



y, Middle, Secondary and Continuing Education
ilities, Management and Information Services
Szuberla, Jr. Coordinator
Child Nutrition Program Administration, Room 55, Albany, NY 12234-0055
Tel. (518) 473-8781
Fax (518) 473-0018

April 2002

To: District Superintendents
Superintendents of Schools
Chief School Officers of Nonpublic Schools
Executive Directors of Residential Child Care Institutions
Chancellor of New York City Public Schools
School Food Service Directors/Managers

From: Frances N. O'Donnell, Coordinator

Subject: New York State Best Practices Awards

Best Practices are true success stories! They represent examples of ideas that resulted in improved customer service, business practices, participation and/or choices by students. New York State will continue to recognize and share "Best Practices" in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. In order to encourage and acknowledge achievement by school food services, Child Nutrition Program Administration will recognize outstanding practices in these areas:

- ◆ Improving the Financial Status of Child Nutrition
- ◆ Preparing Students for Higher Standards – Food for Thought
- ◆ Promoting Healthy Choices/Nutrition Education
- ◆ Incorporating Ethnic/Cultural Foods
- ◆ Accommodating Children with Special Dietary Needs

Nominations of creative or innovative ideas are encouraged! One State winner will be selected in each category. State awards will be presented at the 2002 New York State School Food Service Association (NYSSFSA) Conference in October in Rochester.

These awards are an excellent way to recognize extraordinary accomplishments in school food service and to share creative ideas with other school districts. Being selected as a winner brings a sense of pride and validation to your program, your school, and your community.

We are very proud of the many innovative and successful programs in New York State and hope that you will share your practices with others. Entries will only be accepted from schools or school food authorities (SFAs) that participate in both the school lunch and school breakfast programs. If your program is outstanding in one or more of the categories, we encourage you to take the time to prepare a nomination packet for that category. A list of the categories with ideas for each, the judging criteria, and what a submission should consist of is attached.

Submissions should be comprehensive, complete, and document your initiatives. Entries longer than **four** pages will not be accepted (maximum of 1,500 words, 12 point size font). You may submit additional information such as newspaper articles and flyers that further describe the activity or initiative. The award entry form, the newspaper articles and flyers will not be counted in the four-page limit.

All nominations must be submitted to Marti Sparer, Child Nutrition Program Administration, New York State Education Department, Room 55, Albany, New York 12234-0055 no later than June 26, 2002.

Questions should be directed to the Child Nutrition Representative in your area or to Marti Sparer at (518) 473-8781.

Attachments

"Best Practices Awards" for 2001

A nomination should consist of:

- ◆ A completed awards entry form for each entry
- ◆ A 2-4 page summary (12 point font, maximum of 1,500 words) describing the practice/program for each entry submitted in one or more of the four categories
- ◆ Additional information, such as newspaper articles and flyers, that further describes the activity or initiative. The newspaper articles and flyers will not be counted in the four-page limit.

Entries will be judged based on the criteria outlined in "Best Practices Awards Criteria".

Nominations from the following categories will be considered for these awards:

1. **Improving the Financial Status of Child Nutrition**

The award will be presented to an SFA that has made changes to operate self-sustaining Child Nutrition Programs. Emphasis will be placed on the implementation of creative strategies to increase participation, increase revenues and reduce expenses. Questions to consider when applying for this category include:

- ◆ Why did you make changes?
- ◆ What strategies did you try?
- ◆ How has the overall quality of your program changed?
- ◆ What data supports your improving status?
- ◆ What challenges did you encounter?
- ◆ What role has the school administration taken to help achieve your effort?

2. **Preparing Students for Higher Standards/Food for Thought**

The award will be presented to a school or SFA that emphasizes the correlation between good nutrition and learning. It could involve the promotion of breakfast as a way to start the school day, snacks as part of an after school education or enrichment program or lunch as a way to recharge your student's batteries. Questions to answer include:

- ◆ Why is the focus on nutrition and academic progress important in your school?
- ◆ What initiatives were tried?
- ◆ What challenges did you face?
- ◆ Were you successful?
- ◆ How did you measure your success?
- ◆ How did students react to your strategies?
- ◆ How will you ensure your efforts are ongoing?
- ◆ How were the administration, teaching staff and community involved in this effort?

