



# 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

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**Dear Friends,**

**It is with great honor to share this annual report with you as the Urban School Food Alliance's first executive director.**

**Representing 12 of the largest urban school districts in the country and their nutrition directors, I am honored to work with passionate leaders dedicated to the health and wellbeing of our nation's children. After all, studies show that healthy school meals play a critical role in a child's ability to succeed in the classroom.**

**We, as the Urban School Food Alliance, are at the forefront of making school meals the best that they can be each and every day. We take this challenge with great responsibility. We want to ensure USFA has a voice in the national conversation and helps educate decision makers around the impact of policies and regulations that govern school food.**

**We take great pride in sourcing foods locally whenever possible with sound environmental practices. We work with local farmers thereby stimulating the local economy. More importantly, we work diligently with our partners to ensure that we stay true to our mission that regardless of neighborhood, income or ethnicity, ALL children have access to nutritious, delicious, quality meals.**

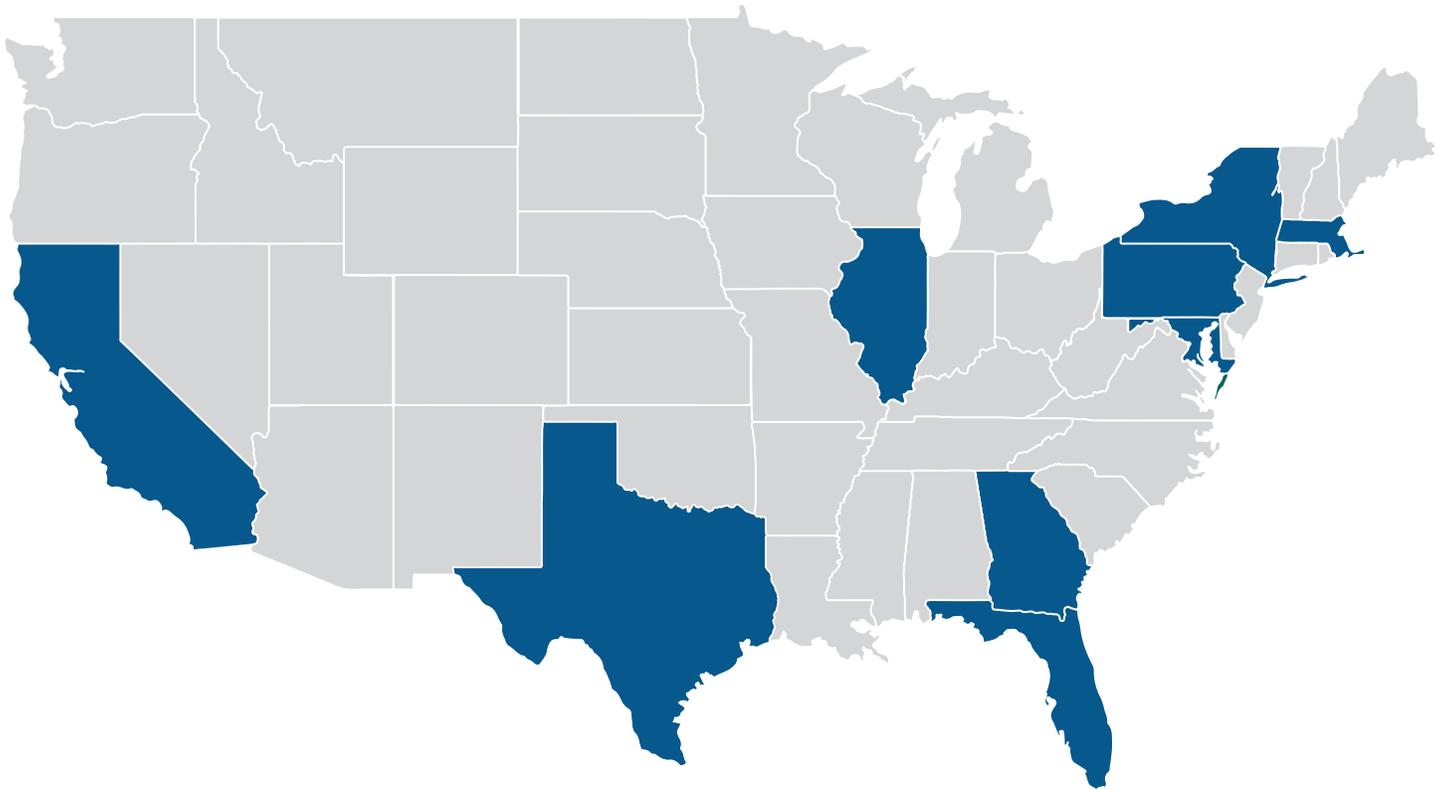
**Please join me in celebrating the work of the Alliance over the past year, and we look forward to strengthening our mission in service to our students.**

