



Alabama Child Nutrition Programs

CNP Newsletter
Winter 2024



Healthy eating habits promote proper growth and development and create better learners. Good eating habits can prevent obesity and other health problems.

Thanks so much for all you do to meet the nutritional needs of so many. Your team feeds adults and children across Alabama and works hard managing and implementing USDA's Child Nutrition Programs by following federal and state policies and laws.

It's an important job and WE APPRECIATE YOU!



What do you have on
a cold Taco Tuesday?
Taco Soup!!

Chili and Grilled Cheese!
[Chalkville Elementary School](#)



[#excelleceinchildnutrition](#)
[#pcscnp](#)

[Phenix City Schools Child Nutrition Program](#)



Alabama's Junior Chef COMPETITION

The Alabama Child Nutrition School Programs Staff is pleased to announce the seventh annual **Alabama State Junior Chef Competition**. This culinary competition is designed to encourage students to be engaged with our programs and provide them with an opportunity to demonstrate their cooking skills in a competitive environment.



When: Friday, February 16, 2024

Where: Jefferson State Community College
Shelby-Hoover Campus

Alabama's First-Place Junior Chef Team will move forward to the Southeast Regional Junior Chef Competition. The SERJCC will take place Thursday and Friday, May 9 - 10, 2024 at Nashville State Community College Southeast Campus.



If you have questions or have a team wishing to compete this year, please email Esther Hicks at CNPNSLP@ALSDE.EDU

A copy of the registration packet will be provided upon request.





Annual State Conference Mardi Gras in the Magic City

[View the Conference Guide Here](#)

See you there!

Get ready to experience a culinary celebration like never before at the Alabama School Nutrition Association's Annual State Conference! This year, immerse yourself in the vibrant energy of our Mardi Gras in the Magic City theme, where the spirit of the festivities meets the dedication of school nutrition professionals.



Alabama School Nutrition Association's Annual State Conference

MARDI GRAS IN THE MAGIC CITY

Celebrating the Past, Treasuring the Present, Shaping the Future

FEBRUARY 16 & 17, 2024

Birmingham Jefferson Convention Center

Birmingham, Alabama



MARDI GRAS IN THE MAGIC CITY

Celebrating the Past, Treasuring the Present, Shaping the Future



In the spirit of giving back to other organizations fight against hunger in our conference's host city, join ASNA's support of the Community Food Bank of Central Alabama. Since its creation in 1982, the CFBCA accomplishes the mission of supplying millions of meals per year to over 230 Partner Agencies, like food pantries, shelters, and children's programs in 12 counties across central Alabama. Their aim is to ensure people in need can access emergency food near where they live. ASNA attendees are encouraged to bring two cans of food. Conference attendees that support this endeavor will receive a special ribbon for their nametag. Bins will be available in the second-floor lobby of the East Hall to place canned goods.

**DON'T FORGET TO BRING
TWO CANNED GOODS**
• **TO OUR ANNUAL CONFERENCE** •
AND RECEIVE A SPECIAL RIBBON FOR YOUR NAMETAG



Join us in supporting the Community
Foodbank of Central Alabama!



MARCH 4-8, 2024

NATIONAL SCHOOL BREAKFAST WEEK



SURF'S
UP
WITH SCHOOL
BREAKFAST

Say "Aloha" to this year's National School Breakfast Week theme! "Surf's Up with School Breakfast" is here to bring some tropical warmth to your spring months, particularly as students look forward to Spring Break. The theme is designed to bring the excitement and energy of surfing culture to your cafeteria while keeping the focus on healthy and delicious breakfast options.

National School Breakfast Week (NSBW) celebrates the importance of a nutritious school breakfast in fueling students for success. This special observance during the first week of March celebrates the national School Breakfast Program and the many ways it gives kids a great start every day.

