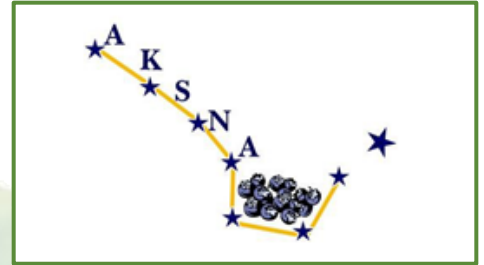


MUSH-ON

Alaska School Nutrition Association
www.aksna.org



Dr. Katie Wilson, SNS, presents the Six Pillars for Success on the challenges and successes in school nutrition at the 51st Annual Conference

AKSNA EXECUTIVE BOARD

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jo.dawson@alaska.gov

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sue.lampert@alaska.gov

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tanyad@charliesproduce.com

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twilson@lpsd.com

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marybeth_whelen@ksd.org

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Gavin M. Northey
northey_gavin@asdk12.org

Member Services:

Adrienne Schwartz
Adrienne.schwartz@juneauschools.org

Nutrition Standards & Education:

Walter Williams
wwilliams@swrsd.org

State Farm to School Representative:

Lyssa Frohling
lyssa.frohling@alaska.gov

Members at Large:

Geno Ceccarelli
geno.ceccarelli@nsbsd.org

Trevor Bridgewater
trevor.bridgewater@k12northstar.org

RCCI Representative:

Noni Albino
noni@kpccc.org

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IMPORTANT DATES

52nd Annual Conference



SNA Virtual Expo

The Virtual Expo remains open through 22 March

Meet Me in St. Louis, ANC 2019

14 – 16 July in St. Louis, MO

WEBINAR WEDNESDAYS

Best of LAC: Winning Over the Public on School Meals

10:00 a.m. 20 March 2019 AKDT

Best of SNIC: The evolving Agricultural Landscape – Enabling a Plant-based Future

10:00 a.m. 27 March 2019 AKDT

FROM LAC



Bethy Whalen, Jennifer Meiwes, and Chris Johnson with Rep. Don Young

POP-QUIZ

Which of the following are Pillars of Success?

- a. Customer Service
- b. Legislative Action
- c. Program Flexibilities
- d. Know your history
- e. Tell your story

Answer on Page 4

A note from the State Association President

Jo Dawson, SNS

There is so much good work and good news to talk about this month!

The annual conference represents change for the AKSNA board each year, I am proud to be the President of the state association for the next year and really happy to announce the other changes to include Sue Lampert (Alaska Child Nutrition Programs) as the President-Elect, Gavin Northey (Anchorage School District) as the Communications Chair and editor of the *Mush-On News*, Bethy Whalen (Lower Kuskokwim School District) as the new chair for Public Policy and Legislation Committee and Trevor Bridgewater (Fairbanks School District) as our Member at Large. Thank you to all of those who commit their time and energy to help the nutrition programs succeed in Alaska!

Our association was well represented in Washington DC last month at the SNA Legislative Action Committee. Representing AKSNA was Chris Johnson (MatSu School District), Bethy Whalen (Lower Kuskokwim School District), and Jennifer Meiwes (Anchorage School District) were able to meet with each of the Alaska delegation: Senator Dan Sullivan, Senator Lisa Murkowski, and Representative Don Young in order to express the priorities we have for school nutrition at the federal level. Thank you team!

A huge congratulations to Gavin Northey (Anchorage School District), Bethy Whalen (Lower Kuskokwim School District), and Trevor Bridgewater (Fairbanks School District) for passing their School Nutrition Specialist examination and earning the SNS credentials!

Our state membership has grown by 14% since October, further increasing our strength as an association. Please consider the resources and training offered by the School Nutrition Association to support your school nutrition program.

SNA Policy Priorities Included in 2019 Appropriations Bill

From SNAC Bites, March 2019

The 2019 Agriculture Appropriations [bill](#) signed into law in February included two SNA policy priorities. The law provides \$20,000,000 in commodity support for the School Breakfast Program and \$30,000,000 for school nutrition equipment grants. Increasing commodity support for school breakfast remains a key SNA priority this year and was included in the [2019 Position Paper](#).

Alaska Kids Are Counting On You— As Always

Dean Hamburg, SNS, past AKSNA President

As your 2018-2019 school meal year comes to a close, it is already that time to look ahead to the 2019-2020 student nutrition year.

AK kids are counting on AKSNA professionals to again be ready with their kindness in August.

It is understood by Alaskan adults that these are challenging times for Alaska families with children in school. Both in rural and road system Alaska, schools are looking to changes and adapt to budget challenges.

Regardless of other changes in school services, Alaska children will again be expecting your warm smiles and professional provision of terrific school meals.

As other aspects of a school day may change in the coming year, AK kids will be looking to your always friendly breakfast service, kind delivery of a nutritious lunch, and those other snack services that serve as a base support to their school life success.

Do enjoy your Alaska summer and do prepare with establishing an awesome menu and inventory.

Take advantage of summer trainings and SNA events. Keep in touch with your school meal family.

You know how much AK kids depend on you.

Your kind service, and prepared professional caring, will again be key to their success this 2019-2020 year.

Remember you are awesome.

Coast Guard Serves Lunch in Juneau, Food Comes to Life

Adrienne Schwartz

The US Coast Guard visited Juneau elementary schools where they served lunch and met with students across the state's capital city. Adrienne's staff really knows how to bring lunch to life! Students asked, "Why does our food look like it's alive?"



