



North Dakota SNA Newsletter



President's Message

Hello, NDSNA Members,

Welcome back to the 2024-2025 school year! I hope you all had a relaxing summer and are ready for another exciting school year.



I'd like to take a moment to introduce myself. I was born and raised in Minot, ND, and after graduating from Concordia College in Moorhead, MN with a BS in Food Nutrition Dietetics and Exercise Science, I spent several years in healthcare. In 2009, I discovered my passion for School Nutrition, and I'm proud to say this marks my 17th year as a Director!

As I step into my role as president, I'm reminded of the incredible strength of our NDSNA community. Working alongside our Board of Directors and all of you is a true honor.

This past summer, I had the privilege of planning our state conference in Fargo, where we enjoyed educational sessions, inspiring speakers, and a fantastic Food Show. It was a wonderful opportunity to connect with peers from across the state. Allison is already hard at work planning next year's conference in Bismarck, and I hope to see everyone there!

Thank you for your dedication to providing nutritious meals for our students. Here's to a fantastic school year ahead!

Ivy Thorson
Nutrition Services Director
Minot Public Schools
NDSNA President 2024-2025

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Legislative Update - Fall 2024

Welcome Back for the 2024-2025 School Year!

As we dive into another busy legislative year, preparations for the “State 200” initiative, approved during the 2023 session, are well underway. With \$6 million allocated to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) for this program, it's crucial to stay proactive to either maintain or expand funding in the upcoming legislative session. This initiative is designed to support the working middle class, and we need to ensure its continued success.

A committee has been formed, including school board members, child nutrition directors, FRAC, Great Plains Food Bank, and various local entities. We're drafting a new bill and actively seeking additional committee members, particularly till operators who witness firsthand how students benefit from this legislation, as well as parents who have directly experienced its positive impact. If you or someone you know is interested, please reach out to me at the contact information below.



Additionally, I encourage you to visit the School Nutrition Association (SNA) website to stay informed about federal bills related to child nutrition, such as those addressing unpaid meal debt, Medicaid certification, and increased funding for CEP schools. If there's a bill you believe deserves our legislators' attention, don't hesitate to voice your support! <https://schoolnutrition.quorum.us/USBills>

Wishing you a wonderful 2024-2025 school year! Thank you for your continued dedication and all the hard work you do each day to support our students.



Michelle Wagner, RD, SNS
Child Nutrition Program Director
Bismarck Public Schools
NDSNA Legislative Chair
michelle_wagner@bismarckschools.org
701-323-4089

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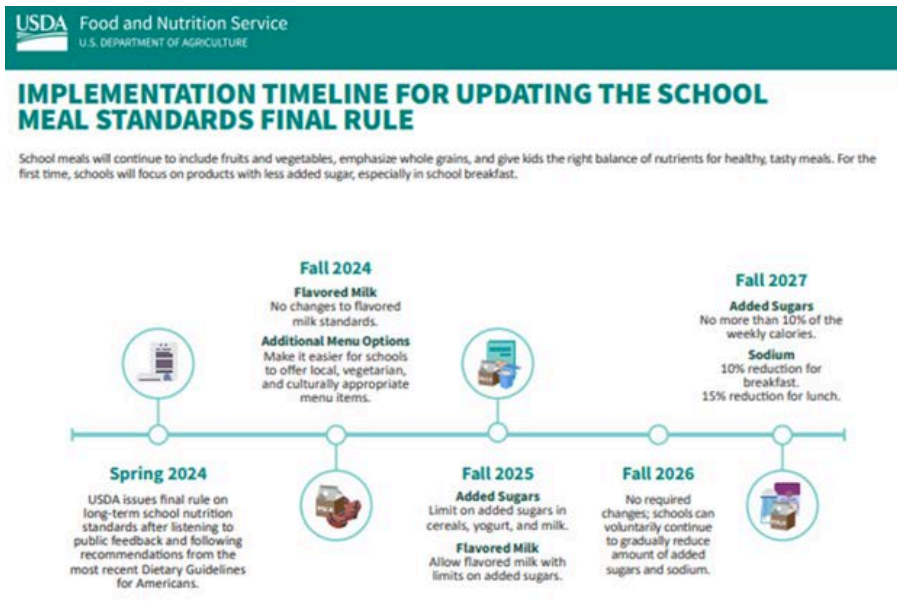