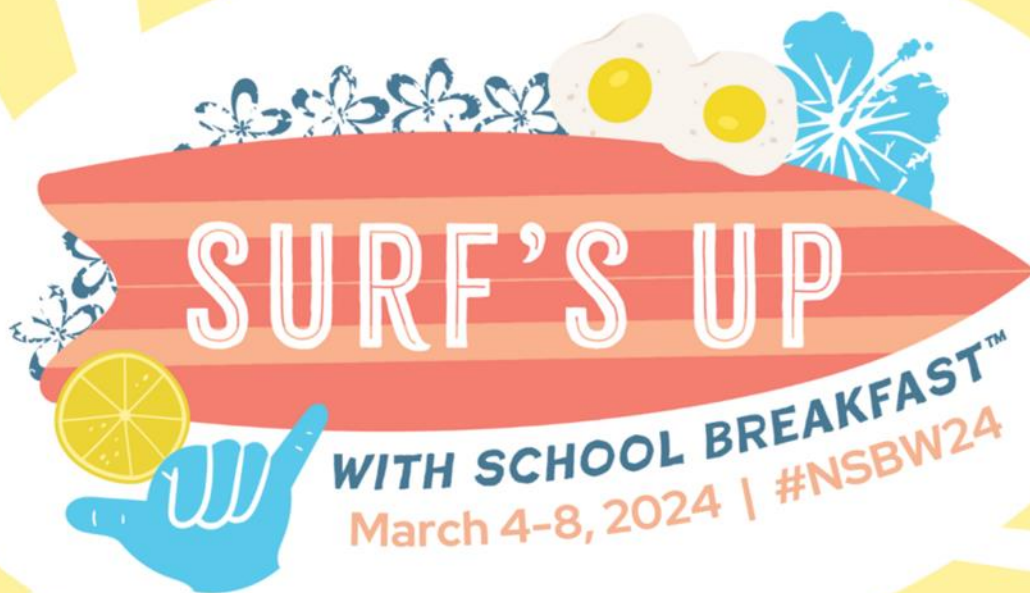
#NSBW24 will take place March 4-8, 2024.



Share your NSBW24 celebration with us!

Please send all submissions for the CNP newsletter to: Penni Jeter, pjeter@alsde.edu

A photo release for any pictures of children sent to ALSDE should be kept on file at the local office.



Plan Your National School Breakfast Week Celebration

SNA has everything you need to make this year's NSBW the best one ever! Check out the tools and resources they have assembled to recognize your school's breakfast program.

#NSBW24 March 4-8, 2024.

[Learn More](#)

[Get the #NSBW24 Resources](#)



Coloring Sheets & Activity Guide

Help students soak up the sun and their creativity during National School Breakfast Week with these printable activity and coloring sheets, **available in English and Spanish.**

[Get the Activity Guide](#)



Be part of advocacy in action when you attend SNA's Legislative Action Conference in the nation's capital.

March 3-5, 2024 | Washington, D.C.

We hope to see you at the SNA Legislative Action Conference where school nutrition professionals from across the nation meet with USDA national staff and visit Capitol Hill to advocate for School Meal Programs!



LAC²⁰²⁴
LEGISLATIVE
ACTION CONFERENCE
MARCH 3-5, 2024 | WASHINGTON, D.C.

[Click here for the #LAC24 Schedule at a Glance](#)

Change. Challenge. Opportunity.

The Legislative Action Conference (LAC) is one of SNA's most highly anticipated and informative conferences. LAC allows attendees to experience firsthand the inner workings of the democratic process, learn about current legislative and regulatory challenges facing school nutrition and advocate directly with their legislators.

Need help convincing your supervisor to send you to #LAC24? [Click here to download a customizable letter sharing the benefits of attending the conference.](#)

LEARN EDUCATE ADVANCE DEVELOP

LEAD to Succeed™

[LEAD to Succeed™](#) was developed specifically for school nutrition professionals with a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Online and in-person facilitated training is available through March 31, 2024 at no cost to all, regardless of SNA membership status.

[Learn More](#)

Professional development opportunities include the [Communication for Impact Series](#), [Leadership Growth Series](#), [LEAD en Español](#) and the [Adult Learning Series](#)

Continue Your Leadership Education Journey

Continue your leadership journey with the latest [Lead to Succeed™](#) training from the School Nutrition Foundation! Earn more than three CEUs with the newest offerings from the LEAD to Succeed™ Leadership Series, available now to all SNPs through [SNA's Training Zone](#).

Child and Adult Care Food Program

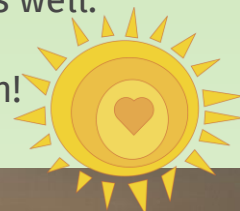


Office: 334.694.4659
CACFP/SFSP

The National Child Nutrition Conference is the premier annual event held by the **National CACFP Sponsors Association**, bringing together professionals from childcare centers, home providers, sponsoring organizations, school districts, afterschool programs, Head Start programs, Food Banks, tribal nations and State Agencies.

