



National Food Service Management Institute  
University of Mississippi



# Best Practices for Marketing the School Nutrition Program



Cafeteria photo and background illustration from iStockphoto

Applied Research Division  
The University of Southern Mississippi

# BEST PRACTICES FOR MARKETING THE SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAM



National Food Service Management Institute  
The University of Mississippi

Item Number GY 2011 #2  
2013

This project has been funded at least in part with federal funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service through an agreement with the National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) at The University of Mississippi. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. government.

The information provided in this publication is the result of independent research produced by NFSMI and is not necessarily in accordance with U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) policy. FNS is the federal agency responsible for all federal domestic child nutrition programs including the National School Lunch Program, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, and the Summer Food Service Program. Individuals are encouraged to contact their local child nutrition program sponsor and/or their Child Nutrition State Agency should there appear to be a conflict with the information contained herein, and any state or federal policy that governs the associated Child Nutrition Program. For more information on the federal Child Nutrition Programs please visit [www.fns.usda.gov/cnd](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd).

The University of Mississippi is an EEO/Title VI/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA Employer.

© 2013, National Food Service Management Institute, The University of Mississippi

Except as provided below, you may freely use the text and information contained in this document for non-profit or educational use providing the following credit is included:

Suggested Reference Citation:

Rowser M. & Castillo, A. *Best Practices for Marketing the School Nutrition Programs*. University, MS:  
National Food Service Management Institute.

The photographs and images in this document may be owned by third parties and used by The University of Mississippi or The University of Southern Mississippi under a licensing agreement. The universities cannot, therefore, grant permission to use these images. For more information, please contact [nfsmi@olemiss.edu](mailto:nfsmi@olemiss.edu).

# **NATIONAL FOOD SERVICE MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE**

## **THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI**

### **BUILDING THE FUTURE THROUGH CHILD NUTRITION**

The National Food Service Management Institute was authorized by Congress in 1989 and established in 1990 at The University of Mississippi in Oxford and is operated in collaboration with The University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg. The Institute operates under a grant agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service.

#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the National Food Service Management Institute is to improve the operation of child nutrition programs through research, education and training, and information dissemination.

#### **MISSION**

The mission of the National Food Service Management Institute is to provide information and services that promote the continuous improvement of child nutrition programs.

#### **VISION**

The vision of the National Food Service Management Institute is to be the leader in providing education, research, and resources to promote excellence in child nutrition programs.

#### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

##### **Headquarters**

##### **Administrative Division**

The University of Mississippi

Phone: 800-321-3054

Fax: 800-321-3061

[www.nfsmi.org](http://www.nfsmi.org)

##### **Education and Training Division**

##### **Information Services Division**

The University of Mississippi

6 Jeanette Phillips Drive

P.O. Drawer 188

University, MS 38677-0188

##### **Applied Research Division**

##### **The University of Southern Mississippi**

118 College Drive #5060

Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001

Phone: 601-261-2480

Fax: 888-262-9631

# **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

## **WRITTEN AND DEVELOPED BY**

Marjuyua Lartey-Rowser, PhD, RD  
Research Scientist

Alexandra Castillo, MS  
Researcher

Applied Research Division  
The University of Southern Mississippi

## **GRAPHIC DESIGN BY**

Travis Brewington  
Karen Mullins

## **NFSMI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Katie Wilson, PhD, SNS

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

INTRODUCTION .....	7
DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS .....	9
USING THE RESOURCE .....	10
SECTION 1: DEVELOPMENT .....	11
SECTION 2: IMPLEMENTATION.....	20
SECTION 3: SCHOOL NUTRITION STAFF INVOLVEMENT .....	25
SECTION 4: COMMUNICATION.....	30
SECTION 5: STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT.....	37
SECTION 6: ADVANTAGES FOR STUDENTS.....	46
SCHOOL NUTRITION MARKETING RESOURCES .....	49