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Nutrition Standard Changes

Greetings! I hope you all have had a wonderful start to your 24-25 school year. By now, I imagine you are all aware of the nutrition standard changes that are being made to the school breakfast and lunch programs in the coming years. The biggest implementation being a reduction in sugar at breakfast. If you need a refresher of the guideline updates, below is a link and timeline from the USDA. Initially, you will need to take a look at your breakfast cereals, yogurts, and milk and see what items are in compliance and what items you may need to remove. I highly encourage you to take a look at your menus and start slowly implementing changes. Gradual removal of some of the higher sugar items will make the fall of 2025 and coming years so much easier on you as food service professionals and the students. If your school participates in grab and go breakfasts to the classroom, this may make things a little more challenging. However, take the time to have team meetings and strategize what you can do and work with your vendors on options. Can you offer an omelette with a cracker pack or sausage pancakes on a stick to reduce sugar content? Even trying to change one day a month in your cycle menus this year can alleviate the challenges you face in the coming years. This will also ease your students into the change. The goal being that they don't even notice because you've been making small changes now.

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/school-nutrition-standards-updates>



Kydra Zach, LRD, CDM, CFP
Nutrition Supervisor
Fargo Public Schools
NDSNA Nutrition Standards Chair

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Meet the Presidents!

Ivy Thorson

NDSNA President 2024-2025

Role at School/Job Title/Location: *Nutrition Services Director, Minot Public Schools*

Hometown: *Minot, ND*

Family: *My husband Corey and three kids, Grant, Tait, and Elle*

Pets: *Yellow Lab, Mox and a Golden Retriever, Charlie*

What do you do when you're not at school?

Watch my kids in their activities and bake

What is your favorite place to vacation or adventure?

I love going to the lake

What activities did you participate in, in high school?

Cheerleading

What was your favorite childhood TV show?

Saved by the Bell

What is your favorite store to shop at?

Nordstrom

What is your favorite restaurant?

La Famiglia Giorgio's Restaurant

What is your favorite sports team?

Vikings

If you could only eat one school lunch the rest of your life, what would it be?

Tacos

What is the funniest/kindest thing a student has ever said to you?

A Kindergarten student asked me how I got the bone in the chicken drumstick? He had never had one!



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Meet the Presidents!

Allison Grabow

NDSNA President-Elect 2024-2025

Role at School/Job Title/Location: *Kitchen Manager, Will-Moore Elementary School, Bismarck Public Schools*

Hometown: *New London, WI*

Family: *Married with two boys (junior in high school/freshman in college)*

Pets: *A vizsla named Rocket!*

What do you do when you're not at school?

Curling - primarily taking my kids to their competitive events as they seek a berth to Nationals and Worlds. I also play locally on leagues.

What is your favorite place to vacation or adventure?

Anywhere that allows me to relax comfortably outside with few people around. A secluded cabin in the summer is PERFECT!

What activities did you participate in, in high school? *I played Volleyball and was a part of the Forensics Team and Band.*

What was your favorite childhood TV show?

Full House, Wonder Years, Golden Girls

What is your favorite store to shop at?

Costco and Old Navy

What is your favorite restaurant?

Most Thai places are on the top of my list!

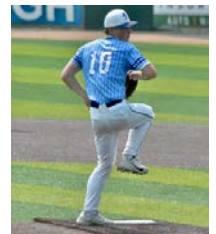
What is your favorite sports team?

Milwaukee Brewers

If you could only eat one school lunch the rest of your life, what would it be?

Orange Chicken with Rice and Edamame

What is the funniest/kindest thing a student has ever said to you? *The hugs and smiles keep me going everyday!*



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Meet the Presidents!

