

How to use the SNA Legislative Tool Kit

The School Nutrition Association Public Policy and Legislative Committee is pleased to present the 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, as well as 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 these 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.

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.

U.S. Congress: 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.

Resolutions: A sample resolution from California is provided for your information.

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.

Allied Organizations: Use this area to identify organizations that are sympathetic to SNA's issues. Share this information with others so they know the right people to contact when the need arises.

The Legislative 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.