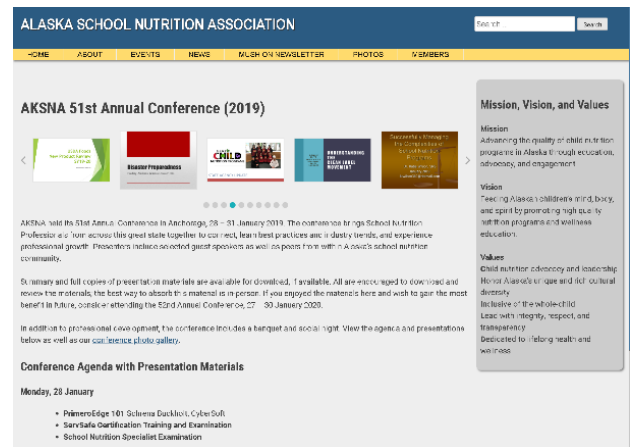
New Web Site

Gavin M. Northey, SNS

www.aksna.org has been updated!

Visit our new web page to find a new design, new content, and news.

All AKSNA members are invited to register (Link in the "Members" menu). The site has community features such as discussion/comment areas on many of the pages. Additional features will be forthcoming!



What Do You Order from Your Local Farmer?

From SNAC Bites, February 2019

Partnering with local farmers goes beyond simply bringing in farm-fresh fruits and vegetables into your school cafeterias. In a recent report published in the [Journal of Child Nutrition & Management](#), researchers surveyed schools across the country to see what exactly they were order from farmers. Not only did the researchers look at what was being ordered and in what frequency, but they also sought to see if any differences existed that were relative to school size (based on the number of lunches served).

U.S. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue Speaks at LAC 2019

From SNAC Bites, March 2019

On February 25, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue addressed school nutrition professionals gathered for SNA's 47th annual Legislative Action Conference. Sec. Perdue spoke about his experiences with school meals programs, and the work the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has been doing to provide flexibility for state agency staff and school nutrition operators. He also announced USDA's final rule on hiring flexibility for school nutrition programs.

Introducing SNA's New Procurement Zone!

From SNAC Bites, March 2019

As part of SNA's ongoing efforts to help school nutrition professionals on a path to continuous improvement in procurement practices, SNA has launched the [Procurement Zone](http://www.schoolnutrition.org/Procurement) (www.schoolnutrition.org/Procurement), as part of its new [SNA Learning Center](http://www.schoolnutrition.org/LearningCenter) (www.schoolnutrition.org/LearningCenter).

The Procurement Zone offers user-friendly resources available to SNA members including procurement do's and don'ts, procurement regulations, procurement and administrative review preparations, understanding the Buy American provision and more. You'll also find templates from state agencies across the country and a primer designed to help school business officials understand the nuances of school nutrition procurement.

The goal of the new Procurement Zone is to help you feel more confident in this complex part of school nutrition. The resources available will help you manage effective, fair, transparent and competitive procurement practices. Check it out today at www.schoolnutrition.org/Procurement!

Pop-Quiz Answers: A, D, and E, the Six Pillars of Success may be downloaded from www.aksna.org

State Agency Update

Jo Dawson, SNS

As the school year is winding down, consider offering the Summer Food Service Program this summer. Last summer only 8% of Alaska children who access school meals were able to participate in the summer nutrition programs. Training will be held in April and will provide you the framework to operate the program in your community. Please contact our offices if you'd like to register for training or apply to sponsor a site.

The theme with USDA lately has been flexibility, recently legislation was passed to allow for more flexibilities in the meal pattern:

- First, it will broaden the milk options in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program by allowing local operators to permanently offer flavored, low-fat milk. For consistency across nutrition programs, it will also allow flavored, low-fat milk in the Special Milk Program for Children and in the Child and Adult Care Food Program for participants ages 6 and older.
- Second, this final rule will require that half of the weekly grains in the school lunch and breakfast menu be whole grain-rich, thus ending the need for the exemption process.
- Third, it will provide schools in the lunch and breakfast programs more time for gradual sodium reduction by retaining Sodium Target 1 through the end of school year (SY) 2023-2024, continuing to Target 2 in SY 2024-2025, and eliminating the Final Target that would have gone into effect in SY 2022-2023.

Additional flexibility will be implemented April 30, 2019 in the area of professional standards. New flexibility will apply to school nutrition program directors in small local educational agencies (LEAs) and new State agency directors under the Professional Standards regulations for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program:

- First, to address hiring challenges faced by small school districts, which are those with 2,499 or fewer students, this rule requires relevant food service experience *rather than* school nutrition program experience for new school nutrition program directors.
- Second, it provides State agencies with discretion to consider documented volunteer or unpaid work as relevant experience for new school nutrition program directors in LEAs with 2,499 or fewer students.
- Third, it gives State agencies discretion to accept less than the required years of food service experience when an applicant for a new director position *in an LEA with fewer than 500 students*, if the applicant has the minimum required education.

Lastly, this rule adds flexibility to the hiring standards for State directors of school nutrition programs by allowing State agencies to consider applicants with either a bachelor's or advanced degree in specified fields.

An additional flexibility is being promoted to State agencies to allow for an extended Administrative Review cycle, this is a topic of great interest to us and we'll advise you all when USDA provide the state agencies more information on this.

Share your success! Send articles, photos, success stories, and more to share with your colleagues working across the Great State to fuel our future. Email: news@aksna.org.