

Child Nutrition Program Operations Study (CN-OPS-II)

CN-OPS-II YEAR 2 REPORT: SY 2016–17

Final Report



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Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support

CN-OPS-II Year 2 Report: SY 2016–17

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ACRONYMS USED IN TOPIC-BASED BRIEFS

Acronym	Name
CACFP	Child and Adult Care Food Program
CI	Confidence Interval
CN	Child Nutrition
CN-OPS-II	Child Nutrition Program Operations Study
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DC	Direct Certification
F/RP	Free or Reduced Price
FDPIR	Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations
FFVP	Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program
FNS	Food and Nutrition Service
FPL	Federal Poverty Level
FY	Fiscal Year
LEA	Local Education Agency
NCES	National Center for Education Statistics
NSLA	National School Lunch Act
NSLP	National School Lunch Program
PII	Personally Identifiable Information
PIN	Personal Identification Number
POS	Point of Service
PPS	Probability Proportional to Size
RCCIs	Residential Child Care Institutions
SA	State Agency
SBP	School Breakfast Program
SFA	School Food Authority
SFSP	Summer Food Service Program
SMP	Special Milk Program
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
SN-OPS	Special Nutrition Program Operations Study
SSO	Seamless Summer Option
SY	School Year
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
VCR	Verification Collection Report

GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN TOPIC-BASED BRIEFS

Term	Definition
Charter Schools	Independent public schools that operate within or as a school district.
Child and Adult Care Food Program At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program (CACFP At-Risk)	CACFP At-Risk allows schools or afterschool centers in low-income areas to serve a third meal for students (usually supper) who attend an afterschool program. Students through age 18 are eligible. Afterschool programs can operate CACFP At-Risk independently or through a sponsoring organization. To be eligible, programs must (1) be organized primarily to provide care for students after school or on weekends, holidays, or school vacations during the regular school year; (2) provide regularly scheduled education or enrichment activities; and (3) be in a school attendance zone where 50 percent or more of the students are approved for free or reduced price (F/RP) meals.
Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)	CEP is a non-pricing meal service option that allows schools and school districts in low-income areas to serve breakfasts and lunches at no cost to all students without collecting household applications. Individual schools, groups of schools, or entire school districts may elect CEP if the number of identified students (i.e., those who are automatically certified for free meals through direct certification or other locally sourced lists of categorically eligible students) is at least 40 percent of total student enrollment.
Direct Certification (DC)	Direct certification allows local education agencies (LEAs) to certify eligible children for free meals based on documentation obtained directly from appropriate State Agencies, local agencies, or other authorized individuals, eliminating the need for an application.
Direct Verification	Direct verification involves using records from public agencies to verify household income or household participation in a program that creates automatic eligibility for free school meals.
Federal Sodium Targets	The Federal Sodium Targets set maximum sodium levels, in milligrams, for average weekly school meals offered in the NSLP and SBP. Targets vary by elementary, middle, and high school level. Target 1 was effective July 1, 2014. At the time of the study, Target 2 was scheduled to take effect in SY 2017-18; however, the USDA published an interim final rule ¹ in November 2017 that retained Target 1 as the regulatory limit through SY 2018-19.
Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)	FNS administers the nutrition assistance programs of the USDA. The mission of FNS is to increase food security and reduce hunger by providing children and low-income people access to food, a healthful diet and nutrition education in a way that supports American agriculture and inspires public confidence.

¹ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. 2018. *Child nutrition programs: Flexibilities for milk, whole grains, and sodium requirements*, Interim final rule, 82 Fed. Reg. 56703. [federalregister.gov/documents/2017/11/30/2017-25799/child-nutrition-programs-flexibilities-for-milk-whole-grains-and-sodium-requirements](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/11/30/2017-25799/child-nutrition-programs-flexibilities-for-milk-whole-grains-and-sodium-requirements)

