

EDITOR'S NOTE

The Spring 2017 issue of *The Journal of Child Nutrition and Management* (JCNM) marks the eighth issue since I became Editor in Summer 2013. During the past four years, we have managed the review of just over 100 submitted papers, with 68 of those published in JCNM. Many of these papers represent the combined efforts of child nutrition directors and academic professionals in researching and discussing topics relevant to school nutrition programs. Thus JCNM serves as a public forum for professionals in the child nutrition field.

This issue includes four papers in the Research in Action category focusing on management, nutrition, and food safety in school nutrition programs. How school nutrition staff handle free and reduced price meal application and verification procedures is the topic of a paper summarizing research by Kwon and associates. They conclude that accuracy might be improved and staff time reduced if school nutrition programs were able to accept both online and paper applications.

How to encourage children to eat more vegetables as part of their school lunch meals is a continuing challenge in many schools. Snelling et al. tested an innovative strategy of pairing a fresh cold fruit with a cold vegetable as one lunch selection in a suburban school district and found that vegetable consumption by students was significantly increased. Another paper by Landry and Logue summarizes and discusses the benefits and barriers of school gardens.

Wherever food is served, food safety is always a concern and especially so in Summer Food Service Programs (SFSPs) where sites, equipment, and resources vary. After surveying SFSP sites in seven states, Patten et al. conclude that improvement is needed in personal hygiene, time/temperature control, and cleaning/sanitizing practices.

A Current Issues paper by Medina and associates describes the effect of offering produce for sale to students, teachers, and community members at bi-monthly farm stands. Included in the paper is a survey form that can be used to evaluate student fruit/vegetable preferences and self-efficacy.

Three Practical Solutions papers in this issue describe techniques that can be used to improve school nutrition operations. Bristow et al. found that offering students free samples of locally-grown sweet potatoes significantly increased selection by students when they were later made available on the school lunch menu. Cullen and Rushing collaborated to compile participant evaluations of a Team Up for School Nutrition Success pilot workshop. Their survey results may assist others involved in organizing similar workshops at state, district, and unit levels. Johnson and associates describe a problem-solving, decision-making model that includes five steps ranging from problem definition to ongoing assessment. Although they used the model to evaluate salad bars in schools, this model could be used to evaluate many other school-based activities.

Also included in this issue is a summary of USDA-funded research projects related to child nutrition programs. This report, which includes both recently completed projects and those still in progress, should be of interest to all child nutrition directors.

Readers are reminded that JCNM is an online journal publishing peer-reviewed articles related to school nutrition programs biennially in May and November. Abstracts for articles published in JCNM are currently listed in two databases: AGRICOLA and ERIC. Those who wish to submit manuscripts will find author guidelines for four categories of papers (Research in Action, Commentary, Current Issues, and Practical Solutions) posted on the School Nutrition Association website at <https://schoolnutrition.org/JCNM/ContributionReprintGuidelines/>. My job as Editor will end on July 31 of this year, and I wish the new incoming Editor continuing success in advancing and improving this Journal.

Carolyn Bednar, PhD, RDN
JCNM Editor