

Georgia School Nutrition Association

Nutrition Advisory Council

Handbook



**Georgia School
Nutrition Association**

*Building Healthy Children,
Ready to Learn*



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SECTION 1

SNA/NAC HISTORY

The School Nutrition Association (SNA) (formerly ASFSA) was established in 1946 (the same year school lunches were mandated by the government) and currently has approximately 55,000 members across the United States. Members work in the school foodservice profession and are dedicated to the advancement of child nutrition causes.

Working for children is the Georgia School Nutrition Association's (GSNA) first priority. GSNA was founded in 1951. GSNA members work in schools with students on a daily basis. They want to keep up to date on students' concerns and ideas regarding school meals and nutrition.

Nutrition Advisory Councils (NACs) were formed in 1973 based on the idea that students should have an active role in their school meals programs. NACs offered a forum where ideas could be exchanged for the benefit of all people involved, including teachers and students. The first national committee consisted of seven students representing each of the Association's regions (Mideast, Northeast Southeast, Midwest, Northwest, Southwest, and West). Over the years, the NAC program encouraged individual districts and schools to form local NACs and participate in a national competition. In Fall 2003, however, the formal program administered by SNA was discontinued.

This Handbook is an updated version of the previous NAC Handbook. Although SNA is no longer sponsoring a national NAC program, the Association encourages schools to continue forming them. These groups are a great way to teach students all there is to know about nutrition.

The Georgia School Nutrition Association continues to sponsor the NAC program in Georgia. GSNA offers grants to affiliated NAC chapters to help them fund activities throughout the school year. GSNA also sponsors a NAC Art Contest each year and encourages its affiliated chapters to apply for the NAC of the Year Award.

For additional information about any of the NAC activities please contact the GSNA Headquarters office at 770-934-8890/800-543-2023 (inside GA).

SECTION 2



GSNA/SNA MEMBERSHIP

GSNA and SNA membership keeps you up to date on what's new in school foodservice and nutrition and provides you with educational and networking opportunities to increase the value and effectiveness of your NAC program. As a NAC advisor, consider becoming a member of GSNA and SNA if you are not already. For more information about membership, contact the GSNA Member Services department at 770-934-8890 / (800) 543-2023 and request membership information.

NUTRITION ADVISORY COUNCILS ARE

Effective communicators
Nutrition minded
Enthusiastic
Result oriented
Good examples
Excellent public relations agents
Teachers
Idea oriented
Cooperative



GROUP STRUCTURE

When forming your group, you should have a general idea of how you want it to be structured. Here are some questions you can ask yourself:

- ❖ How many students should be in the group?
- ❖ Do you want to limit the size of the group?
- ❖ What are the criteria for membership?
- ❖ How should the group be governed?
- ❖ By students or by advisor?
- ❖ Do you want the group to have officers?
- ❖ Should they be elected or appointed?
- ❖ What are the criteria for being appointed?
- ❖ What are the responsibilities of each officer?
- ❖ How to establish voting procedures?

❖ How do you want to organize tasks? (committee, group, individual)



How often should the group meet? (weekly, biweekly, monthly, as needed)



HELPFUL HINTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL NUTRITION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Commitment

School nutrition personnel must have a commitment to continually strive to improve the foodservice program. They must recognize that student involvement through NACs is one of the best means for accomplishing the desired results.

Staff Involvement

Support from the school principal, teachers and administration is a key ingredient to organizing a successful NAC. Schedule a meeting with the principal to give a general overview of the foodservice operation.

Breaking the Ice

Hold a promotional meeting to define the purposes of the NAC. Obtain input from all interested persons, including the principal, adult advisor, foodservice manager, foodservice director and students. An open mind and an open channel of communication are essential for a successful NAC.

Representation

Determine the make up of the NAC. A diverse group of students should be represented in the group. Develop a method of recruiting and retaining members.

Organizational Meeting

After the group is formed, have a meeting to establish operational procedures. Many NAC organizations have a constitution that outlines the purpose, selection and election of officers for meetings and other operating procedures.

Goals

After establishing procedural details, NAC members need to set realistic goals and objectives. Be sure to set both long-and short-term goals. Also, a plan of action should be developed that outlines specific activities, assigns responsibilities to NAC members and establishes time lines for accomplishment.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the results of NAC activities is an ongoing process. It is important for adults to lend the support and guidance that students need to help make intelligent decisions. Most importantly, adults must follow through in addressing and/or implementing recommended changes.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Establish goals and objectives at the beginning of each year. Then, an action plan should be developed that outlines specific activities, assigns responsibilities to NAC members and establishes time lines for accomplishment.