Term	Definition
Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)	FDPIR is a Federal program that provides USDA Foods to low-income households living on Indian reservations and to Native American families residing in designated areas near reservations or in Oklahoma. Children from households that receive benefits from the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations are deemed categorically eligible for free school meals
Free or Reduced Price (F/RP) Meals	While all students, regardless of income, are eligible to participate in NSLP and SBP, students in income-eligible households may receive F/RP meals. Students from households earning at or below 130 percent of the Federal poverty level (FPL) qualify for free meals, while students from households with incomes between 130 and 185 percent of FPL pay a reduced price for meals.
Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)	FFVP is a federally assisted program providing free fresh fruits and vegetables to students in participating elementary schools during the school day. FFVP helps schools create healthier school environments by providing healthier food choices, expanding the variety of fruits and vegetables that students experience, and promoting nutrition education.
Head Start	Head Start provides early childhood education (i.e., prekindergarten) to qualifying children and families. Children enrolled in Head Start programs are automatically eligible to receive free school meal benefits without further application or eligibility determination.
Local Education Agency (LEA)	LEAs are governing bodies responsible for activities related to but not directly under the school food service. In most cases, the LEA is the school district.
Meal Pattern Requirements	Meal pattern requirements are minimum amounts of foods to be offered in school meals each day and over the course of a week. NSLP requirements include five meal components (fruits, vegetables, grains, meats/meat alternates, and milk). SBP requirements include three meal components (fruits, grains, and milk).
National School Lunch Act (NSLA)	The NSLA (the Act), first passed in 1946, authorizes funding and sets policy for USDA's core child nutrition programs: the NSLP, the SBP, the CACFP, and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).
National School Lunch Program (NSLP)	The NSLP is a federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions (RCCIs). It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to students each school day. State education agencies typically administer the NSLP at the State level while SFAs operate the program at the local level.
NSLP Afterschool Snack Service	This federally assisted snack service provides cash reimbursement to encourage schools to serve snacks to children after the regular school day. The snack service is administered by State agencies through agreements with SFAs. Participating sites must participate in the NSLP, serve snacks that meet Federal requirements, and operate an afterschool care program that provides organized, regularly scheduled activities in a structured and supervised environment, including an educational or enrichment activity.

Term	Definition
Nutrition Standards for School Meals	The Federal Government implemented revised nutrition standards in SY 2012–13. The revised standards require school meals to increase the availability of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk; reduce the levels of sodium, saturated fat, and trans fat in meals; and meet students' nutritional needs within their calorie requirements. Requirements vary by student age.
Special Provisions	Special provisions allow SFAs and schools to operate NSLP and SBP at a community level. Rather than making meal benefits available to students based solely on individual eligibility determinations, SFAs and schools can establish that a sufficient percentage of students are within income guidelines for F/RP meals to warrant serving all student meals at no cost to the student. Special provisions increase access to free meals for students and decrease the administrative and household burden that results from completing and processing meal applications. Under Provision 2, schools establish claiming percentages and serve meals at no cost to all students for a 4-year period. SFAs must distribute F/RP applications, and individual eligibility determinations and meal counts by type must be made during the first year (base year) to determine the percentages of F/RP and paid meals. Reimbursement for the subsequent 3 years is calculated by applying first-year percentages to monthly meal counts. Any costs of providing meals at no charge to all students that are not covered by this reimbursement must come from non-Federal funds. Provision 3 is similar to Provision 2, except that the Federal reimbursement is the same dollar amount that the school received in the base year, adjusted for enrollment, operating days, and inflation. Similar to Provision 2, Provision 3 can be further extended in 4-year increments if the socioeconomic status of the student population is stable.
School Breakfast Program (SBP)	The SBP provides cash assistance to States to operate nonprofit breakfast programs in public or nonprofit private schools and RCCIs. FNS administers the SBP at the Federal level. State education agencies typically administer the SBP at the State level while SFAs operate the program at the local level.
School Food Authority (SFA)	An SFA is the governing body responsible for the administration of one or more schools. It has the authority to enter into a legal agreement with a State to operate the school meal programs. An SFA can cover a single school district or multiple school districts.

Term	Definition
SFA Verification Collection Report (VCR) (Form FNS-742)	The SFA VCR (Form FNS-742) is an annual report that State Agencies submit to USDA based on self-reported information provided by SFAs. All SFAs with schools that operate the NSLP and/or the SBP must submit Form FNS-742 to their State Agency. The report includes results of SFA verification activities of F/RP applications in the school meals programs. The report also includes, among other data, the number of schools that operate the school meals programs, the number of students eligible for F/RP meals, the number of school meals applications that were verified for household income eligibility and changes in household eligibility based on verified applications, and data on the number of schools using special provisions.
State Agency (SA)	The State Agency is the agency in the State designated by the Governor or other appropriate executive or legislative authority of the State and approved by USDA to administer Child Nutrition Programs.
Seamless Summer Option (SSO)	SFAs that participate in NSLP or SBP are eligible to apply for this summer meal service option. The same meal service rules and claiming procedures used during the school year are applied to summer meal service. This option is a streamlined approach to feeding hungry children during the summer. Once approved through their local State agency, SFAs serve meals free of charge to children 18 years of age and younger from low-income areas.
Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)	The SFSP ensures that low-income children continue to receive nutritious meals when school is not in session. Each summer, millions of free meals are served to children in low-income areas at approved SFSP sites. State agencies receive Federal grants based on per-meal reimbursements and administer funds to local sponsors for the provision of free meals. The SFSP aims to reduce the nutrition gap that may occur during the summer months and to curb poor school performance stemming from reduced access to healthy meals among children and teens age 18 years and younger when school is out.
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	SNAP provides nutrition assistance to eligible, low-income individuals and households via a monthly benefit on a debit-type card, which can be used to purchase approved food items at authorized retail stores. SNAP is the largest program in the domestic hunger safety net.
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	The TANF program is designed to help needy families achieve self-sufficiency. States receive block grants to design and operate programs that accomplish one of the purposes of the TANF program. The four purposes of the TANF program are to (1) provide assistance to needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes; (2) reduce the dependency of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage; (3) prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies; and (4) encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.
USDA Professional Standards	USDA Professional Standards are regulations establishing minimum professional standards for school nutrition personnel who manage and operate the NSLP and the SBP. The standards went into effect on July 1, 2015. The USDA Professional Standards establish a national standard for hiring new State and local directors and annual training for all school nutrition program employees.