Sam Jonckowski

NDSNA Vice President 2024-2025

Role at School/Job Title/Location:

*West Fargo Public Schools - Food Service
Operations Supervisor*

Hometown: *Browerville, MN*

Family: *Hubby Brandon, parents Jim and Karen,
siblings Erica, Melissa, Dan, and Vanessa,
in-laws, and 10 nieces and nephews.*

Pets: *Our dog, Copper*

What do you do when you're not at school?

*Spend time at our camper, woodworking or
refurbishing furniture, pickleball, and
socializing with friends.*

**What is your favorite place to vacation or
adventure?** *Disney!!!*

**What activities did you participate in, in
high school?** *Golf, choir, and band.*

What was your favorite childhood TV show?
Probably Sponge Bob?

What is your favorite store to shop at?
So many! Love to shop and browse.

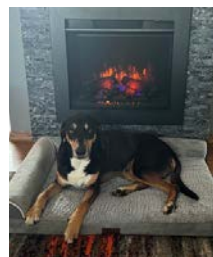
What is your favorite restaurant?
Silver Spike and Hen House are our go to's.

What is your favorite sports team? *Vikings!*

**If you could only eat one school lunch the
rest of your life, what would it be?**
Hotdog or chicken Philly.

**What is the funniest/kindest thing a student
has ever said to you?**

"Wow, you're really chef-ing it up!"



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ND SNA Leadership Journey

Leadership Isn't One Size Fits All

As this year's president-elect, I was asked to write an article about leadership. My experience with leadership is different than many on our board. I am the head cook in an elementary kitchen in Bismarck, ND. This is my eighth school year at my school and my sixth year with NDSNA on the board.

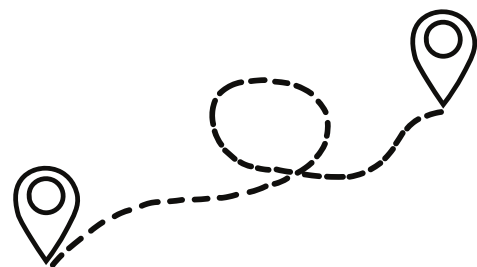
Leadership can come in so many forms. I have learned to lead by example. A person does not have to be a director of a program to show leadership skills. At my school, I provide education to the staff and teachers, to the students, and to the staff person in my kitchen. As a leader, I listen to the needs of those around me and make sure that the information gets to the right department or person. I truly believe that if you own your position, you are a leader within that position and can offer expertise to those who are not familiar with the details in your line of work. I advocate for my students and staff and ensure their voices are heard.

Within NDSNA, I began as Membership Chair. I helped with questions from potential members and kept the board informed about our membership stats. I eventually was elected as Secretary, followed by Vice President. I am now in the position of President-Elect and will be President after next year's State Conference. Leading the board and the state in Child Nutrition is a journey of its own! I am always looking to find ways to connect our kitchens across the state, to help where needed, and to bring new information to the state and my school that I learn at the National Level via conferences and webinars. There is always something to be learned. My goal at NDSNA is to find more people in MY position (working leader IN a kitchen) to join the board. We are the ones who know what is going on day-to-day in our schools and we can provide valuable information to our directors and leaders within our district and state.

Leadership can mean directing a program, managing a staff, managing a kitchen, and owning a role within your job description. It all matters. It is all important. Thank you to all of you for what you do! Everyone has a role to play, and I celebrate every one of you! Thank you for making a difference!



Allison Grabow
Kitchen Manager
Will-Moore Elementary
Bismarck Public Schools
NDSNA President-Elect, 2024-2025



Let your voice be heard. If you are interested in joining the Board, please head to the NDSNA website and use the Contact Us form under the Board of Directors link.

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ND DPI Update

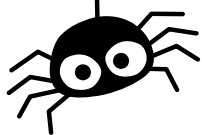
Happy Fall, Y'all. School is in full swing, and continuing the swing are the celebrations around school food. October has its fair share with Halloween, National School Lunch Week, October 14 through the 18th, and a month-long Farm to School and Crunch off activities.

We appreciate seeing and hearing about your activities. I, for one, miss the hustle and bustle in the kitchen and nudging kids to take the meal. We already have one submission from Karen Krump, the re-nowned Food Service Director at Richland County High School in Colfax.