# INTRODUCTION

Marketing and advertising are not new concepts in reaching children for food and beverage product sales. The debate over food and beverage marketing to children spans for at least a 30 year time frame and involves the Federal Communications Commission, the Federal Trade Commission, and the United States Congress. These marketing and advertising efforts are generally positioned on mainstream media. However, public schools are not immune to marketing campaigns by food and beverage companies. Schools have been targeted for marketing purposes through food and beverage product sales, direct sales of foods and beverages, indirect advertising, and market research among students (Story & French, 2004; Wilde 2009). Although the current changes to the National School Lunch Act help schools gain control over the outside influences of marketing and advertising to children and adolescents in the school setting, marketing and advertising can still be utilized by the school nutrition (SN) program to benefit the youth. Previous National Food Service Management, Applied Research Division (NFSMI, ARD) research has identified the potential for a successful marketing initiative in the local school nutrition program designed to benefit the health and well-being of school age children. These research findings also indicated that a marketing initiative within the SN program can be successfully implemented if key components are employed.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THIS RESOURCE

The ***Best Practices for Marketing the School Nutrition Program*** resource was developed with the assistance of SN professionals from across the country. Based on their recommendations, the resource is designed as a Web-based, self-assessment checklist developed around six practice categories:

- Development,
- Implementation,
- School Nutrition Staff Involvement,
- Communication,
- Stakeholder Support,
- Advantages for Students,

and consisting of sixteen goals and seventy-three best practice statements. It is recommended that each statement be reviewed and a determination be made through the self-assessment process regarding the stage of implementation or assessment associated with the practice.

Each practice statement is assessed using a 4-point scale for current status. The four response options include “Elements in Place”, “Majority of Elements in Place” “Few Elements in Place” and “No Elements in Place”. Space is provided for the user to include a “Plan of Action” to address and utilize the best practice identified as one that requires further attention. This scale is an assessment tool to determine the current



status of each practice statement as it pertains to the user's school nutrition program. Once the assessment is complete, school nutrition professionals can establish a plan of action to address those practices that have been identified as needing attention and schedule an annual review for the action plans and implementation process.

The practices featured in this resource are measurable practices that define achievable and effective strategies for school nutrition professionals. Both the expert panel and review panel agreed the practices define the steps required to successfully market the school nutrition program. School nutrition professionals can use this assessment to develop and maintain a successful marketing initiative for school nutrition programs. Listed below are additional ways in which to use this best practice resource:

- Identify essential practices to implement in your school nutrition program.
- Identify the role of school nutrition staff and other stakeholders.
- Identify resources needed for planning, developing, and implementing policies and procedures related to marketing practices.
- Identify training needs of school nutrition staff specific to marketing activities.





# DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

---

## GOALS

Specific, measurable objectives that provide the context for what is to be accomplished under each category.

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Measures that provide the most important performance information to enable management or their stakeholders to understand the performance level of the organization.

## MARKETING CATEGORIES

Research-based factors that influence marketing practices

- **Development:** Practices that focus on developing the marketing initiative.
- **Implementation:** Practices that focus on implementing and monitoring the marketing initiative.
- **School Nutrition Staff Involvement:** Practices that focus on involving the school nutrition staff in the marketing initiative.
- **Communication:** Practices that focus on communicating the marketing initiative to stakeholders.
- **Stakeholder Support:** Practices that focus on obtaining and maintaining the support of stakeholders related to the marketing initiative.
- **Advantages for Students:** Practices that focus on advantages the marketing initiative provides to students.

## MARKETING INITIATIVE

Planned action that drives the marketing efforts.

## MARKETING STRATEGIES

Specific steps taken to execute the marketing initiative.

## STAKEHOLDERS

Individuals or groups of individuals (e.g., students, parents, school nutrition staff, school staff, district/school administration, community members, and/or other organizations) that can directly or indirectly affect, influence, and/or benefit from the services offered by the school nutrition program.

# USING THE RESOURCE

This checklist contains six research-based marketing categories that influence marketing practices:

- Section 1: Development
- Section 2: Implementation
- Section 3: School Nutrition Staff Involvement
- Section 4: Communication
- Section 5: Stakeholder Support
- Section 6: Advantages for Students

There are 73 marketing practices comprising 16 goals that support the 6 marketing categories.

## STEP 1 – CURRENT STATUS

Indicate the current status of each practice statement pertaining to YOUR school nutrition program with regards to marketing the school nutrition program by placing a check mark in the appropriate column.

