



School Nutrition Association of Wisconsin

State Government Affairs Report (March 2013)

OVERVIEW:

The Legislature's powerful budget-writing committee – the Joint Finance Committee – has begun its work to reshape Gov. Scott Walker's 2013-15 state budget bill. While the \$68 billion state appropriations bill proposed by Gov. Walker did not cut funding for the School Lunch, School Breakfast or School Day Milk Programs, it also did not provide a much-needed funding increase for the School Breakfast Program. The SNA-WI Government Affairs Team is currently in the process of meeting with members of the Joint Finance Committee and other key legislators in an effort to amend Gov. Walker's budget to include an additional \$1.7 million for School Breakfast Reimbursement funding.

The Finance Committee held state agency briefings on the budget bill in March, it will hold a series of public hearings in April, and it will begin to modify the budget bill in May and ultimately send it to the full Legislature for final approval in June.

Please find below the March 2013 SNA-WI State Government Affairs Report:

ADVOCACY EFFORTS:

- SNA-WI sent out a membership-wide grassroots advocacy "Action Alert" asking members to contact their legislators and urge them to support increasing school breakfast funding in the state budget bill. The "Action Alert" e-mail included: 1.) A link so members could find out who their legislators are (if they did not already know); and 2.) A sample letter for members to use when communicating with their legislators. **"Action Alert" Request to Legislators:** *Please support a budget proposal to increase the state School Breakfast reimbursement rate from 9-cents per meal served to 10-cents for each breakfast served in public, private and charter schools (\$1.7 million over the two-year budget cycle).*

LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY:

- **State Budget Bill – School Breakfast Reimbursement Funding**
The SNA-WI Government Affairs Teams continues to lobby legislators who serve on the Joint Finance Committee and other key lawmakers to increase school breakfast reimbursement funding in the state budget bill. Most legislators understand the importance of school breakfast – and the connection between a nutritious meal and academic success – but many are hesitant, at least to date, to make a commitment to increase School Breakfast reimbursement funding.
- **Other Legislation** – The SNA-WI Legislative Committee is in the process of reviewing the following legislative proposals for possible support or simple monitoring:
 - **Assembly Bill 78 / Senate Bill 73** - The legislation would promote workplace wellness by creating a tax credit for Wisconsin small businesses that offer wellness programs for their employees. Under the bill, employers that implement wellness programs would be eligible for a tax credit equal to 30% of the cost of their program. While the bill would not directly impact school nutrition, studies have shown that parents who learn healthy eating and exercise habits at work tend to bring that knowledge into the home. SNA-WI supported similar legislation last session.
 - **Assembly Bill 110** – The bill would require the Department of Health Services to conduct a pilot program that limits the use of FoodShare benefits to foods and beverages that have sufficient nutritional value. SNA-WI could serve as a resource for lawmakers on this legislation.
- **School Nutrition Employee Week** – The SNA-WI Legislative Committee vote to direct the lobby team to request a proclamation from Gov. Scott Walker declaring May 6-10 WI School Nutrition Employee Week.