Karen went all out to get hungry kids in the spirit with window décor, signage, and 'helping hands'. Thanks, Karen, for the awesome effort!



Rhonda Amundson
ND Department of Public Instruction
NDSNA DPI Chair



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Fond Farewells and Happy Hellos

On October 4, we bid Congratulations and Happy Retirement to long-time DPI Child Nutrition and Food Distribution Director Linda Schloer. Linda had been with Child Nutrition and Food Distribution for more than 25 years. She oversaw the implementation of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids new meal patterns, led us through the COVID-19 years, added the Summer EBT program payments, and hired all but one of your CNFD team. Stepping up to her duties is Lynelle Johnson, formerly the Food Service Director at Williston and previously Jamestown. Lynelle says she is 'drinking from a firehose' right now, learning the ropes for all the new reports, feeling her way around the fiscal side, and directing the department's activities.

Kayla Ekart has been hired (sans Linda) to fill out the DPI Child Nutrition and Food Distribution section. Kayla comes to us from Bismarck Public Schools, where she served as the English Learner Coordinator. She has been learning the meal patterns but has a special set of skills to help us with some of the Civil Rights language issues and eligibility groups. She is now a proud, card-carrying SNA/NDSNA member.

Thank You for Being a School Nutrition Professional!

We are grateful for the hard work, the kind words, and the hours of preparation that you put into your students and their meals. We are blessed to work with you. Please contact us anytime you have questions or concerns: dpicnfd@nd.gov or 1-701- 328-2294

thank you

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Mountain Plains Crunch Off Contest-Celebrating Farm to School the Entire Month of October

We hope all schools are making plans to join us in competing for the ‘Crunch Off’ title of the Mountain Plains region. North Dakota has come in second place in this Farm to School event the past three years and one of the ideas to get a really big crunch was to hold an event at the local football game. The North Dakota Corn Growers Association really upped their game with a ‘Corn Nuts’ crunch along with a shucking contest between Bob the Cob and the cheerleading squad. Bob couldn’t compete against the nimble-fingered cheerleaders at the game. The corn nuts, along with all the education provided by both the Dept of Agriculture and the Corn Growers, helped almost 5,000 people crunch into local food and celebrate Farm to School.



Continued....

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Register your “Crunch” event at the link below. Registration closes on October 31.

North Dakota Dept of Agriculture is giving away a free Ag in the Classroom package for the most creative Crunch Off event this year! Here are the details:

- Read the details on hosting a crunch off event here: <https://www.ndda.nd.gov/crunch>
- Register your crunch off event here: <https://forms.office.com/g/Dpg9CGvUaf>
- Take a picture of your event and email to kmhanenberg@nd.gov. Make sure to include your name, grade, school, and the details of why your event was so unique and should win!
- The winner will be selected by mid-November.
- What will you win? A teacher pack full of Ag in the Classroom materials and project supplies plus Fresh from North Dakota products for your classroom to sample!



USDA-Mountain Plains Crunch Off at Dakota Stage in Bismarck.



Katie Johnke BBPH and Jan Stankiewicz NDSU Extension

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Bismarck Public Schools served local cucumbers from Dwight Duke from Skyline Ranch in Hensler, ND and Judy Hagerott from Grannies Goodies just outside of Mandan! Between Dwight and Judy, they have provided BPS with over 1 ton of fresh cucumbers! It takes over 300 pounds of cucumbers to serve BPS almost 5000 elementary students! From late August to early October, they have processed over 2000 pounds, a ton, feeding over 10,000 BPS students! Bismarck Public Schools will also be featuring these cucumbers in their crunch off!



Mohall Public Schools - Harvest of the Month 'Corn' Coloring!