3. **Promoting Healthy Choices/Nutrition Education**

The award will be presented to a school or SFA that makes special efforts to integrate nutrition education in the classroom, cafeteria, community and the total school environment, by enhancing the nutritional content of meals offered, or providing for cultural diversity of foods served. Questions to consider include:

- ◆ What types of nutrition education activities have been conducted?
- ◆ What new strategies did you try?
- ◆ Were members of the community recruited to assist in these activities?
- ◆ Did you meet with any resistance?

- ◆ To what extent are nutrition education activities ongoing and/or implemented into your school's curriculum?
- ◆ To what extent have nutrition education activities resulted in increased participation or increased consumption of nutritional foods?
- ◆ What data supports your results?

4. Incorporating Ethnic/Cultural Foods

The award will be presented to a school or SFA that develops and implements a strategy to increase participation of students by offering foods that appeal to the ethnic/cultural diversity of the community.

- ◆ What is the cultural/ethnic make-up of your school community?
- ◆ When did you start offering the foods? Why?
- ◆ What foods have been incorporated on your menus that appeal to students? (Submit copies of your menus)
- ◆ Do you offer these foods daily/weekly as a choice or just on special occasions?
- ◆ What happens to your participation when these foods are offered?
- ◆ Are there special recipes you use for the food items?
- ◆ What is the per meal cost of the items? How does this cost compare to your regular food costs?

5. Accommodating Children with Special Dietary Needs?

The award will be presented to a school or SFA that has developed and implemented a strategy to accommodate students with special dietary needs.

- ◆ How many children with special dietary needs are you serving?
- ◆ What policies have you successfully implemented to accommodate the children?
- ◆ What kinds of diets are you providing?
- ◆ Has the number of special diets increased?
- ◆ What costs do you incur?
- ◆ Do you provide options for vegetarian students or other dietary requests that you are not required to do in order to accommodate your customers?

Be sure your submission addresses the specific questions listed above.

Best Practices Awards Criteria

1. Community Partnerships/Sustained Excellence (Maximum 20 points)

Maximum score will be awarded to partners who effectively work together to establish positive relationships and increase overall quality and management of the lunch and breakfast programs. Schools and SFAs that have had a superior program for some length of time will receive the highest score in this area. Partnerships could involve State agencies, sponsors, community groups, advocacy organizations, public agencies, businesses, schools, teachers, students, coaches and/or families. Activities could include designing and implementing outreach initiatives, media campaigns, volunteer programs, learning activities for children, nutrition education programs, innovative and effective training, and/or careful evaluation of the school lunch and breakfast programs.

2. Innovation (Maximum 20 points)

Maximum score will be awarded to creative ideas; innovative and successful ways of dealing with challenging or unusual situations; or successful additions to program operation.

3. Increased Quality of Service (Maximum 20 points)

Maximum score will be awarded to improved program access, increased program participation, and increased quality of service. Also considered will be indications of increased support or recognition from students, parents, teachers, community members and school administration.

4. Sustainability/Transferability (Maximum 15 points)

Maximum score will be awarded to ideas and programs that can demonstrate:

- ◆ Commitment to program excellence on the part of school leaders, family members, students, and/or school administration; and
- ◆ Overall usefulness of the idea and ease of incorporating it in other states, SFAs and schools
- ◆ Long term incorporation and implementation of the best practice.

5. Cost Effectiveness (Maximum 15 points)

Maximum score will be awarded for ideas that make good use of available resources, labor and budget. High scores will be awarded to a program that is “doing more with less,” for a cost-effective idea or program that uses a minimum expense with a maximum result.