ANCHOR	DESCRIPTION
Elements in place	Practice is implemented in your program
Majority of elements in place	Practice is mostly implemented in your program
Few elements in place	Practice is implemented to some degree in your program
No elements in place	Practice is not implemented in your program

## STEP 2 – ACTION PLAN

Review and assess those practice statements identified as needing attention, indicated by the selection of “Few elements in place” and “No elements in place”. Establish an action plan based on the assessment of YOUR school nutrition program with regards to marketing the school nutrition program.

## STEP 3 – EVALUATION

Schedule an annual review of YOUR action plans and implementation process with regards to marketing the school nutrition program.

- Evaluate your marketing practices.
- Based on your assessment, analyze and revise your action plan.
- Establish a timeline for implementation and include long-term plans and goals.



## SECTION 1

### DEVELOPMENT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on developing the marketing initiative.

**Goal 1: Marketing strategies are identified to update the school nutrition program.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Encourage the planning for comfortable dining furniture that is age appropriate and promote social interactions among customers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Offer a variety of food choices to accommodate the ethnical and religious/cultural diversity of students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 1

### DEVELOPMENT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on developing the marketing initiative.

**Goal 2: Marketing strategies are developed to increase student participation and sales revenue.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Establish menu pricing strategy in a manner that advances the goals of the school nutrition program.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Identify locations where customers are more likely to buy foods and beverages at school (e.g., vending machines, kiosks, food carts).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 1

### DEVELOPMENT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on developing the marketing initiative.

**Goal 2: Marketing strategies are developed to increase student participation and sales revenue.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Establish key performance indicators for each marketing promotion and/or event.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Plan, promote, and present nutrition related events for special occasions, theme days, and/or holidays (e.g. at student body assemblies and/or pep rallies).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 1

### DEVELOPMENT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on developing the marketing initiative.

**Goal 3: The marketing initiative is developed to meet the needs of your school nutrition program.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Research and observe marketing trends in a variety of industries (e.g., retail lighting, product placement, displays, layout design).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Review marketing strategies of other school districts to assist with the development of your school nutrition marketing initiative.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 1

### DEVELOPMENT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on developing the marketing initiative.

**Goal 3: The marketing initiative is developed to meet the needs of your school nutrition program.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Conduct student focus groups and/or surveys to determine customer expectations and preferences.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Seek, allocate, and budget resources to plan and implement the school nutrition marketing initiative.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	



## SECTION 1

### DEVELOPMENT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on developing the marketing initiative.

**Goal 3: The marketing initiative is developed to meet the needs of your school nutrition program.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Develop a marketing plan to guide the marketing initiative of the school nutrition program.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Find a consultant/advisor to assist with the development of the marketing initiative, as the budget allows.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 1

### DEVELOPMENT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on developing the marketing initiative.

**Goal 3: The marketing initiative is developed to meet the needs of your school nutrition program.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Involve students in the development process to include marketing strategies and menu changes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Utilize branded dining concepts in the school nutrition marketing initiative, as appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 1

### DEVELOPMENT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on developing the marketing initiative.

**Goal 3: The marketing initiative is developed to meet the needs of your school nutrition program.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Create a personalized school brand to implement a color scheme, logo, and/or slogan that represents a consistent appearance easily identifiable with your school nutrition program.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Create a marketing strategy that involves peer-to-peer discussions to identify attitudes and beliefs regarding the school nutrition program.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 1

### DEVELOPMENT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on developing the marketing initiative.

**Goal 3: The marketing initiative is developed to meet the needs of your school nutrition program.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Seek and incorporate feedback/ perceptions on the marketing initiative from stakeholders through surveys, comment cards, suggestion boxes, focus groups, and/or use of technology.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Establish partnerships with local and national organizations to help promote marketing strategies (e.g., SNA, Dairy Council, ADA, AHA).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 2

### IMPLEMENTATION

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on implementing and monitoring the marketing initiative.

**Goal 1: Processes are created and utilized to implement the marketing initiative.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Implement a marketing plan to guide the marketing initiative of the school nutrition program.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Implement the marketing initiative in all school nutrition venues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 2

### IMPLEMENTATION

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on implementing and monitoring the marketing initiative.

**Goal 1: Processes are created and utilized to implement the marketing initiative.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Implement the marketing initiative in phases (i.e., budget, logistics, training) to ensure customer buy-in.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ensure consistent marketing in all school cafeterias.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 2

### IMPLEMENTATION

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on implementing and monitoring the marketing initiative.