Have a master plan.

What do you want to accomplish this year? In three years?

What do you need to do to reach those goals?

- Make sure you set realistic attainable goals and be ambitious. However, you must realize your limitations. If you set overly lofty goals, you and the students may become discouraged when you are not able to realize the goals.

MEETINGS

To help your student officers to lead smooth meetings, each meeting should have an agenda. Below is a suggestion for a possible agenda:

AGENDA

Call Meeting to Order
Opening Remarks
Officer or Committee
Reports

Speakers or Special Guests

Old Business

New Business
General Comments

Closing Remarks
Adjourn Meeting

TIPS

Maybe a poem, thought for the day, current news events about nutrition

As appropriate, officer gives a brief overview of what they have been working on since the last meeting

Presentations can be made by speakers; foodservice staff can organize taste testing.

Ongoing projects or events, issues not resolved at previous meeting

Proposals, upcoming events, elections if necessary
Group members can voice their opinions or give suggestions on topics



HOW TO KEEP NUTRITION ADVISORY COUNCILS GOING

Assess Needs

Set Goals

Establish Objectives

Plan Activities

Evaluate

SECTION 3

NUTRITION ADVISORY COUNCIL ADVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Personal

- a. Believe students are your best teammates.

- b. Be pleasant, relaxed and receptive to improvement through change.
- c. Be willing to listen and accept constructive criticism.

Administration

- a. Show your school administration the need for a NAC.
 - 1. Observe serving line and time.
 - 2. Observe eating area condition.
 - 3. Observe plate waste.
 - 4. Discuss menu options with students.
- b. Keep administration constantly informed of the NAC's purpose and results.



Students

- a. Help students focus on their school nutrition program goals and how to achieve them.
- b. Discuss the structure of school meal programs.
- c. Look at the positive changes in school food service.
- d. Assist in planning and coordinating programs and meetings.

Nutrition Advisory Council Chairperson/Co-Chairperson or President

- a. Give advice, counsel and professional expertise in organizing the NAC.
- b. Act as a liaison between your school group and the state association.
- c. Serve as a supervisor over group events.
- d. Help make arrangements for NAC activities.

SECTION 4

NUTRITION ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Personal

- a. Examine your school's foodservice program; identify which aspects of the program are liked and well received and those that are not.
- b. Set priorities, create an agenda and establish attainable goals.

- c. In school, serve as a liaison between students, school foodservice professionals and the administration.

Advisor

- a. Work with the group's advisors to achieve overall objectives for the group.
- b. Develop well-rounded, well-planned programming with the advisors.

Peers, Faculty and Community

- a. Educate faculty and fellow students about the important role school foodservice can play in the health of each student in the areas of:
 - 1. Athletic performance
 - 2. Academic achievement
 - 3. Personal well-being
 - 4. Productivity
- b. Consult with fellow students to find out the strengths and weaknesses of the school nutrition program and get ideas on how to improve the program.
- c. When presented with plans or suggestions from the student body, school foodservice personnel or fellow group members, investigate all options.
- d. Establish relations with community and business leaders.
- e. Help include students in decisions regarding school meals, so they understand that the program is for them.

Miscellaneous

- a. Create and maintain a school nutrition calendar of events.
- b. Plan special events and projects in the cafeteria to make it a center for educational programs and an integral part of the school.



SECTION 5

GROUP ACTIVITIES



National School Lunch Week

National School Lunch Week (NSLW) is an annual event that takes place during the second week in October. This is a great time for your group to promote school lunch to fellow students and the community. You can promote school lunch by hosting some of SNA's suggested activities or think of your own ideas.

National School Breakfast Week (NSBW)

National School Breakfast Week is an annual event, similar to NSLW that takes place during the first full week in March. Again, you may use activities SNA suggests to promote school breakfast or create some of your own. Promotional materials for NSLW & NSBW also

can be purchased through the SNA's Emporium catalog or on the Web at www.schoolnutrition/emporium.org.

Menu Planning

Students and school nutrition personnel can meet together to discuss menu options. They can exchange ideas regarding what the students like and dislike and how to improve the school meals program.

Taste Testing

Taste testing is a great way to survey how much or little the students like a particular product in the school meals program. It can be a helpful guide to future menu planning. It's also a fun way for students to get involved in menu planning. Students can give their opinions and suggestions about the products. You can arrange for sample products through various distributors and companies. Tell them what you are doing and they probably will be excited to help.

