

School Nutrition Industry Conference 2020

## **“BUILDING” Relationships: How to Create Your Seat at the Table**

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Ideas@Work education sessions are intended to inspire and encourage innovation in school nutrition through peer-to-peer learning and engagement.

# Affiliation or Financial Disclosure

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- Alyssia Wright, Ed.S.  
Fulton County Schools  
Sandy Springs, Georgia
- Nothing to disclose



If you don't have a

seat at the table,

bring your own chair.

## “Building” Relationships

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In 30 minutes, my objectives are to provide you with:

- The reason your seat at the table is critical
- Ways to create your seat at the table
- How to keep your seat at the table

@MidyAponte

# Who decided I needed 4 Serving Lines in an Elementary School of 500 Students?

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- Ummmmm.....?
- New and Innovative
- Industry is changing
- Don't you love the "Extra Space"
- We thought you'd appreciate it

***All the reasons  
School Nutrition Director's  
NEED a SEAT at the TABLE!***

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# A Bit About Our District



- **Fulton County Schools** – Metro Atlanta Georgia
- 95,000 Students 17,000+ Staff
- Approximately 700 SNP school and central staff
- 95 Kitchens
- SBP (Grab-n-Go, BIC, Kiosks, NSLP (Grab-n-Go, Kiosks, Self-Service, Salad Bars, Customized Deli Lines, Build-A-Bowl), After-School Snacks, and Summer Feeding/Seamless Summer
- 43.93% Free/Reduced – 27 CEP Schools
- Overseen the building/renovation of 50+ kitchens during tenure
  - To include:
    - Freezer/Cooler Replacements
    - Serving Line Renovations
    - Full Kitchen Renovations
    - New School (Kitchen) Builds

# Getting Started...The Why

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- Federal Regulations mandate you financially to stay in the black, therefore you need to have a voice for determining how best to design your kitchens and cafés in a way that will keep the customers you have and attract new ones!
- **Too late to voice your opinion after the kitchen is designed and built**
- Stay on top of trends in order to design the kitchen you need



# Planning – Where to Start

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- Understand the Norms/Roles
  - Who is speaking on behalf of School Nutrition?
  - Who is leading Capital Programs in your district?
  - Know the Flow of Communication
- Become well-versed
  - Ability to Walk the Talk (when it's time)
  - Approach with good intentions to produce good work
- Understand the Operations
  - Do your homework
  - The timeline to build a new school (where the kitchen falls)
  - If you need renovations – the best time to ask





# Implementation – The “Keys”

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## Unlocking the Door

- Ask to sit in a Planning Meeting – Be Silent
  - Jot questions to ask at a later time
- You’re ready to SPEAK UP!
  - You have great insights
  - Share your Truth
  - Be Brave
  - Resist the urge to nod in agreement
- Exude Executive Presence
  - Build connections
  - Be seen as the expert
  - Build Trust

**Your  
SEAT is  
at THE  
TABLE!**



# OKAY, You Have a SEAT...NOW WHAT?

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The “Recipe” for keeping your seat:

- Be Passionate
- Be Informed/Knowledgeable
- Be Credible
- Be Available
- Be Articulate
- Be Honest/Transparent
- Be Data-Driven
- Be Forward-Thinking
- Be Brave



# Keeping “THE” Seat

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- OWN your space at the table
- Know what they don't know
- Seek Feedback
- Include vital members of your team
- Train others up to take the reigns



# Closing Thoughts

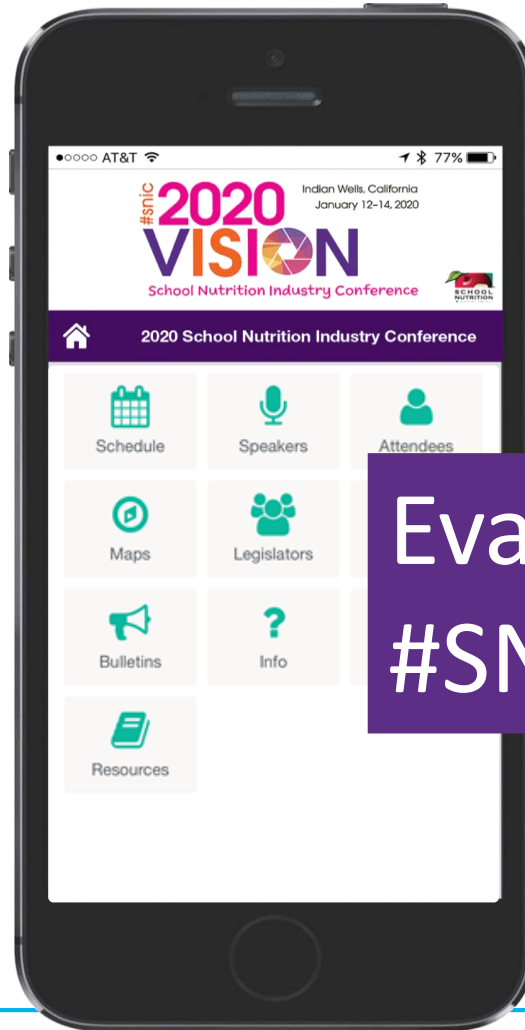
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- ✓ Having a well-informed, well-articulated, and well-respected opinion is step one!
- ✓ Have the confidence to push for your opinion as you believe fit. You need to deeply understand other people's concerns or push back and be able to either articulate why these concerns don't apply or could be resolved or to actually change your opinion as you further understand the issues.
- ✓ Have a strong opinion but hold it loosely. Advocate for it, work with others to achieve it, change it when you cannot support it anymore.
- ✓ Earning your seat at the table means contributing back.



# Your Input is Critical!



Evaluate this session using the #SNIC2020 App





Thank you!

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