**Goal 1: Processes are created and utilized to implement the marketing initiative.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Using the established key performance indicators, evaluate the effectiveness of each activity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**Goal 2: Menu and pricing strategies are created utilizing the marketing initiative and monitored through student participation and sales revenue.**

Set the price of healthy menu items so that customers perceive them as a good value.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
--	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--



## SECTION 2

### IMPLEMENTATION

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on implementing and monitoring the marketing initiative.

**Goal 2: Menu and pricing strategies are created utilizing the marketing initiative and monitored through student participation and sales revenue.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Ensure menus are easily accessible for students and families.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Goal 3: Marketing strategies are created and implemented to increase student support.</b>					
Use student focus groups and/or survey results to generate marketing ideas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 2

### IMPLEMENTATION

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on implementing and monitoring the marketing initiative.

**Goal 3: Marketing strategies are created and implemented to increase student support.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Increase student buy-in by appealing to their interest through student centered activities (e.g., recipe contest, nutrition mascot, cafeteria name, slogans).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 3

### SCHOOL NUTRITION STAFF INVOLVEMENT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on involving the school nutrition staff in the marketing initiative.

**Goal 1: The school nutrition director researches various marketing strategies to enhance the marketing initiative.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Visit and network with other school districts to share marketing ideas for your school nutrition program.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Attend conferences, seminars, webinars, network groups, and trade groups to stay current on marketing trends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 3

### SCHOOL NUTRITION STAFF INVOLVEMENT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on involving the school nutrition staff in the marketing initiative.

**Goal 1: The school nutrition director researches various marketing strategies to enhance the marketing initiative.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Provide professional development to school nutrition managers on marketing the school nutrition program.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Goal 2: The school nutrition director creates a marketing plan that guides the development of marketing strategies for the school nutrition program.</b>					
Create menus to support the marketing theme or brand.					

## SECTION 3

### SCHOOL NUTRITION STAFF INVOLVEMENT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on involving the school nutrition staff in the marketing initiative.

**Goal 2: The school nutrition director creates a marketing plan that guides the development of marketing strategies for the school nutrition program.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Create a marketing strategy that involves students in the distribution of taste-testing samples.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Goal 3: The school nutrition director involves the school nutrition staff in all phases of the marketing initiative to gain their buy-in.</b>					
Involve school nutrition staff in planning and implementing the marketing initiative.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 3

### SCHOOL NUTRITION STAFF INVOLVEMENT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on involving the school nutrition staff in the marketing initiative.

**Goal 3: The school nutrition director involves the school nutrition staff in all phases of the marketing initiative to gain their buy-in.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Incorporate school nutrition managers' feedback into the marketing initiative.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide training to the school nutrition staff on implementing marketing strategies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 3

### SCHOOL NUTRITION STAFF INVOLVEMENT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on involving the school nutrition staff in the marketing initiative.

**Goal 3: The school nutrition director involves the school nutrition staff in all phases of the marketing initiative to gain their buy-in.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Train school nutrition managers to conduct taste-testing activities and to obtain customer feedback.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Train school nutrition staff on customer service expectations and problem solving to increase customer satisfaction.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	



## SECTION 4

### COMMUNICATION

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on communicating the marketing initiative to stakeholders.

**Goal 1: Promotional marketing strategies are created and implemented to ensure effective communication with stakeholders.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Communicate marketing initiative to stakeholders.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Promote regular communication to stakeholders as part of the marketing initiative.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 4

### COMMUNICATION

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on communicating the marketing initiative to stakeholders.

**Goal 1: Promotional marketing strategies are created and implemented to ensure effective communication with stakeholders.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Communicate to stakeholders the importance of proper nutrition for students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Develop creative names for menu items and add signage to the cafeteria serving line.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 4

### COMMUNICATION

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on communicating the marketing initiative to stakeholders.

**Goal 1: Promotional marketing strategies are created and implemented to ensure effective communication with stakeholders.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Use menu boards and/or signs (i.e., post menus in various locations throughout the school) to communicate menu items offered and prices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Utilize enticing labels to describe menu items to include brand and/or logo, as appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 4

### COMMUNICATION

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on communicating the marketing initiative to stakeholders.