Industry Facility Tours

Students can learn different aspects of the foodservice industry, from production and packaging to marketing. Contact local companies, businesses, restaurants, etc. and arrange a tour.

School Kitchen Tour

Set aside an afternoon to show how the school meals program is run. Show the students all of the behind-the-scenes ins and outs of their school foodservice program.

Parents/Seniors Day



Invite parents and/or senior citizens to share breakfast or lunch with students. This is a great way to promote school food programs in the community and gain support.

Food Drives

Collect non-perishable foods and donate them to a local charity. Holiday seasons are a great time to kick off a food drive campaign.

School Assembly on Nutrition

Get the entire school involved by holding a fun and educational assembly about child nutrition or any other topic related to health, wellness, food, nutrition and so on. You can use the list of general contacts for help in getting information and contacting possible speakers. School foodservice professionals, doctors, dentists, nurses or nutritionists can be great speakers.

Classroom Presentation on Child Nutrition

Use posters, role-playing, speakers, taste testing, etc., to make a presentation in the classroom.

Survey Students about School Foodservice Programs



Surveys about the school nutrition program can be handed out to the students to fill out. You could also recruit small groups and ask them each series of questions in order to obtain feedback.

Guest Speakers

Guest speakers may be a welcomed addition to NAC meetings or to assemblies.

Decorate the Dining Area

Student art, fresh paint, posters, lights, rearranged tables, wallpaper, and other decorations can make the cafeteria a fun environment. Be creative! Hold an art contest and display the winners' artwork in the dining area. Playing music in the cafeteria also might help improve the atmosphere.

Gain Some Independence

Conduct a “make your own sandwich day,” setting aside areas for self-serve items and condiments, encourage your school to use a salad bar or buffet.

Write a Newsletter or an Article in the School Newspaper

Get the word out about child nutrition. Students and staff could write articles for a NAC newsletter. Print up flyers for students, faculty and parents with important information about child nutrition. Legislative updates would help to draw attention to state and national child nutrition issues. A NAC column can be added to the school newspaper and/or to the local or state school foodservice publication. Let the local media (newspapers, TV stations, radio stations) know about NAC-sponsored events. Getting local media coverage helps increase

public interest and makes your school and group look great! Let people know about the good things your group is doing!

Recycling Program

Investigate what would be involved in setting up a program to recycle bottles, milk cartons and other recyclables. This can be an excellent way to gain support from other school groups.



Let Everyone Know Who You Are

Arrange for custom T-shirts, pens, pencils, stationary, bumper stickers, buttons and decals, etc. Be visible in school and in the community. Items also could be sold as a fundraiser.

Develop a Healthy Eating Program

Work with the school nutritionist and school foodservice personnel to develop and distribute special diet and nutrition suggestion information sheets; develop low-fat and low-calorie menus; and work with the physical education department in developing activities and training programs. Examine current dietary habits and discuss together how they can be improved.

Bulletin Board

Display a large bulletin board in the cafeteria or another highly visible place in the school and post menu information, program updates, best-buy meals and nutrition information. Be sure to decorate and change displays periodically.

FUNDRAISERS

Bake Sales

Hold bake sales after school, at the community center or at school athletic events.

Car Washes

Collect donations or charge a fee.

Sale of Merchandise

Sell various items such as pens, pencils, T-shirts, buttons, bumper stickers, etc. in school or at athletic events.

Thons (Bowl-a-thon, run-a-thon, walk-a-thon, skate-a-thon etc)

Have people sponsor participants for the "thon." For example, for a bowl-a-thon request a sum for every pin knocked down or for a strike,

etc., for every hour you walk, etc.

NAC-A-Gram

0Sell and deliver different color carnations or candy with a note from friend or secret admirer attached.

Paper Drive

Work with your local recycling center or newspaper. Collect used papers or bottles to turn in for reimbursement.

Games

Host a faculty vs. group member event. Examples: basketball, volleyball, swim meet, softball, tennis, etc. or challenge them to a board game or a trivia contest.

Sponsor a School Dance

Charge a small admittance fee or have everyone bring canned food or old clothing to donate to a local charity on behalf of the school NAC.



Sponsor a Nutrition Week

The week can be filled with lots of activities, games, contests, nutrition information, special menus, etc.

Spirit Links

Example: Sell colored paper links for 5¢ to each class or grade level. Display links in the cafeteria, and the class with the most links wins for the most spirit. Try contacting local merchants to donate prizes.