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'Fresh From North Dakota Week' at Grand Forks and Bismarck Public Schools



FRESH

FROM

NORTH DAKOTA



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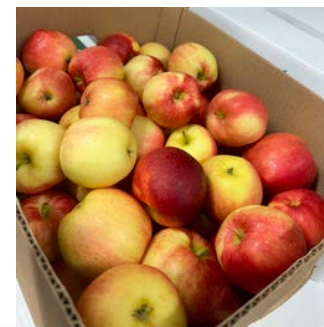
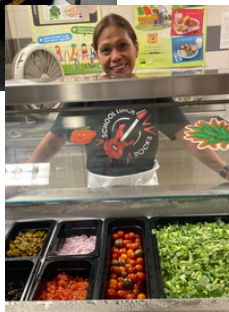


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Local Corn, Tomatoes, and Squash from 'Farm in the Dell' and Apples from 'Country Blossom Farm' Served at West Fargo Public Schools!



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New Kitchen Manager Training

The 'New Kitchen Manager Training' was held in Bismarck at the Capitol Building this past July and was hosted by NDDPI. Kim Sauer, Lisbon Public Schools new Kitchen Manager this year, attended this training. She joined Lisbon Public Schools last year as a full-time cook. She moved to Lisbon from Fargo with her husband and 4 kids to a farm 5 miles east of Lisbon. Her children were homeschooled by her, and now they all attend public school and love it! From city to farm and homeschool to public school; her kiddos love that she is at the school each day with them. Kim has been a wonderful addition to the team in Lisbon. Jennifer Hehn is Lisbon's Food Service Director and Kim's sister-in-law! The 'New Kitchen Managers Training' was very valuable to both Kim and Jennifer and helped set them up for success this school year!



Grant Opportunities



The ND Youth Correctional Center received a new proofer/heater cabinet under the Team Nutrition Grant for Small Equipment. Employees Charlie Benson, JayDeen Huus, and Loren Wagner participated in the Master the Menu Training.

We have a link to 'The Lunchbox' on our NDSNA website under the resources tab. There are links to a multitude of grants when they come available.
<https://www.thelunchbox.org/>

USDA Team Nutrition may also have more opportunities this new school year.
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/team-nutrition-training-grants>

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Team Bismarck at the SNA Annual National Conference in Boston

Over 3000 members, from across the country, gathered for 3 days to listen to inspirational and motivating breakouts from districts large and small.



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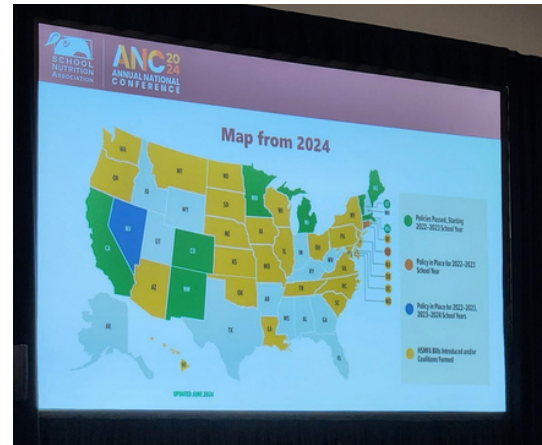


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Team Bismarck at the SNA Annual National Conference in Boston



Team ND

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Team Bismarck at the SNA Annual National Conference in Boston



We also experienced the food show with 100's of industry representatives showcasing the latest trends in school nutrition. Here we met 'Duke' from Busch's Baked Beans. Yes, he is real!



Jose Hernandez shared his incredible journey on how he became an engineer then later an astronaut for NASA. He developed the first full-field digital mammography imaging system, which is now used to help detect early stages of breast cancer. His 2012 autobiography *Reaching for the Stars: The Inspiring Story of a Migrant Farmworker Turned Astronaut* was adapted to a movie titled 'A Million Miles Away'.

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NDSNA State Conference Recap

The NDSNA state conference was held in Fargo this past June at the Hilton Garden Inn. The conference was a success with many wonderful speakers, networking, 'The Feud' game show, and a great food show!



Guest speaker Joe Petit celebrated Lois Scott from Grand Forks Public Schools on her being the longest serving child nutrition professional in the room! She received Joe's book as a gift! 😊



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Nominate a School Nutrition Professional Today!