**Goal 1: Promotional marketing strategies are created and implemented to ensure effective communication with stakeholders.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Broadcast menu items on the school announcement systems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Post menus in various locations throughout the school to draw customers' interest.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 4

### COMMUNICATION

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on communicating the marketing initiative to stakeholders.

**Goal 2: Diverse modes of communication are utilized to increase stakeholder buy-in.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Provide information promoting the school nutrition program to stakeholders.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Utilize simple messages and designs on promotional displays to ensure readability.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 4

### COMMUNICATION

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on communicating the marketing initiative to stakeholders.

**Goal 2: Diverse modes of communication are utilized to increase stakeholder buy-in.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Include school nutrition promotions and communicate activities in the school district calendar.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Initiate media coverage of school nutrition services provided to students, as approved by district policy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 4

### COMMUNICATION

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on communicating the marketing initiative to stakeholders.

**Goal 2: Diverse modes of communication are utilized to increase stakeholder buy-in.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Utilize targeted promotional materials to address different market segments (e.g., females/males, ethnic groups, athletes).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Utilize social media (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) to promote the school nutrition program, as approved by district policy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	



## SECTION 5

### STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on obtaining and maintaining the support of stakeholders related to the marketing initiative.

**Goal 1: Student advocacy will be encouraged to increase buy-in for the marketing initiative.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Meet with student leaders to educate them about the role of good nutrition and encourage them to be advocates for the school nutrition program.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Practice peer-to-peer marketing by utilizing prominent school campus figures in promotional messages (e.g., athletic team captains, school mascots, most popular teachers, student council officers, famous alumni).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 5

### STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on obtaining and maintaining the support of stakeholders related to the marketing initiative.

**Goal 2: The school nutrition director collaborates with stakeholders to encourage their promotion of the school nutrition program in the community.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Collaborate with stakeholders on marketing ideas to continually improve the school nutrition program image in the community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Address feedback from stakeholders in a timely manner to improve the image of your school nutrition program.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 5

### STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on obtaining and maintaining the support of stakeholders related to the marketing initiative.

**Goal 2: The school nutrition director collaborates with stakeholders to encourage their promotion of the school nutrition program in the community.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Encourage parents/guardians and community participation in school nutrition programs, when appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Partner with parents/guardians (i.e., PTO/PTA) to promote and educate on school nutrition program benefits.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 5

### STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on obtaining and maintaining the support of stakeholders related to the marketing initiative.

**Goal 2: The school nutrition director collaborates with stakeholders to encourage their promotion of the school nutrition program in the community.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Offer school nutrition services as a resource to stakeholders for after school events (e.g., PTO/PTA meetings, school plays).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Establish partnerships with local allied health and/or community organizations for special promotions and events.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 5

### STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on obtaining and maintaining the support of stakeholders related to the marketing initiative.

**Goal 3: The school nutrition director collaborates with district/school administration and school staff to increase support of the school nutrition program and the marketing initiative.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Involve district/school administration in the marketing initiative to gain support.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Encourage advocates within the school district to promote the marketing initiative.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 5

### STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on obtaining and maintaining the support of stakeholders related to the marketing initiative.

**Goal 3: The school nutrition director collaborates with district/school administration and school staff to increase support of the school nutrition program and the marketing initiative.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Encourage district/school administrators to promote school nutrition programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Promote healthful eating, encourage district/school administrators and school staff to participate in the school nutrition program.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 5

### STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on obtaining and maintaining the support of stakeholders related to the marketing initiative.

**Goal 3: The school nutrition director collaborates with district/school administration and school staff to increase support of the school nutrition program and the marketing initiative.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Display samples or pictures of menu items so that customers see them prior to entering the cafeteria and/or serving lines.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Utilize multiple communication channels (i.e., Web site, flyers, menus, posters) to provide nutrition data and promotional messages related to building a healthy school nutrition environment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 5

### STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on obtaining and maintaining the support of stakeholders related to the marketing initiative.

**Goal 3: The school nutrition director collaborates with district/school administration and school staff to increase support of the school nutrition program and the marketing initiative.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Present a recipe of the month with nutrient analysis on the school nutrition Web site.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide promotional messages that meet the diverse languages of your district's populations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	



## SECTION 5

### STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on obtaining and maintaining the support of stakeholders related to the marketing initiative.

