

# Kansans CAN



## 2023-24 Best Practice Awards

### Child Nutrition & Wellness

The Kansas State Board of Education vision is: Kansas leads the world in the success of each student. This vision for education calls for a more child-focused system that provides support and resources for individual success and will require everyone to work together to make it a reality.

The academic achievement and physical well-being of our students in Kansas today will impact the success of our communities, our state and the nation in the future. Research continues to demonstrate the positive correlation between health and learning. Good health that results from adequate nutrition and physical activity is a pre-requisite, perhaps the pre-requisite, for optimal learning. Students with health promoting behaviors perform better academically than those with poor health behaviors. Simply put healthy students are better students.

The purpose of the Kansans CAN Best Practice Awards is to encourage and reward outstanding practices in Child Nutrition & Wellness Programs in Kansas that support the Kansans Can vision. We encourage you and your staff to make nominations for outstanding and/or innovative practices for recognition of your efforts. Please see the attached nomination entry form and limit the categories of nominations to those included with this communication. A panel for each category will judge nominees on sustained excellence, innovation, impact, cost effectiveness, efficiency, transferability, and presentation.

**Nominations are due to the Child Nutrition & Wellness office on or before June 30, 2024.** Winners will be notified by July 31 and presentations will be made at the August 2024 Kansas State Board of Education meeting. Please do not hesitate to contact the Child Nutrition & Wellness team at (785) 296-2276 if we can be of assistance with this process. Ideas are given below for each category; however, these ideas are not intended as limitations. Submission of creative or innovative ideas (this is where Kansas Child Nutrition Program personnel excel!) in all areas is encouraged. The categories are:

**Kansans CAN Celebrate Nutrition and Wellness Special Events.** This type of event should spotlight nutrition, and health and wellness activities that promote a healthy lifestyle. The intent is to provide information and education that encourages adoption of these healthy activities for a lifetime. Best Practices could include: sponsor wide participation, all age groups involved, education on healthy eating, spotlighting new products, education on meal and snack requirements, activities for all ages with lower intensity for beginners or older adults, board representation, teacher representation.

**Kansans CAN Implement Innovative Meal Pattern Strategies.** Recognition for thinking "outside the lunch box" (or the lunch tray) to create timely, affordable ideas that enhance the ability to deliver quality meals which meet the NSLP, SFSP or CACFP meal pattern. The concept may relate (but is not limited) to any of the following areas:

- New food item, snack or beverage concept, combination, or recipe
- Unusual ingredients, preparation technique, packaging
- Marketing ideas, customer feedback
- Convenience/on-the-go packaging
- Environmental responsibility



**Kansans CAN Impact Wellness.** Recognizing Sponsors that take a leadership role in educating about healthy eating and active lifestyle choices. Identify how your Sponsor has impacted change to nutrition, nutrition education and/or physical activity environments. Some examples might be implementing and demonstrating best practices in wellness programs that promote school, community and environmental changes that increase healthy food choices and physical activity. Emphasize how projects have helped develop practices and policies that include a team approach to model highly effective programs.

**Kansans CAN Increase Participation.** We would like to recognize child nutrition programs who have achieved an increase in participation in their meal program(s). Please share your experiences along with measurable data in relation to participation percentage increases seen in a specific program. Examples shared should also include what area of the meal program was focused on to achieve these increases such as:

- **Marketing.** New menus, using social media, giveaways or drawing for those participating, celebrating National School Breakfast and Lunch Weeks, National CACFP Week, etc.
- **New Meal Options.** 2<sup>nd</sup> chance breakfast, grab and go breakfast and lunch options, alternate entrée options, implemented a snack program, supper program, etc.

**Kansans CAN Manage Finances.** This category includes creative and accountable practices for managing finances in tough economic times. The entry should describe practices that reduce costs and/or increase efficiency in Child Nutrition Programs; efforts to better serve program participants more efficiently with the resources at hand. Please provide measurable before and after data to substantiate program success.

**Kansans CAN Provide Outstanding Customer Service.** Kansas can provide excellence in customer service. This category includes the implementation of any event, program or service that improves participation; quality or delivery of program services; and creates greater relationships with participants, parents, and the community.

**Kansans CAN Serve it Safe.** Food safety is important for everyone – but it's especially important for children and older adults, the primary customers of Child Nutrition Programs. The good reputation of Child Nutrition Programs is built on serving safe food. Ensuring food safety can be accomplished by empowering employees with the knowledge and skills they need to prepare and serve foods safely and help them realize the key role they each play every day in protecting the health of those they serve. This category includes implementation of strategies and training to ensure food safety while preparing and serving food in its Child Nutrition Programs.

**Kansans CAN Serve Local Foods.** This category includes partnership efforts between Sponsors and local producers is the focus of this area; this includes cooperation with local farmers utilizing locally grown produce for child nutrition programs. Learning opportunities that expose participants to food produced in their geographical area. This could include nutrition education, field trips, taste testing, and gardens. In addition, efforts to increase student's knowledge of healthy food and the farming industry could be included.

**Kansans CAN Step Up to Lead.** This category focuses on:

- Setting achievable goals for your organization/facility
- Organizing and implementing plans/objectives with the focus on achievement of those goals
- Motivating staff/providers to practice objectives in their area of work
- Provide the opportunity for staff/providers to develop leadership skills through trainings and assignment of responsibility



## NOMINATION ENTRY FORM

Sponsor \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone/Fax Numbers \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Award Category \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Practice (not to exceed 300 words; attach additional sheets if necessary)

Relevant History (not to exceed 200 words; attach additional sheets if necessary)

Documented Date of Practice Impact (i.e., dollars saved/generated, percentage of participation increase, etc.; attach additional sheets if necessary)

Time Period of Practice: \_\_\_\_\_

Videos, posters, coloring books, photos, and/or print articles must be practice specific. Enclose one copy of each with the nomination if applicable.

Send completed nomination form to: Child Nutrition & Wellness, Kansas State Department of Education, 900 SW Jackson Street, Suite 251, Topeka, Kansas 66612, or email to [CNW@ksde.org](mailto:CNW@ksde.org).



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- (1) **mail**  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
- (2) **fax:**  
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) **email:**  
[program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



For more information, contact:

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