SCHOOL PROGRAM STAFF

The State of Alabama has a vastly experienced staff assigned to planning and implementing the National School Lunch, School Breakfast, After School Snack, Fresh Fruit & Vegetable and Seamless Summer Programs. Collectively, the staff has many years of invaluable experience teaching both adults and children. This staff’s knowledge of Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) ranges from working locally in a school cafeteria to administration from the state level. Therefore, this staff offers a unique perspective in meeting the needs of CNP Sponsors who operate school meals programs for children enrolled in Public and Private Schools and Residential Child Care Facilities in Alabama. The staff salaries are paid from state administrative expense funds.

Listed below are the qualifications and duties of the School Program Staff.

Amber L. Adams, PhD ABD, MPH, Education Administrator School Programs, received her undergraduate degree from Jacksonville State University in Nutrition and Foods with a concentration in Dietetics. She received her Master’s degree in Public Health from Walden University, concentrating on Community Health. She completed her dietetic internship for registered dietician certification from The University of TN-Martin. Currently, she is completing a PhD in Public Health/Community Health Education. Amber has previously worked as an AL CNP Director, in school foodservice management with Sodexho Marriott, in education as an online instructor at Middle TN State University, and in federal nutrition and food safety programs with the U.S. Food & Drug Administration.

DeLois Smith, Education Specialist, earned a Bachelor’s degree in Health and Physical Education from Savannah State College in Ga. and a Master’s degree in Guidance and Counseling from Fort Valley State College in Ga. She taught school and served as a Guidance Counselor for a number of years in Georgia and Alabama. She began her career in child nutrition as a district director in Butler County responsible for supervising all school nutrition programs.

DeLois joined the state staff in July 1997. Her primary responsibilities are to provide training and technical assistance to Public / Private Schools and Residential Child Care facilities participating in the National School Breakfast, Lunch Programs, and Special Milk Programs.
Sharon Golden, MS, Education Specialist, earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Home Economics from the University of Montevallo and a Master’s of Science degree from the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa in Human Environmental Sciences and Family Financial Planning and Counseling. Sharon previously worked for the Alabama Cooperative Extension System as a Regional Extension Educator in the area of Family and Consumer Science and worked with other educators in the Youth, Family and Health Resource area which includes 4-H, human nutrition, diet and health, food safety, and family and child development.

Sharon joined the state staff in January 2013. Her primary responsibilities are to provide training and technical assistance to school districts participating in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs. Her focus areas with this section are paid lunch equity and verification.

Linda S. Jennings, MS, RD, LD, Education Specialist, earned a Bachelor’s degree in Nutrition and Foods from Auburn University and a Master’s degree in Health Education from the University of West Florida. She is a registered and licensed dietician and has previously worked in hospital settings before entering state employment. She worked for a number of years with Children’s Rehabilitation Services and the Alabama Department of Public Health. Linda joined the Child Nutrition Program state staff in March 2013 as an Education Specialist. Her primary responsibilities are 6 Cent Certification processes and workshop, conference, and training development and execution.

Angela McCormick, Nutritionist, is a Registered Dietitian and was one of two interns chosen to participate in the State Department’s first Child Nutrition Dietetic Internship. After graduating from the internship in April 2011, she joined our staff as a Nutritionist. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Nutrition and Food Science from Texas State University in 2006, and Masters of Science in Nutrition from the University of Alabama in 2012. Prior to joining our staff, she worked for the Department of Public Health as a W.I.C. Nutritionist Associate from 2007-2010.

Her primary responsibilities here are to provide leadership and guidance for regulatory compliance of the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, and the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. Angela also develops nutrition education and outreach materials for school nutrition programs and will determine media needs for these programs.

Daron Bell, Nutritionist, is a Registered Dietitian (RD) with six years’ experience as the Director of Food and Nutrition Services in hospital foodservice.
management/operations. Additionally, he has two years' experience with the Alabama Department of Public Health, working with nursing home compliance. Daron earned his B.S. degree from The University of Alabama in 2003 in Human Food and Nutrition.

*Jessica Ragan, Administrative Support Assistant,* has over 7 years of administrative experience. Jessica joined the State Child Nutrition Staff in November 2010 and prior to joining the State Department, she worked in the private sector in construction. Her primary responsibilities are to provide clerical and technical assistance to the State Staff and Child Nutrition Directors.