**Goal 3: The school nutrition director collaborates with district/school administration and school staff to increase support of the school nutrition program and the marketing initiative.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Establish partnerships with the local media (i.e., print, TV, radio) to promote your school nutrition program.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 6

### ADVANTAGES FOR STUDENTS

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on advantages the marketing initiative provides students.

**Goal 1: Students will increase their consumption of healthier menu choices.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Provide healthier versions of popular retail food items.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Encourage students to explore healthier food choices through appropriate promotional events (e.g., tasting sample, taste testing).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 6

### ADVANTAGES FOR STUDENTS

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on advantages the marketing initiative provides students.

**Goal 2: The school nutrition director ensures student accessibility to an inviting eating environment.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Ensure that serving and dining areas are clean, well-lit, and attractive.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Use colorful signage, posters, and/or décor to make the cafeteria environment more appealing and attractive to customers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 6

### ADVANTAGES FOR STUDENTS

In this section, you will consider the goals and best practices that focus on advantages the marketing initiative provides students.

**Goal 2: The school nutrition director ensures student accessibility to an inviting eating environment.**

BEST PRACTICE STATEMENT	CURRENT STATUS				NOTES FOR ACTION PLAN
	Elements in Place	Majority of Elements in Place	Few Elements in Place	No Elements in Place	
Provide alternative foodservice options (i.e., reimbursable vending, kiosks, grab and go, breakfast in the classroom) to meet the wants and needs of customers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SCHOOL NUTRITION MARKETING RESOURCES

---

For more information about Marketing the School Nutrition Program, please visit the following Web Sites:

Arizona Department of Education. (n.d.). *Effective marketing strategies*. Retrieved from <http://www.azed.gov/wp-content/uploads/PDF/EffectiveMarketingStrategies.pdf>.

Cornel Center for Behavioral Sciences in Child Nutrition Programs. (n.d.). *Bringing the smarter lunchrooms movement to your school or district*. Retrieved from [http://smarterlunchrooms.org/sites/default/files/school\\_board\\_intro\\_plaintext\\_version\\_1.pdf](http://smarterlunchrooms.org/sites/default/files/school_board_intro_plaintext_version_1.pdf).

Cornel Center for Behavioral Sciences in Child Nutrition Programs. (n.d.). *6 guiding principles to improving eating behaviors*. Retrieved from <http://smarterlunchrooms.org/sites/default/files/6principles.pdf>.

Cornel Center for Behavioral Sciences in Child Nutrition Programs. (n.d.). *Smarter lunchroom best practice evaluation & implementation guide*. Retrieved from [http://smarterlunchrooms.org/sites/default/files/slm\\_best\\_practices\\_implementation\\_guide.pdf](http://smarterlunchrooms.org/sites/default/files/slm_best_practices_implementation_guide.pdf).

Cornel Center for Behavioral Sciences in Child Nutrition Programs. (n.d.). *Quick and inexpensive lunchroom makeover ideas*. Retrieved from [http://smarterlunchrooms.org/sites/default/files/quick\\_and\\_inexpensive\\_slm\\_ideas.pdf](http://smarterlunchrooms.org/sites/default/files/quick_and_inexpensive_slm_ideas.pdf).

National Food Service Management Institute. (n.d.). *Marketing your school nutrition program*. Retrieved from <http://www.nfsmi.org/documentlibraryfiles/PDF/20120301103120.pdf>.

National Food Service Management Institute. (n.d.). *Marketing your school nutrition program: Develop a brochure to showcase your program*. Retrieved from <http://www.nfsmi.org/documentlibraryfiles/PDF/20120301102850.pdf>.

United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services. (n.d.). *Marketing Efforts*. Retrieved from <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/breakfast/toolkit/marketing.pdf>

United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services. (n.d.). *Meal Appeal: Attracting Customers*. Retrieved from [http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/meal\\_appeal.pdf](http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/meal_appeal.pdf).

Vermont Feed. (n.d.). *Taste testing new foods in the classroom and cafeteria*. Retrieved from <http://www.okfarmtoschool.com/pdf/Taste-testing-new-foods.pdf>.





National Food Service Management Institute

The University of Mississippi  
P. O. Drawer 188  
University, MS 38677-0188  
[www.nfsmi.org](http://www.nfsmi.org)

GY 2011 #2

© 2013 National Food Service Management Institute  
The University of Mississippi