Fly in on Monday and stay until Friday! The 2024 Conference will be held at the Rosen Shingle Creek from Tuesday-Thursday, April 23-25, 2024, but there will be additional training opportunities available on Monday and Friday as well.

Get ready for a jam-packed schedule of training, networking and fun!



38th National

CHILD NUTRITION CONFERENCE

April 22-26, 2024

Orlando, Florida



National CACFP Sponsors Association Upcoming Conferences

Location

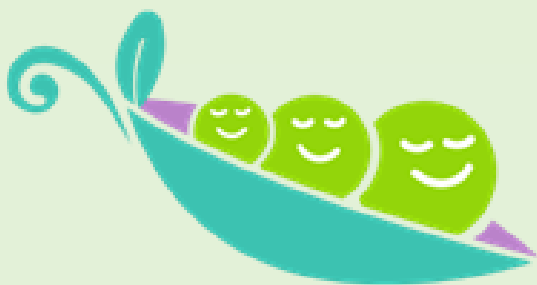
Dallas, Texas

Las Vegas, Nevada

Dates

April 14-18, 2025

April 13-17, 2026





Shaping Tomorrow Together

Join us for SNA's Annual National
Conference (ANC)
July 14-16, 2024 | Boston, Mass.



About the Annual National Conference

Known as the School Nutrition Event of the Year, the School Nutrition Association's Annual National Conference (ANC) unites thousands of school nutrition program operators, industry partners, and allied organizations for an unparalleled educational and networking experience every July.



Future Meetings

Location	Dates
San Antonio, TX	July 13-15, 2025
Charlotte, NC	July 12-14, 2026
Phoenix, AZ	July 11-13, 2027
Nashville, TN	July 9- 11, 2028



Shaping Tomorrow Together

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2023 Position Paper

Thanks to support from Congress and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), school meal programs provided students consistent access to nutritious meals and assisted families in need throughout the pandemic. While [The Keep Kids Fed Act](#) helped these programs transition to normal operations in Fall 2022, Congress must address long-term economic and regulatory challenges. Ensuring the sustainability of school meal programs is invaluable, as [research](#) shows school meals support student health and academic achievement by improving children's diets and combatting hunger. *The non-profit School Nutrition Association (SNA) urges Congress to:*

- **Make permanent the reimbursement rate increases for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program (NSLP/SBP), provided in the bipartisan Keep Kids Fed Act (PL 117-158).**
Acute supply chain disruptions, labor shortages and inflation have dramatically increased costs for school meal programs. In a recent [SNA survey](#) of school nutrition directors, increasing costs was the top challenge cited by nearly all respondents (99.8%). Despite additional Keep Kids Fed Act funds, 56.6% reported the higher reimbursement rate fails to cover the cost of producing school lunch; 54.7% cited the school breakfast rate as inadequate. *Nearly all respondents (99.2%) expressed concern about reimbursement adequacy when these additional funds expire in July 2023.* School meal programs will become financially unsustainable. Losses will cut into education budgets, impeding efforts to meet the needs of students and jeopardizing progress in school nutrition programs. [Learn more](#)
- **Expand NSLP/SBP to offer healthy school meals for all students at no charge.**
Providing equal access to free school meals during the pandemic ensured all students were fueled for success. In school districts that now must charge for meals, 66.8% of nutrition directors [reported](#) an increase in stigma for low-income students, 86.8% cited increased concerns from families and 96.3% reported an increase in unpaid meal charges or debt, a burden on families and school district budgets. SNA supports offering free school meals to all students and proposals to advance this goal, including expanding the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), eliminating the reduced-price category and making permanent the Direct Certification with Medicaid pilot program. [Learn more](#)
- **Ensure USDA maintains current school nutrition standards, rather than implements additional, unachievable rules.**
[Research](#) shows students eat their healthiest meals at school, thanks to current [nutrition standards](#) requiring school meals to include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein and low-fat milk. In February, USDA proposed stricter, long-term nutrition rules. However, 88.8% of school nutrition directors [reported](#) challenges obtaining sufficient menu items (e.g. whole-grain, low-sodium, low-fat options) to meet *current* standards. Additionally, 97.8% are concerned about the availability of foods to meet the July 2023 transitional sodium limits. To keep students eating healthy school meals, USDA must support school nutrition professionals as they work to maintain current standards. [Learn more](#)
- **Reduce regulatory and administrative burdens.**
Overly complex federal regulations divert resources from the mission of serving students and impede efforts to quickly and creatively adapt meal services during emergencies. Congress should direct USDA to implement the recommendations of the congressionally-mandated [Child Nutrition Reporting Burden Analysis Study](#) and the forthcoming Government Accountability Office (GAO) study of [USDA Foods in Schools](#).