It's time to recognize outstanding employees in the office and in the kitchen. Start thinking now about your employees and their contributions that they have made to school nutrition. Are they motivating? Have they accomplished something for you or the district? What challenge have they helped you to overcome? Do you have someone who is great with new employees? Do you have someone who came up with a new idea and/or system to improve workplace efficiency? Do you have a top performer who continues to hustle for you, and you need them to take a bow? Do you have someone who always shows up, is always willing to learn and catches on quickly? Do you have someone who bends over backwards for their colleagues and students? If any of these examples brings someone to mind, then get on that nomination today!

The SNA award categories are:

1. **Employee of the Year Award** - this award recognizes non-managerial school nutrition employees for the contribution they have made throughout their school nutrition career.
2. **Manager of the Year Award** - this is in honor of Louise Sublette and recognizes school nutrition managers for the contributions they have made throughout their school nutrition career.
3. **Director of the Year Award** - recognizes school nutrition directors for the contributions they have made throughout their school nutrition career.
4. **National Industry Member of the Year Award** - recognizes the outstanding contributions of industry members who demonstrate exemplary support to SNA, SNA members, and their professional communities nationwide.

Individuals for these awards may be nominated by their peers, staff, colleagues, or supervisors. All nominees must be SNA members who hold an SNA Certificate in School Nutrition or the SNS credential throughout the entire awards nomination and judging process.

Award winners will receive the following:

- **State winners will receive a certificate.**
- **Regional winners will receive a pin, a certificate and \$50.00.**
- **National winners will receive a plaque and an all-expenses paid trip to ANC, worth up to \$1,000.**

So, start thinking about those employees who have demonstrated commitment to the school nutrition profession and get those nominations in. Go to schoolnutrition.org. Then hover over 'Resources' and click 'Awards & Scholarships' – click on the award you need – on the right side of the page, you will see 'Link to Apply' – click on this and begin the nomination.

Nominations are due by March 1, 2024.



Wendy Mankie

Child Nutrition Director
Grand Forks Public Schools
NDSNA Awards Chair



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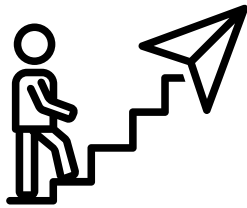


Professional Standards



Anyone who is ready to demonstrate their commitment to the school nutrition profession, here you go! Getting certified through the School Nutrition Association (SNA) is possible. Just log onto schoolnutrition.org and begin your training today! It's easy to track the CEU's you have completed. Just download a PDF document of your certificates!

<https://schoolnutrition.org/careers-training/professional-development/>
<https://www.pathlms.com/sna>



There are many ways to earn your CEU's:

- Nutrition
- Operations
- Administration
- Communication and Marketing

All the courses must fall under one of the 4 key areas:

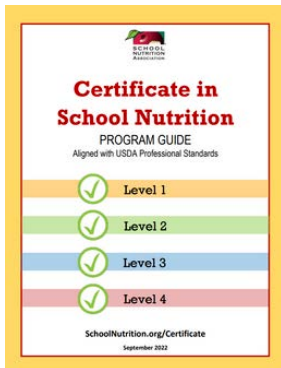
- Webinars
- Workshops
- Conferences
- On-line Courses
- Professional Development Articles

All the courses must fall under one of the 4 key areas:

- Nutrition
- Operations
- Administration
- Communication and Marketing

We currently have 49 certified members in levels 1 through 4

- Level 1 - **20** members
- Level 2 - **18** members
- Level 3 - **2** members
- Level 4 - **9** members



There are also many options available for CEU's through the Institute of Child Nutrition!

www.theicn.org



Any questions, please contact:

Cindy Wall

Jamestown School District
NDSNA Professional Development Chair
Cindy.Wall@k12.nd.us



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Become a ND Star Member

The School Nutrition Association (SNA) is the strong organization it is today because of members like you who recognize the value of SNA membership and the benefits it provides to your career, your school nutrition programs and the children you serve. You can help build the future of SNA by recruiting new members and retaining existing members. In recognition of your recruiting and retention efforts you will become part of SNA's exclusive Star Club!

How Does SNA's Star Club Work?

