

# RECALIBRATE YOUR WHY

Aligning Purpose with Progress in School Nutrition



2024 CONFERENCE FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION ADMINISTRATORS

## 2024 Conference for School Nutrition Administrators

### Session Descriptions

#### General Sessions

*Wednesday, October 16, 2024*

Opening General Session: *Recalibrating Your Communication* (Denise Ryan)

Life would be so easy if everyone we interacted with was just like us. They would understand our cryptic e-mail messages, forgive our bizarre text messages, and pick up on our bad moods. There would be no hard feelings, no conflict, and zero drama. Unfortunately, no one else is exactly like you and to be effective you have to constantly calibrate your communication to connect with them. This session will help you do just that! You'll learn about barriers to communication and how to remove them. You'll take a communication styles quiz and find out just how different others can be and how to get through to them. People won't stop being different; this session will help you understand them.

*Thursday, October 17, 2024*

Lunch General Session: *Reigniting the Flame to Maximize Our Impact* (Thomas Murray)

The past few years have brought uncertainty at every turn, creating significant anxiety and a loss of sleep for all School Nutrition Directors. The fallout of the pandemic, where we as Directors found ourselves thrust into the front lines, remains. As we navigate very real challenges, how can we build our teams to create a food service experience where both students and staff can thrive? How can we reignite our purpose and recognize that challenges bring opportunities? How can we overcome fear and fail forward when things don't go as planned? Regardless of what happens outside the walls of our kitchens, we must seek and seize the opportunities that come our way each day. We must maximize our impact! The work is hard, but our kids are worth it!

Special Session – *Sharing Your Why by Being a Fred* (Lisa Altmann)

During this special session, we will take a deeper dive into the book [The Fred Factor](#) by Mark Sanborn. This book, a best seller, is a true story of an ordinary mail carrier whose approach to work and life has the power to transform the everyday into the extraordinary. In this deeply inspiring book, Sanborn illuminates the four basic principles anyone can use to bring fresh energy and creativity to our work and life: how to make a tangible difference every day, build stronger relationships, create real value for others without spending a penny, and constantly reinventing yourself. Today, Mark Sanborn's transformative insights are timelier and more necessary than ever. By following his principles, you, too, can find more excitement, fulfillment, and success in your career and in your life and inspire your teams to greater heights and satisfaction.

Lisa Altmann, the School Nutrition Director for Rowan-Salisbury Schools, will lead a group discussion on the four principles from The Fred Factor to bring energy and creativity into our lives and our teams. This interactive session will motivate and inspire us to recalibrate our purpose and passion for School Nutrition. Copies of the book will be provided to all School Food Authorities to use during the session and to help cultivate energy and creativity in our teams and communities.

*Friday, October 18, 2024*

*Closing General Session: Ignite the Future: Empowering Our Next Steps (Stakeholder Group Panel Discussions)*

As we draw this transformative conference to a close, we stand ready to ignite the future and empower our next steps. This closing session is not an ending but a powerful launchpad for the journeys that lie ahead. Here, we will summarize the insights we have gained, celebrate the connections we have made, and transform our newfound knowledge into actionable strategies. During this insightful session, you will hear from School Nutrition pioneers on how we can approach our home district colleagues to influence decisions that are in the best interest of our students, and therefore academic success. Tips from these School Nutrition innovators will help you to create a seat at the education table for School Nutrition and influence your leaders to open doors for School Nutrition Programs. With renewed inspiration and a clearer vision, we are better equipped to tackle challenges, seize opportunities, and drive meaningful change. You will not want to miss this exciting wrap-up!

## **Educational Sessions**

*Wednesday, October 16 – Thursday, October 17, 2024*

*Recalibrate Your Financial “Why” (Janet Johnson and Jeff Squires, NCDPI Office of School Nutrition)*

Reset your financial management mind with this session on how good financial management practices impact compliance. Janet Johnson and Jeff Squires will review key financial management practices and show how they influence outcomes on your Administrative Review. Attend this session to set your program up for financial success and let the numbers speak for themselves!

*Emotionally Intelligent Leadership as a Lever for Aligning Your Purpose with Progress (Susan Cole)*

What does it take to be a good leader? Participants will explore the role of Emotional Intelligence in leadership success, specifically exploring the power of self-awareness and self-management in cultivating generative relationships built on clear communication and trust. Participants will learn and experience practical strategies for creating space for relationship building, clear communication, and actionable problem solving that leads to a shared commitment to goals, overall staff well-being, and improved School Nutrition program outcomes.

### *Applying the “What, Why, When, and How” of Menu Certification (Trip Warren and Jennifer Brown, NCDPI Office of School Nutrition)*

Now that you have a basic understanding of the USDA Certification of Compliance Worksheets, join Trip Warren and Jennifer Brown as they demonstrate this new compliance tool. During this session, you will walk through practical examples and use school menus to develop completed USDA Certification of Compliance Worksheets to support meal pattern compliance in your program. This session and use of the USDA Certification of Compliance Worksheets is intended for those who do not have menu certification tools and reports available through their software systems.