[Learn more](#)

MEALTIME MEMO



Share the monthly [Mealtime Memos](#) with families or use the information in your resources for families. Mealtime Memos provide a wealth of topics that can be adapted for families, including menu ideas, recipes, and mealtime discussion prompts.

To ensure you automatically receive the latest issue, [click here to subscribe!](#)



The [Child Nutrition Recipe Box](#) has USDA-standardized recipes for child care centers and family child care homes.

The [Child Nutrition Recipe Box: New CACFP Lunch/Supper Recipes](#) has standardized recipes per age group (3–5 and 6–18 year-olds) and for servings of 6, 25, and 50.

[Sign Up for SNA Newsletters](#)

[Sign Up for SNA SmartBrief](#)

[Upcoming Meetings & Events](#)

[School Nutrition magazine](#)

[The Journal of Child Nutrition & Management](#)

[The Learning Center](#)



Why Is It Important to Keep Milk on Your Students' Trays?

Milk is packed with 13 essential nutrients that are important for growth and development, including calcium, vitamin D & potassium, 3 of the 4 nutrients the [Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#) found many people, including children are falling short on.

What can you do to ensure that you have nutritious milk to serve as part of your students' healthy meals?

When supply chain issues limit fresh milk options, shelf stable milk is a great choice. Shelf stable (or aseptic) milk is the same milk – just in a different carton.

In fact, shelf stable milk offers:

- ✓ Natural, Real Milk
- ✓ Same Nutritional Value
- ✓ Packaging that acts as a preservative – no need for added preservatives
- ✓ No refrigeration needed during storage.

Store it at an ambient temperature and then chill it the day before service to reach a peak serving temperature of 35 degrees.

For more information and resources on school milk options, please visit [The Dairy Alliance](#) website or contact your local Youth Wellness Manager, Jana Miller, jmiller@thedairyalliance.com 205.410.6988



**THE DAIRY
ALLIANCE**





Congratulations

2023 Equipment Assistance Grant Award Winners

Albertville City

Albertville Elementary



Winston County

Double Springs Elementary



University Charter

University Charter



Tuscaloosa County

Crestmont Elementary

Hale County

Greensboro High

Hale County

Greensboro Elementary

Hale County

Hale County High



Congratulations!



Marcey **Ciecierski** is always encouraging, educating, and praising her CNP staff for the job that they do every day; this positive environment is reflected in the meals that are served and the overall spirit of the kitchen. Marcey and her staff go above and beyond at making lunch a fun, pleasant, and positive experience for the students at Highlands Elementary School.

Ms. Ciesielski has 25 years with Dothan City Schools. She began her career with DCS in 1998 as a Band Teaching Assistant. She served as flag corps and majorette sponsor for many years. In January of 2022 Ms. Ciesielski transferred to CNP Assistant manager and in August of 2023 transferred to CNP Manager at Highlands Elementary.

When Ms. Ciecierski was hired into the Child Nutrition Program, she came with zero experience in CNP. She made it a point to learn the ins and outs of the CNP program; she takes initiative to research the CNP program on her own and then comes to the CNP Director and/or CNP Supervisor with clarification.

Marcey is always presenting ways to improve the CNP Program at her school. She creates an inviting atmosphere for students and communicates well with parents and students through the Highlands Facebook page. She and her staff know the students that come through the cafeteria line and they are aware of students who have special dietary needs.

Marcey has increased lunch participation from an average of 245 meals per day last school year to an average of 380 meals per day this current school year. She began an a la carte menu during the student's lunch period to increase food options offered to her students while also generating revenue for the CNP Program. Marcey excels in this position and that is reflected in the student's happiness and the yummy meals that are prepared daily.



Great Job Marcey!



Clarke County's Child Nutrition Mardi Gras Open House

Please send all submissions for the CNP newsletter to: Penni Jeter, pjeter@alsde.edu
A photo release for any pictures of children sent to ALSDE should be kept on file at the local office.

Soup Recipes for a Warm Winter

[View in Spanish | Veá en español](#)

The soups in Team Nutrition's [Multicultural Child Care Recipe Collection](#) are not only a great way to stay warm this winter but can also introduce children to new foods and flavors. The following recipes are inspired by different cultures and regions of the world and use nutritious ingredients such as cabbage, collard greens, chickpeas, spinach, and sweet potatoes. Click below to get these recipes (6 servings) to try at home or child care!



