November 1-15, 2017. A total of 3,646 responses were received.