***Dr. Katie Wilson, SNS***

**Executive Director, Urban School Food Alliance**

# Who We Are

- Baltimore City Schools
- Boston Public Schools
- Broward County Public Schools
- Chicago Public Schools
- Dallas Independent School District
- DeKalb County Public Schools
- Los Angeles Unified School District
- Miami-Dade County Public Schools
- New York City Department of Education
- Orange County Public Schools
- Palm Beach County Public Schools
- School District of Philadelphia



**12**  
**MEMBER**  
**DISTRICTS**



**5,445**  
**SCHOOLS**



**3.6 M**  
**STUDENTS**



**\$800 M**  
**SPENT ON**  
**PROCUREMENT**



**635 M**  
**MEALS**  
**SERVED**

# New Executive Director



In 2019, the Urban School Food Alliance welcomed Dr. Katie Wilson as the Alliance's first executive director.

Dr. Wilson, who formerly served as Deputy Under Secretary of Food, Nutrition and Consumer services at the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) officially took helm in April 2019.

Members of the Alliance are familiar with Dr. Wilson's body of work in school nutrition. Her office at the USDA oversaw school food funding and regulations and worked closely with many of the Alliance food service directors. Before the USDA, Dr. Wilson served as executive director at the Institute of Childhood Nutrition, the only federally funded national center dedicated to applied research, education and training and technical assistance for child nutrition programs. She also knows firsthand the challenges of school food service having served as a food service director at various school districts in her home state of Wisconsin.

The Alliance conducted a national search for an executive director, receiving more than 200 applications for the position. Board members spent months doing research and talking with candidates before hiring Dr. Wilson.

The Alliance sought a business-minded executive director to lead the development and implementation of strategic and cohesive procurement initiatives to elevate school meals, while managing costs for the participating districts. Additionally, the Alliance looked for an executive director to deliver organization and partnership development; to expand the Alliance's district membership; and to serve as a respected public representative for the group.

# Membership Expansion

To grow the organization and to expand its reach geographically, the Urban School Food Alliance plans to increase its membership at a rate of two to three districts per year. In the fall of 2019, the Alliance fulfilled its goal by adding DeKalb County School District and Palm Beach County School District to the group.



## DeKalb County School District

The DeKalb County School District (DCSD) is located in the Atlanta metropolitan area. DCSD is Georgia’s third largest school system and serves nearly 102,000 students across its 140 schools and centers. The school nutrition program in DCSD aims to “provide healthy meals, nutrition education, and wellness initiatives in support of teaching and learning.” During the 2018–2019 school year, the district served more than 17 million meals and meal equivalents, with an average total of 94,500 meals served each day. During the summer, more than 285,000 meals were provided by DeKalb County Schools, as well as programs operating out of parks and recreation centers.



## Palm Beach County School District

The School District of Palm Beach County (SDPBC) is the tenth largest in the nation and the fifth largest in the State of Florida. SDPBC serves more than 197,000 students across its 209 sites, which includes both base and charter schools. The school nutrition program in SDPBC aims to “put kids first in every idea and decision.” During the 2018–2019 school year, the district served more than 34 million meals and meal equivalents, including 777,000 meals served through the summer feeding program.