6. Presentation (Maximum 10 points)

The material should be neatly presented, well organized, well written, complete, clear, and succinct. Nominations should not exceed the stated **limit of 4 pages** (not including the additional information such as newspaper articles or flyers).

**2002 BEST PRACTICES AWARDS
National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs
AWARDS ENTRY FORM**

Please attach this form to the first page of the summary of each entry submitted. Entries will not be accepted after June 26, 2002.

Name of Nominee (School or SFA):

Address of Nominee:

Name of Superintendent or Chief Administrative Officer:

Telephone Number:

Fax Number:

E-mail Address (if available):

Award Category (Circle One)

Promoting Healthy Choices/Nutrition Education

Improving the Financial Status of Nutrition

Preparing Students for Higher Standards – Food for Thought

Incorporating Ethnic/Cultural Foods

Accommodating Children with Special Dietary Needs

Average Daily Participation of Program:

Lunch:

Breakfast:

Name and Title of Person Submitting This Form:

Address:

Telephone Number:

Fax Number:

E-mail Address (if available):

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

ROOM 55

Albany, NY 12234-0055

(518) 473-8781 FAX 473-0018

FRANCES N. O'DONNELL, COORDINATOR ☎
Barbara Malone, Support Staff
Dechelle Johnson, DEMO

CARLA BROADNAX, Associate ☎ Diane Carter, Education Program Aide	LINVAL FOSTER, Associate ☎
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Albany & Syracuse Regional Offices – Serving schools in the following counties:	Buffalo and Albany-based staff for New York City & Long Island Regional Offices – Serving the following counties:
Region I : Sandra Ragule, Assistant ◆ (518) 474-3956 Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Montgomery, Schoharie	Region V: Assistant ◆ Linda St. Pierre, Nutrition Program Rep. (518) 474-3956 Nassau, Suffolk
Region II: Sandra Ragule, Assistant ◆ Barbara St. Louis, Nutrition Program Rep. (518) 474-3956 Albany, Clinton, Columbia, Essex, Putnam, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren, Washington	Region VI: Bronx, New York City (Manhattan) Region VII: Kings (Brooklyn) Region VIII: Queens, Richmond (Staten Island)
Region III: Sharon Smith, Assistant ◆◆ (518) 473-1525 Greene, Westchester	Debbie Favro, Assistant ◆◆◆◆ Sandy Sheedy, Todd Bradshaw, Ruth Franklin, Elizabeth Lattanzio & Diane Snyder, Nutrition Program Reps. (518) 473-1525
Region IV: Maureen Rooney, Assistant ◆ Marti Sparer, Nutrition Program Rep. (518) 474-3956 Dutchess, Orange, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster	
Syracuse Regional Office: Maureen Rooney, Assistant ☎ Joan Rouse & Judy Ward, Nutrition Program Rep. Support Staff: Patricia Minnoe Room 313 – Third Floor 800 Fourth Street Liverpool, NY 13088 (315) 453-3100 FAX 453-3120 Broome, Cayuga, Chemung, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Ontario, Oswego, Otsego, Schuyler, Seneca, St. Lawrence, Tioga, Tompkins, Wayne, Yates	Buffalo Regional Office: Anna Burse, Assistant Frank Caccamise, Nutrition Program Rep. Support Staff: Joan Gaczewski 355 Harlem Road West Seneca, NY 14224-1892 (716) 821-7350 FAX 821-7357 Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara, Orleans, Steuben, Wyoming
• Support Staff Dechelle Johnson ◆ Dee Krawczyk ◆◆ Barbara Malone ◆◆◆◆ Kaleen Edwards	Summer Food Service Program Linval Foster, Associate Paula Tyner-Doyle, Assistant Theresa Lin, Christopher Cionek, Kurt Coleman, Kimberly Vumbaco & Lindsey Osterhout, Nutrition Program Representatives Jean Beauregard, Secretary (518) 432-5050 (Telephone) (518)432-5069 (FAX)

