

# Preparing A State Legislative Position Paper

Each year, the School Nutrition Association (SNA) publishes a Position Paper that states clearly and concisely the top issues facing its membership. It is not uncommon for SNA Affiliates to produce similar papers for their State Legislature as it is an excellent exercise in focusing on the policy goals for the year.

The following steps will help your state when drafting a Position Paper. For any additional questions or support, please contact the Government Affairs and Media Relations Center at SNA.



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- Create an introduction and a background statement which explains the mission and overall goals for the organization.
- Identify and prioritize problems. Try to keep them to between three and six.
- Clearly state why it is a problem, the impact, and propose a solution. Be as concise and accurate as possible.
- Word your positions using positive and active language for a stronger impact. Focus on how the proposed changes will ensure a better environment for students.
- Keep topics focused on issues that can be addressed at the state vs. federal level.
- Determine where and how the position paper will be distributed. Start with any Committee Chairs or consider sending it to every Member of the legislative body, as well as the Governor, Lt. Governor, and State Agency heads. Include contact information in case they have questions or comments.
- Consider local media and social media promotion. Be prepared to answer questions concerning the topics including from those who may not support your positions.
- Offer to meet with interested parties to answer questions or clarify statements.
- Be prepared for next steps. Will your Association advocate for specific legislation?
- Follow up and keep the lines of communication open! You can use a position paper as an entry into developing relationships with key policy makers in your state.

*As stated in the School Nutrition Association State Affiliate Agreement: State Affiliates, their officers, directors, chairs, and members of the Board cannot publicly oppose SNA's national advocacy plans, objectives, statements or Position Paper.*