## Advisory Council

Urban School Food Alliance’s advisory council consists of a diverse group of leaders and professionals who bring their unique knowledge, skill set and experience in guiding the Alliance and its mission. Advisory council members meet several times a year in person and via phone conference to provide fresh perspective and technical expertise. They serve as an independent, unbiased sounding board to assist the Alliance in championing important initiatives.

**Mark Izeman** | Chairman

New York Regional Director and Senior Attorney, Natural Resources Defense Council

**Kyra Tirana Barry** | Board Member

Board President, Beat the Streets

**Lisa Davis** | Board Member

Senior Vice President, No Kid Hungry Campaign, Share Our Strength

**Andrew Kaplan** | Board Member

Co-Founder and Director, Yum-o! & VP Culinary Operations, Rachael Ray

**Laura Hatch** | Board Member

Senior Director, FoodCorps

# Nutrition Standards Promise

The Urban School Food Alliance continues to support research-based nutrition policy and guidelines that boost student achievement and educate young people about healthy choices and lifestyles. We are committed to serving students, healthy, flavorful meals with the use of local products as often as possible. The members of the Alliance work hard to gain student approval of menu items that meet the strong nutrition standards set through federal regulations.

## Procurement

The Urban School Food Alliance proactively works on crafting bids and policies that focus on elevating school meals for the health and wellness of students. Quality food, environmentally friendly supplies, forecasting demand for local sourcing, and lowering overall costs are the core mission for the Alliance when it comes to procurement.

To accomplish these goals, the Alliance has:



Established a procurement committee. The Alliance will also hire a specialist in 2020 to help navigate the complicated processes related to procurement.



Began development of a database that collects and analyzes districts' purchases and costs to stay competitive in the marketplace when buying food and supplies.



Worked with producers to support local economies and promote fresh, high-quality foods. Member districts are on track to procure nearly \$100 million in local items by the 2020-2021 school year.

# Expertise Sharing

One of the Alliance's core values is to share best practices not only among Alliance members, but with districts throughout the country as well.

The Alliance has recently added a resource page on its website that enables visitors to access the group's food and nutrition standards, compostable product specifications and key learnings that pertain to school meal programs.

Alliance members have also attended and presented at prestigious conferences throughout the country and abroad to share groundbreaking efforts when it comes to school nutrition.

## Notable Presentations in 2019

Agriculture Future of America Presentation  
American Commodity Distribution Association Presentation  
California School Nutrition Association Presentation  
City of Boston Good Food Purchasing Ordinance Presentation  
Congressional Aide Hearings on Capitol Hill - School Nutrition Presentation  
Connecticut School Nutrition Association - Managing School Meals, Leadership, and Team Building Presentation  
Culinary Institute of America Seminar - University Food Service Directors - Presentation Joint Procurement and Menus of Change Presentation  
Florida Department of Agriculture - School Nutrition Leadership Presentation  
Florida School Nutrition Association Conference - Sustainability Initiatives & New Employee Presentation  
FoodCorps ReWork Lunch Seminar Presentation  
Food Institute Career Roundtable Presentation

Friends of the Earth: Northeast Forum on Climate-Friendly School Food Presentation  
Houston Food Bank Partners Presentation  
International Eating City Campus (France) - Sustainable Nutrition in Institutional Settings Presentation  
Loyola Health Sciences Campus School Nutrition Seminar Presentation  
National Child Nutrition 33rd Annual Conference Presentation  
Nebraska School Nutrition Association Conference - Leadership and Team Building Presentation  
Pennsylvania School Nutrition Association - Local Food Presentation  
School Nutrition Association Annual Meeting - Plant-Based Menu Presentation  
Share Our Strength No Kid Hungry Chef Impact Presentation  
Washington State School Nutrition Association Conference - Team Building Presentation  
White House Conference on Food and Nutrition 50th Anniversary Presentation



## Professional Exchange Program

Members of the Urban School Food Alliance believe in hands-on learning, which is why it supports a professional exchange program.