The Star Club is SNA's way of recognizing and thanking members who recruit and retain SNA members. Each time a new member writes your name in the referral section of the membership application form you receive one credit, plus you get an additional credit every year they renew. Credits don't expire, so once you have three credits you become a Star Club Member for as long as you are an active SNA national member.

How Star Club Credits Grow

You accumulate credits when you recruit new members and get them to renew each year. For example if you recruit 3 members this year, get all 3 to renew next year and recruit 4 more new members, you will have 10 credits in two years and become a Bronze Star.

Star Club Levels

Level Star Club Credits

- Star Club Member 3
- Bronze Star 10
- Silver Star 50
- Gold Star 100
- Platinum Star 150
- Diamond Star 250

Star Club Recognition

As a member of SNA's Star Club, you will be recognized for your hard work and recruiting efforts throughout the year and at SNA meetings, including special recognition at the Annual National Conference. In addition, you will also receive a gift of appreciation each time you reach the next Star Club level.

Follow the link below for more info on how to recruit SNA members and become a Star Member!

<https://schoolnutrition.org/about-us/sna-membership/membership-recruitment/>
<https://schoolnutrition.org/about-us/sna-membership/membership-recruitment/star-club/>

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Current ND Star Members!



- Joann Carik
- Janet Danks
- Deb Egeland
- Joanne Geinert
- Gina Harder
- Maureen Harmon
- Becky Heinert
- Cindy Hogenson
- Lynelle Johnson
- Martha Kapaun
- Mary Nistler
- Dana Rieth
- Linda Schloer
- Lois Scott
- Jana Ternes
- Barb Uhrich
- Michelle Wagner



Any questions, please contact:

Jennifer Hehn
Food Service Director
Lisbon Public Schools
NDSNA Membership Chair
jennifer.hehn@k12.nd.us



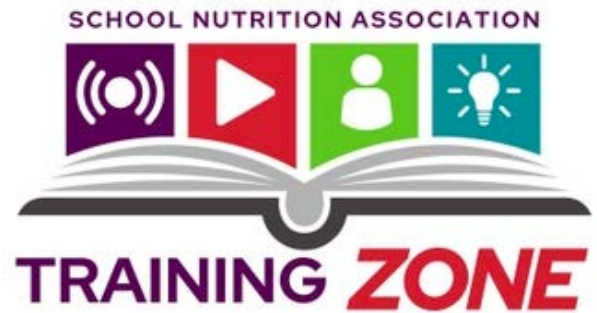
Top 6 Reasons to Join SNA

- 1 Free Training**
 Free live and on-demand webinars at your fingertips on The Training Zone
- 2 Meetings & Events**
 Unparalleled in-person & virtual networking & professional development opportunities
- 3 Advocacy in Action**
 Unyielding efforts to provide a voice for school nutrition at the state and national levels
- 4 Career Advancement**
 The ability to grow professionally with Certificate & Credentialing programs
- 5 School Nutrition Magazine**
 A subscription to SNA's award-winning publication and other timely news you need
- 6 Marketing & PR Resources**
 An array of tools to promote and grow your school meals program

Membership starts with **ME**
#supportSNA

SNA membership is a smart investment for you and your program.

Become a member today at www.schoolnutrition.org/join



LEARN EDUCATE ADVANCE DEVELOP

LEAd to succeed™

Self-Paced Training

- › Communications for Impact Series
- › Leadership Growth Series
- › Adult Learning Series
- › LEAD en Español

FREE

SNF SCHOOL NUTRITION FOUNDATION

Current Industry Members



Gold Level:

- Baker Boy
- Conagra
- J & J Snack Foods
- McCain
- National Food Group
- Pepsi
- Peterson Farms
- Schwan's



Silver Level:

- General Mills
- Great Northern Baking Co
- PrimeroEdge



Bronze Level:

- Cashwa Distributing
- Daly and Deroma
- Nardone's
- Tyson
- Vander & Landgraf, Inc

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Allison Grabow
Bismarck Public Schools
allison_grabow@bismarckschools.org



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Interested in Serving On the Board?

NDSNA is always on the lookout for those who would like to serve on the board, help on committees, or just help at our annual conference!
If you are interested, please contact any board member.

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