SECTION 6

GSNA NAC ACTIVITIES

GSNA NAC Grant

GSNA awards a grant of \$50.00 to a maximum of 10 NAC groups each year. The grants will be awarded to help fund a local NAC project. The NAC group must be affiliated with GSNA and provide a detailed description of what the project will entail. You can apply for a grant throughout the school year, but the earlier you return your form the better your chances of receiving the grant.

GSNA NAC Art Contest

There are three grade levels eligible for the Art Contest: K-5, 6-8 and 9-12.

- Local and District associations are asked to promote, conduct and sponsor the GSNA art contest.
- Each district will select 3 winners from each category to submit to the state level judging.
- All entries must be the student's original drawing on an 8½ x 11-inch sheet of white, unlined paper (regular white plain, poster board is not allowed).
- All entries must have the current president's theme. This year the theme is "School Nutrition Diamond Hits Since 1946"
- All entries must be colorful so they can be reproduced if selected as a state winner.

GSNA NAC of the Year

The Georgia Nutrition Advisory Council of the Year Award recognizes a NAC that has accomplished one special project or activity that FOCUSED on creating a positive image or awareness of its program.

For information on any of the GSNA NAC activities, please contact the GSNA Headquarters office (770-934-8890/800-543-2023) or check the GSNA website at www.gsfsa.com.

SECTION 7



IMPORTANT RESOURCES

School Nutrition Association
<http://www.schoolnutrition.org>
(800) 877-8822

Action for Healthy Kids
<http://www.actionforhealthykids.org>

American Dietetic Association
<http://www.eatright.org/>
(312) 899-0040

Association of School Business Officials
<http://www.asbointl.org/>
(703) 478-0405

Child Nutrition Foundation
<http://www.schoolnutrition.org/cnfoundation>
(800) 877-8822

Food Research and Action Center
<http://www.frac.org/>

(202) 986-2200

Georgia School Nutrition Association

<http://www.gsfsa.com>

(770) 934-8890 / 800-543-2023

International Food and Information Council

<http://www.ific.org>

(202) 296-6540

Meat and Poultry Hotline

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OA/programs/mphotlin.htm>

(800) 535-4555

National Association of Food Equipment Manufacturers

<http://www.nafem.org/>

(312) 821-0201

National Center for Education Statistics

<http://nces.ed.gov/>

(800) 424-1616

National Food Service Management Institute

<http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/nfsmi/>

(800) 321-3054

National School Boards Association

<http://www.nsba.org/>

(703) 838-6227

The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports

<http://www.fitness.gov>

(202) 690-9000

USDA, Team Nutrition

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn>

(703) 305-1624

U.S. Department of Agriculture

<http://www.usda.gov/>

(202) 720-2791

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

<http://www.hhs.gov/>

(202) 619-0257

U.S. Food and Drug Administration

<http://www.fda.gov/>

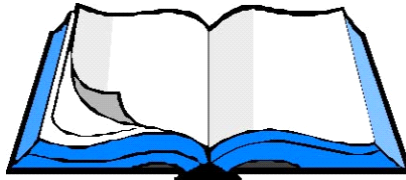
(888) 463-6332

USDA, Food and Nutrition Service
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/>
(703) 305-2284

USDA, Food Safety Inspection Service
<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/>
(202) 205-7760

SECTION 8

GLOSSARY



Child Nutrition Programs:

An umbrella term used to describe the programs administered by the authority of the National School Lunch Act of 1946 and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966. These programs include school lunch programs, school breakfast programs, special milk programs, nonfood assistance, summer food service programs and child care food programs.

Food and Nutrition Service (FNS):

Division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture responsible for administering the federal Child Nutrition Programs.

National Nutrition Month:

Established by the American Dietetic Association for the purpose of observing and promoting good nutrition for the public. This promotion is observed every March.

National School Breakfast Week:

The seven-day period begins the first Sunday in March.

National School Lunch Week:

Established by Congress in 1962 for the purpose of observing the school lunch program with appropriate activities and ceremonies. The seven-day period begins the second Sunday in October.

Nutrition Advisory Council (NAC):

An organization of students whose goal is to learn about nutrition, health and school foodservice.

School Foodservice Manager:

The individual responsible for all foodservice-related activities in a particular school.

School Foodservice Director/Supervisor:

The individual ultimately responsible for all foodservice-related activities in a school district or county.

School Nutrition Association (SNA):

A nonprofit, professional organization representing the school nutrition profession. Membership includes state and local school nutrition directors and supervisors, cafeteria managers, foodservice assistants and other educators throughout the United States.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA):

Agency of the United States government that is responsible for administering the Child Nutrition Programs.