Staff members from one district may request to be transferred for up to a week to another Alliance city where they can job shadow their counterparts in the areas of finance, marketing, grant writing, compliance, quality assurance, recipe and menu development, as well as farm-to-school practices. The program aims to inspire and educate participants, who will then in turn share what they've learned with fellow staff members in their home cities.

In the spring of 2019, for example, Chicago Public Schools Manager of Health Promotion, Tarrah DeClemente, visited New York City Department of Education to learn about the district's meal program and operations. In the fall, members of Dallas Independent School District's Food and Child Nutrition Services visited Orange County Public Schools to learn more about the district's mobile truck meal programs and marketing plans.

"The opportunity to visit New York City was refreshing and enlightening both personally and professionally. From this visit, I have no doubt that operational improvements we are considering for our district will benefit from the full support and institutional knowledge of our colleagues in the Urban School Food Alliance. I look forward to the many conversations and connections to come."

**Tarrah DeClement**  
Chicago Public Schools



## Activities

### Fresh Attitude Week

The Urban School Food Alliance celebrated Fresh Attitude Week for the fifth year from May 6-10 in 2019. In collaboration with the French Department of Agriculture and in partnership with Interfel (French Inter-Branch Association of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables which created Fresh Attitude Week), Fresh Attitude Week has become an annual event in America, along with France and other European countries, to increase consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables in schools. During Fresh Attitude Week, Alliance member districts conducted promotions to highlight fresh produce in school meals, such as featuring new recipes with fruit or vegetable offerings, showcasing food art in dining rooms, and hosting open houses for local media outlets to capture Fresh Attitude Week activities.

## Farm to School Month & National School Lunch Week

Member districts of the Urban School Food Alliance celebrated National Farm to School Month in October and National School Lunch Week from Oct. 14-18, 2019.

National Farm to School Month and National School Lunch Week celebrate food education, school gardens, healthy lunchrooms, and local and sustainable ingredients. During this time, member districts of the Alliance hosted the following activities in their lunchrooms and classrooms:

- Highlighted seasonal produce during breakfast and lunch
- Performed chef cooking demonstrations at school sites with seasonal ingredients
- Hosted local farmer visits to educate students about local, fresh food items and farming innovations
- Offered fresh and healthy recipes ideas for families to enjoy at home



# District Highlights

## Boston Public Schools

Boston Public Schools rolled out the *My Way Café* concept in 29 additional schools. *My Way Café* provides more fresh meal choices with a welcoming and interactive dining experience to encourage students to try items they've never tasted before. In addition, the district converted satellite kitchens into production kitchens so that students have more choices in what they eat.

## Broward County Public Schools

Just before Veteran's Day, Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) and BCPS Food & Nutrition Services invited family members who are United States veterans and active military to enjoy a complimentary lunch to thank them for their service. Students and guests enjoyed whole grain rotini pasta with meat sauce, garlic breadsticks, freshly sliced cucumbers, steamed broccoli, chilled peaches, and a holiday cookie.

## Chicago Public Schools

In 2019, Chicago Public Schools piloted Kosher and Halal meals at an elementary school to further enhance the school meal experience for students.

## Dallas Independent School District

Dallas Independent School District's Food & Child Nutrition Services earned a perfect administrative review in 2019 – the first time in the district's history! The district is so proud of the team and is thankful for all the hard work and dedication of the entire staff.

## Los Angeles Unified School District

In 2019, Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) began a project to replace more than 300 walk-in freezers and coolers across the district. In order to maximize funding on this effort, LAUSD worked directly with the California Division of State Architect (DSA) in creating a new facilities model. By the end of 2019, 60 replacements had already been completed, with 89 others in the planning, bid, or construction phases.



