

2015 Position Paper

Member Feedback Survey Summary

In December, SNA will draft the Association's *2015 Position Paper*. The *Position Paper* reflects the Association's top legislative priorities and will serve as the roadmap for SNA's 2015 Child Nutrition Reauthorization efforts. SNA and members will advocate for these positions to Congress, USDA and the Administration during the 2015 Legislative Action Conference's (LAC) Charge to the Hill and throughout the reauthorization process. To assist in this process, an online survey was distributed via email to all SNA operator members. The survey was conducted from November 13-26, 2014. This document summarizes the survey results.

Survey Response

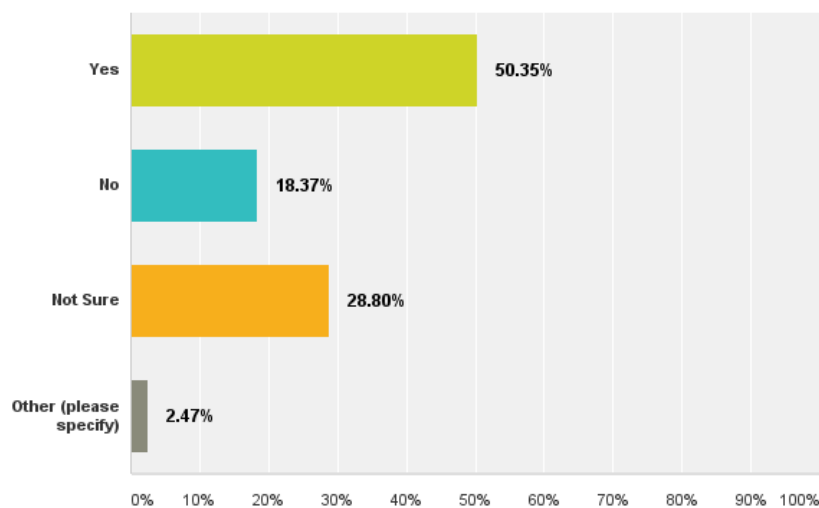
A total of 1,160 members from 49 states responded to the online survey of the 25,074 members it was distributed. This equates to a response rate of 4.6% and margin of sampling error of plus/minus 2.8%.

Financial Health

Respondents were asked if they anticipated that their school nutrition program's expenses will exceed revenue for the 2014-15 school year. Just over half of respondents indicated that they anticipate expenses will exceed revenue this year. An additional 28.8% of respondents are not sure.

Q3 Do you anticipate that your school nutrition program's expenses will exceed revenue for the 2014-15 school year?

Answered: 1,132 Skipped: 36



Challenging Issues

Respondents were asked to share how much of a challenge a list of specific issues were to their school nutrition program. The following table summarizes the data collected for each issue evaluated. The issues are listed in decreasing order of their weighted average (i.e. in decreasing order of level of the challenge).

All of the issues asked about in the survey were identified as either a serious or moderate challenge for more than half of the respondents. However, three issues emerged as being the most challenging issues to respondents overall.

- Increased food costs,
- Increased plate/food waste and
- Sodium requirements

Of these, increased food costs emerged as the most challenging with 92.2% of respondents indicating this issues as being either a serious or moderate challenge for their program (with 70.7% indicating it as a serious challenge).

| Issue | Weighted Average* | Percent of Respondents | | | |
|---|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | Serious challenge | Moderate challenge | Minor challenge | Not a challenge |
| Increased food costs | 3.61 | 70.7% | 21.5% | 5.8% | 1.9% |
| Increased plate/food waste | 3.46 | 62.6% | 24.5% | 9.7% | 2.8% |
| Sodium requirements | 3.40 | 57.1% | 30.0% | 9.4% | 3.0% |
| Decreased lunch participation | 3.16 | 52.0% | 23.0% | 14.5% | 9.8% |
| Product shortages | 3.09 | 40.4% | 35.2% | 18.2% | 5.2% |
| Smart Snacks in School regulations | 3.05 | 41.5% | 32.4% | 16.1% | 8.8% |
| Mandate to serve a fruit or vegetable with reimbursable meals | 2.91 | 38.8% | 29.1% | 16.5% | 15.2% |
| Whole grain requirements | 2.84 | 28.8% | 38.3% | 21.4% | 11.2% |
| Indirect costs | 2.61 | 22.8% | 36.1% | 21.9% | 17.5% |
| Paid meal equity requirements | 2.59 | 24.3% | 33.7% | 21.6% | 17.6% |

* The weighted average was calculated by assigning a numerical value to the scale. (Serious challenge=4; Moderate challenge=3; Minor challenge=2; Not a challenge=1). The sum of the numerical values for each issue was averaged by total number of respondents.

Top Issue for USDA or Congress to Address

Respondents were asked to indicate the top issue that their school nutrition program needs Congress or USDA to address. The 1,029 responses have been categorized by topic area. The following table includes the percentage of responses within each category.

Comments related to sodium restrictions and fruits and vegetables were the most frequently mentioned. The sodium requirements primarily related to relaxing the current standard and/or not moving to Level 2 or 3 requirements. Comments related to fruits and vegetables tended to be varied but commonly related to the cost of and that students were required to take a fruit or vegetable.

Summary of top issue school nutrition program needs Congress or USDA to address.

| Category | Overall |
|--|--------------|
| Sodium | 23% |
| Fruits & Vegetables | 20% |
| Smart Snacks | 14% |
| Whole Grains | 13% |
| Waste | 12% |
| Increased Funding | 10% |
| Costs | 9% |
| Meal Pattern (General) | 7% |
| Decreasing participation | 5% |
| Calories/Portions | 5% |
| Product Shortages/Availability | 3% |
| Paid Meal Equity | 2% |
| Unpaid Meal Charges | 1% |
| Other | 13% |
| # OF COMMENTS | 1,029 |
| Multiple categories could be assigned to a single comment as needed. | |