### *Re-vitalize the Procurement Processes (Lynn Harvey and Victoria Homick, NCDPI Office of School Nutrition)*

Not sure which procurement process to use, yet you simply want to get the product or service your SFA needs as quickly as possible, while doing so in a compliant manner? If this scenario sounds familiar, then this interactive discussion around procurement practices may be for you. Facilitators will discuss specific procurement scenarios, based on actual questions posed from School Nutrition professionals about procurement processes ranging from conflicts of interest and ethical decision-making, to when and how to use micro purchasing or emergency purchasing or other simplified processes. Using the Procurement Process Flow Chart and a basic procurement checklist, this session will help you chart the right course and navigate murky waters in the sea of procurement so that you find yourself safely on the shores of compliance. After all, as Captains of the School programs, “we may not control the winds of change, but we can adjust the sails” for a smooth journey.

### *Recruit \* Retain \* Restructure (Vickie Coffey, RBB Edgewood Schools)*

Still struggling with staffing? Come learn about successful recruiting techniques, staff retention, appreciation, recognition along with out-of-the-box thinking for restructuring within a kitchen or district to be more efficient. Connect and collaborate with other North Carolina school nutrition professionals discussing successful practices for recruitment, retention and restructuring. As part of this interactive session, you will leave with a recruiting, retention, and restructuring plan for developing successful staffing programs for your school.

### *Why It Matters: Addressing Digital Accessibility in School Nutrition Programs (Donna Murray, NCDPI Office of Technology Services, and Tracey Bates, NCDPI Office of School Nutrition)*

The U.S. Department of Justice has released new regulations for state and local governments, including PSUs, related to the accessibility of digital content. Join Donna Murray and Tracey Bates as they decode the new accessibility regulations and explain the potential impact they may have on your School Nutrition Program. This session will include strategies for designing accessible digital content, help you identify areas of your program that may be subject to the new regulations, and provide tools for planning. Don't miss this opportunity to be a step ahead in implementing these digital accessibility requirements.

*Rural Non-Congregate Readiness: Harness Your Potential* (Lynne Privette, Jada Brown, and Ivy Early; NCDPI Office of School Nutrition; Madge McNaboe and Deborah Tarver, USDA Food and Nutrition Service; Gaston County Schools)

Whether you operated a rural non-congregate meal service this past summer or are contemplating next year's summer program, this is a session you won't want to miss! Summer Nutrition Consultants will share information on non-congregate meal eligibility, discuss non-congregate meal application steps for 2025, and highlight best practices from those who operated successful programs. Be sure to join the Summer Programs Team for an engaging and informative session.

*Take Control of Your Story: Leveraging Social Media to Boost Participation, Engagement, and Awareness* (Chef Dave Palmer, Dunk Tank Marketing)

Too often the story about school food gets hijacked by simple stereotypes and worn-out cliches. Beyond that, School Nutrition leaders are often overwhelmed when thinking of how to start marketing their programs, or optimizing the marketing they're already doing. This session will provide practical steps to take control of that story by understanding how and why you can leverage social media to convey your own narrative. Chef Dave Palmer will present a systematic and scalable approach that school nutrition professionals can use to boost participation, engagement, and awareness of their programs. He will draw on his 10+ years of experience to show you how to clarify your message, realize small victories, and build capacity and momentum.

*Making Progress, Not Perfection: Implementing Scratch Cooking When You Have Limited Resources* (Chef Cyndie Story and Chef Andy Montero, K-12 Culinary Team)

When cooking from scratch, there is no need to start from scratch! In this session, Chef Cyndie Story and Chef Andy Montero from the K-12 Culinary Team will provide tips and food production strategies for adding easy scratch and speed cooking to your program. They will draw from their years of experience working with School Nutrition Programs across North Carolina and beyond to highlight recipes you can make based on certain types of equipment or operational needs you have in your program. Leave with ideas of specific recipes and from-scratch meals you can incorporate into your menus this year to give students a taste of new and improved school meals.

*AI Opportunities, Challenges, and Best Practices* (Jennifer Graham, NCDPI Office of Digital Teaching and Learning)

Come explore the exciting world of generative AI! Join Jennifer Graham as she describes the benefits and challenges of using Artificial Intelligence. This session will equip you to use AI effectively in your job as a School Nutrition Professional, maximizing its potential while minimizing its risks.

*Nourishing Leadership: Cultivating Excellence in School Nutrition Administration* (Amelia Royster-Davis, NCDPI Office of School Nutrition)

In this dynamic session, School Nutrition Administrators will explore essential leadership competencies for the 21st century. Engage in interactive activities designed to enhance self-awareness, improve team collaboration, sharpen critical thinking, and boost business acumen in the unique context of School Nutrition Programs. Learn how to inspire your team, navigate change, and drive innovation to ensure

every student receives nourishing meals. Leave with practical tools and strategies to elevate your leadership and make a lasting impact in your school community.