



SNAC Bites

October 2019 Edition

Welcome to the October 2019 issue of SNA Communication (SNAC) Bites! SNAC Bites highlights new SNA programs and news, and provides content for your state association publications, chapter meetings and social media channels. In some cases, the content will need to be customized for your state association's needs, should you decide to use the below stories.

Here are this month's headlines:

1. [Envision Your Future: Register for #SNIC2020 Today!](#)
2. [Share Your NSLW 2019 Playlist with Parents!](#)
3. [Count 'Em, Five Webinar Wednesdays this October](#)
4. [New School Meal Bills Introduced to Congress](#)
5. [ERS Publishes Report on Household Food Security in United States in 2018](#)
6. [FNS Publishes Evaluation for Direct Certification with Medicaid for Free and Reduced-Price](#)

1. Envision Your Future: Register for #SNIC2020 Today!

Join us at [#SNIC2020](#) in California's beautiful Coachella Valley from January 12-14, 2020 and experience three days of unparalleled learning, networking, collaboration and cutting-edge ideas for school nutrition operators and industry partners. Designed to help you grow school nutrition programs, you'll learn new strategies to boost your creativity, gain innovative insights, hone your leadership skills and put the most innovative ideas in school nutrition into practice.

All of your favorite education formats are back—general sessions featuring [visionary speakers](#), 60-minute concurrent breakout [education sessions](#) on hot topics, fast-paced 30-minute Ideas@Work sessions on singular innovations and industry-hosted [Innovative Solutions Sessions](#). Plus, we're offering some fantastic new learning opportunities! Take part in roundtable meet-ups on hot topics, incredible offsites and experiences throughout the conference, and professionally guided Learning Circles for you and up to eight of your peers. Plan to come a day early for [pre-conference sessions](#)!

[Registration](#) is now open—kick off the year of perfect vision with us and register for #SNIC2020 today!

2. Share Your NSLW 2019 Playlist with Parents!

There's only a little time left to amplify your engagement with parents before [National School Lunch Week 2019!](#) Remember that SNA's resources are available to help you share what's on your #SchoolLunchPlaylist. Download the SNA [NSLW 2019 Toolkit](#) as well as share the NSLW 2019 Infographic (available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)) to get the word out to parents. Create more buzz by inviting parents to enjoy school lunch with their child on [National Take Your Parents to Lunch Day](#) (Wednesday, October 16, 2019), or any other day that works for them.

Encourage them to review the school lunch menu and keep the conversation about healthy eating going outside of the cafeteria. You can also encourage them to follow the SNA [TrayTalk Facebook page](#) and [blog](#) for school lunch innovations and success stories.



3. Count 'Em, Five Webinar Wednesdays this October

Kitchen staff in small districts often go beyond the call of duty because their devotion to the students sometimes outweighs available resources and funds. On October 9, join us for [ANC Ideas@Work: Small District? Make the Most of Your Resources](#), where one district director will share how she rewarded her dedicated staff by entrusting them with more decision-making power, creating greater buy-in and professional growth.

Then on October 16, [Best of #ANC19: Redesign Your Serving Line](#) is one simple way to increase participation without breaking the bank. Hear from two states that implemented new food arrangements and service line designs to entice kids to eat healthier reimbursable meals. On October 23, [Best of #ANC19: News You Can Use- Recent Updates in USDA Research \(and Why You Need It\)](#) will dive into why the USDA collects School Food Authority (SFA) data, and how they are putting it to use. Then, on October 30, join [Best of #ANC19: Simple Solutions for Handling Change](#) with Bart Christian, who always finds a way to encourage and motivate those who may need a reminder of why their work is so important. He'll give you the tools you need to re-engage at school (and at home). Find all open registrations here: [Upcoming Live Events](#)

4. New School Meal Bills Introduced to Congress

Two new bills impacting school nutrition programs were introduced in September 2019:

- Rep. Susan Wild (D-PA), Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), Rep. Debbie Dingell (D-MI), Rep. David Trone (D-MD) and Rep. Don Bacon (R-NE) have introduced [H.R. 4259](#), the *Schools Preventing Hunger in At-Risk Kids (SPARK) Act*, a bipartisan bill that extends categorical eligibility to over 400,000 children who currently live with grandparents or in other arrangements such as kinship care.
- Rep. Jim McGovern (D-MA) and Rep. Rodney Davis (R-IL) introduced [H.R. 4265](#), the *Healthy Breakfast Help Kids Learn Act of 2019* which would strengthen and expand the School Breakfast Program (SBP) by providing additional federal support to those schools participating in the SBP.

5. ERS Publishes Report on Household Food Security in United States in 2018

On September 4, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Economic Research Service (ERS) published [Household Food Security in the United States in 2018](#), a report that covers household food security, food expenditures and use of Federal food and nutrition assistance programs for 2018. A food-insecure household is defined as a household that has difficulty providing enough food for all their members due to a lack of resources at some point during the year. USDA monitors the extent and severity of food insecurity in U.S. households through an annual, nationally representative survey sponsored and analyzed by USDA's ERS.

Overall Findings:

- The 2018 prevalence of food insecurity declined, for the first time, to the pre-recession (2007) level of 11.1 percent.
- In 2018, 88.9 percent of U.S. households were food secure. The remaining 11.1 percent (14.3 million households) were food insecure.
- In 2018, 4.3 percent of U.S. households (5.6 million households) had very low food security, not significantly different from 4.5 percent in 2017.
- In households with children, children were food insecure in 7.1 percent of U.S. households (2.7 million households) during 2018, not significantly different from 7.7 percent in 2017. Households with food insecurity among children were unable at times to provide adequate, nutritious food for their children.



6. FNS Publishes Evaluation for Direct Certification with Medicaid for Free and Reduced-Price

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) published the report: [Evaluation of the Direct Certification with Medicaid \(DCM\) for Free and Reduced-Price Meals \(F/RP\) Demonstration](#). This report evaluates the ability of individual states and school districts to identify and directly certify eligible students for free or reduced-price meals by using information from Medicaid data files. This report describes the implementation process and explores the effects it has on certification, participation, Federal reimbursements and State administrative costs. FNS evaluated these new demonstrations to assess the means and resources used, the challenges encountered in conducting data matches, the impacts on student certification and overall participation in National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP), and the costs associated. Read the full report [here](#).

Overall Findings:

- Direct certification through Medicare resulted in an incremental increase in the number and percentage of students certified for free and reduced-price meals, but effects varied across states.
- Changes in certification rates had mixed, limited effects on participation rates.
- Direct certification also had mixed impacts on Federal reimbursement costs.
- Implementation was generally successful, but timelines for implementation were longer than expected due to the complexities of conducting data matches.
- State administrative costs were modest; most of the costs were associated with startup expenses.