[Easy Chicken and Egg Noodle Soup](#)
(Asia and Pacific Islands)



[Greens and Beans Soup](#)
(Africa)



[Red Pozole](#)
(Central and South America)

Nutrition Education Connection

Team Nutrition has resources to help Child Nutrition Program (CNP) operators and parents encourage children to explore a variety of foods:

- When your child tries a new food, celebrate with a fun badge from this [Nibbles for Health Newsletter: Tips for a "Choosy" Eater](#).
- Use the [Discover MyPlate Food Cards](#) to teach children about chickpeas, collard greens, and cabbage.
- Read [The Two-Bite Club](#) to inspire young children to try foods from each food group.
- Share this [Score Card](#) from *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* (see page 25) with preschoolers, so they can share their thoughts on new menu items. Find more [Taste-Testing Event Resources](#).
- CNP operators can request free printed copies of certain Team Nutrition materials, while supplies last, at <https://pueblo.gpo.gov/TN/TNPubs.php>.



Training Statistics

Complete by: 6/30/2024



- Hours completed: 12:30
- Hours remaining: 00:00
- Total required hours: 06:00

The USDA Child Nutrition Program's Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool (PSTTT) is designed to assist School Nutrition Professionals in keeping track of their annually required training hours. For additional information on Professional Standards, please visit USDA Professional Standards site at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/professional-standards>.

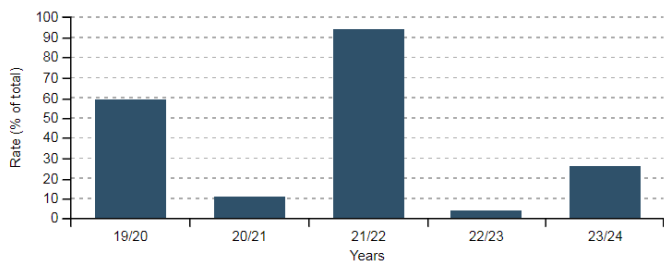
Badges



Congratulations! You've earned a Platinum Badge.



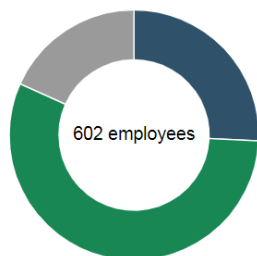
Historical Completion Rate



The Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool (PSTTT) has a new look with graphic images of training statistics. Employee users can quickly view their progress to meet annual training requirements along with their Achievement Badges.

Manager and Director users can view the progress of their employees and historical completion information from previous years.

Employee Training Progress



- All required training hours completed 26%
- At least 50% of training hours completed 56%
- Less than 50% of training hours completed 18%

Team Nutrition appreciates receiving your comments on the PSTTT and works continuously to enhance the user experience. Explore the [Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool](#) today!



BREAK for a PLATE
COMMUNITY

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Office: 334.694.4659
FoodDist@alsde.edu

Community Feeding/Food Distribution

Part of being a community is looking out for one another, making sure needs are met. Often those needs are nutritional. Across the state, there is a program to feed those who would otherwise go hungry.

Food distribution manages and supervises the supply of foods to public schools and other eligible participants in the National School Lunch Program.

Through the program we operate the statewide procurement program as well as manage USDA Foods for the Emergency Food Assistance Program and The Commodity Supplemental Food Program. The state's network of food banks plays a vital role in distributing these food items to those who need them in our communities.

Statewide Procurement Order Guide

To access the current nutritional product guides and specification sheets, please [CLICK HERE](#).

Statewide Procurement, School Orders, and Manufacturer Rebates [EMAIL](#)

Food Banks (TEFAP, CSFP), USDA Foods, DOD, and USDA Rebates [EMAIL](#)



Programs



Participate



Resources



USDA Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity* and sexual orientation*), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#) from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **Mail:** U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue,
SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. **Fax:** (202) 690-7442; or
3. **Email:** program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

*The enclosed "non discrimination" language herein was added pursuant to the May 5, 2022, USDA memorandum. However, although included as currently required for audit compliance by the USDA, the State of Alabama objects to its **inclusion, applicability** and the **application** of this language due to currently pending legal challenges in the matter of *The State of Tennessee, et al. v. USDA, et al.*, Case No. 3:22-cv-00257, and may be subject to change or removal.