## **Baltimore City Schools**

In 2019, Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) launched its Food & Nutrition Leadership Academy. This 2-day event incorporated techniques from Maryland State Department of Education Project SELECT, and included workshops and a visit to the BCPS 33-acre Great Kids Farm. Cafeteria managers received specialized culinary training on the department's strategies for increasing meal participation and reducing waste.



## **Miami-Dade County Public Schools**

In 2019, as part of Miami-Dade County Public Schools' **Lean and Green** initiatives to reduce waste, the district removed straws from its spork packets as cities throughout the country move toward straw-free communities. As part of the district's wellness policy, the Food and Nutrition Department hosted a nutrition education program, with 10,000 families attending a Back-to-School Expo presented by The Children's Trust. The Food and Nutrition Department also expanded its collaboration with the district's PTA/PTSA Council, presenting at the fall leadership conference to provide information on wellness, school meals, and nutrition to families.

## **New York Department of Education**

In 2019, the New York City Department of Education, Office of Food and Nutrition Services welcomed Mr. Christopher Tricarico as the Senior Executive Director.

During the past year, the office implemented citywide meatless Monday menus; reaffirmed its commitment to purchase no-antibiotic-ever chicken items by awarding new chicken contracts; launched a pilot for a chef-driven return to scratch cooking; and received a farm-to-school grant by the New York Farmland Trust to be a part of the inaugural Farm-to-School Institute.

## Orange County Public Schools

In an effort to increase participation and create an enjoyable environment for students to eat and socialize, Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) updated the dining rooms across all high schools. This process included feedback from school administration, cafeteria management, and student focus groups. In addition to design changes, the updates included increased seating to maximize capacity. The effort led to a 7% increase in participation among OCPS high school students.

## School District of Philadelphia

The School District of Philadelphia (SDP) was recognized in 2019 as a pioneer in utilizing and promoting food grown and produced in the state. The district worked with partner agencies to promote Pennsylvania Preferred Day as a way to honor Pennsylvania, pay tribute to SDP's Farm-to-School program, and recognize National Farm-to-School Month, which was celebrated throughout the month of October.

Twenty districts across the state joined in on the celebration and offered a menu day featuring local foods grown and processed in Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture, Russell Redding, visited Philadelphia during Pennsylvania Preferred Day to announce a new Pennsylvania Farm to School Grant Program.





## **With Gratitude**

The Urban School Food Alliance deeply appreciates the organizations that help make the work on the Alliance possible. From financial support to capacity building, sharing of expertise, and ongoing staff support, the Urban School Food Alliance is grateful to funding partners and organizations who have helped further the mission of the Alliance.

### **Funders**

Urban School Food Alliance is deeply appreciative of the generous financial support the organization has received to advance the work of the organization. In 2019, supporters included:

**Anonymous**

**The Austin Memorial Foundation**

**FoodCorps**

**Joyce and Irving Goldman Family  
Foundation**

**Kyra Tirana Berry**

**Michael and Susan Dell Foundation**

**Natural Resources Defense Council**

**The Nielsen Foundation**

**The Rachael Ray Foundation**

**The Rockefeller Foundation**

**Yum-o! Organization**

# Financial Statement\*

## Assets

### Current Assets

Checking and Savings	\$1,015,214.22
Accounts Receivable	\$11,083.33
Other Current Assets	\$102,030.04

<b>Other Assets</b>	<b>\$800.00</b>
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**Total Assets** **\$1,129,127.59**

## Liabilities and Equity

### Liabilities

Accounts Payable	\$21,941.80
Other Current Liabilities	\$114,716.48

**Total Liabilities** **\$137,458.28**

### Equity

Unrestricted Net Assets	\$452,755.43
Net Revenue	\$538,913.88

**Total Equity** **\$991,669.31**

**Total Liabilities and Equity** **\$1,129,127.59**

\*Unaudited



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