Term	Definition
Verification	SFAs are required to verify income for a small percentage of households approved for free or reduced price meals each school year. Verification is only required when eligibility is determined through the household application process rather than via direct certification. Each LEA must annually verify eligibility of students from a sample of household applications approved for F/RP price benefits for that school year, which is typically 3 percent of applications approved on the basis of income.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Study Rationale

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) administers Child Nutrition (CN) programs designed to provide nutritionally balanced meals and snacks to children, thereby improving the quality of their diets. The school-based CN programs operate in every State and represent an annual investment of more than \$16 billion in Federal funds. To manage these programs effectively, FNS collects and analyzes information from State-level management reports. However, FNS also has many one-time information needs that cannot be answered with current program data, including those needed to address current policy issues associated with CN programs.

The multiyear study of Child Nutrition Program Operations (CN-OPS-II) provides FNS with a mechanism to collect program data in a timely and efficient manner. CN-OPS-II is authorized by Sec. 28(a)(1) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA),¹ which directs USDA to perform annual national performance assessments of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP).

CN-OPS-II collects a broad range of data on policy, administrative, and operational issues within the CN programs. The study provides:

- general descriptive data on CN program characteristics to help FNS respond to questions about CN programs in schools;
- data related to program administration for developing and revising program regulations, managing resources, and reporting requirements; and
- data related to program operations to help FNS develop and provide training and technical assistance for State agencies (SAs) and School Food Authorities (SFAs)² responsible for administering the CN programs at the State and local levels.

To address all study objectives, CN-OPS-II includes annual web-based surveys of SAs and SFAs. All SAs and a nationally representative sample of approximately 2,000 SFAs are asked to respond to the CN-OPS-II survey each year. The survey design is modular and includes core topics that are administered every year and special topics that are administered in one or more years. Data from CN-OPS-II allow for cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses. Cross-sectional analyses provide a snapshot of program operations at a point in time; these can be conducted with data from each survey year and from all survey modules administered to SAs and SFAs. Because all SAs are surveyed each year, longitudinal analyses can examine changes at the State level. The SFA sample differs in each study year; therefore, it does not support cohort-type analyses but it does support repeated cross-sectional analyses.

¹ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. 2019. Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 79 P.L. 396, 60 Stat. 230. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/richard-b-russell-national-school-lunch-act>

² SFAs, local education agencies (LEAs), and school districts are distinct governing bodies. SFAs are the governing bodies responsible for school food service operations, but some of the responsibilities are fulfilled by LEAs or districts. In most cases, the LEA and SFA are the same entity (i.e., the school district). This report, and the research briefs within it, generally refers to SFAs, but readers should note that recent NSLP statutes and regulations refer to LEAs for some functions addressed in the briefs (e.g., applications, certification and verification).

An earlier study report presented findings from CN-OPS-II Year 1, which collected data during SY 2015–16.³ This report focuses on CN-OPS-II Year 2, which collected data on SY 2016–17 between October 2017 and January 2018.⁴

Child Nutrition Programs Examined in this Study Series

The **National School Lunch Program (NSLP)** and the **School Breakfast Program (SBP)** operate through schools and serve lunches and breakfasts to an average of 30 million and 15 million students, respectively, each school day.⁵ The overarching goals of the NSLP and SBP are to ensure that students do not go hungry and have access to nutritious meals and snacks that optimize their academic performance and development while they are at school. All students, regardless of income, are eligible to participate in the NSLP and SBP.

Both the NSLP and SBP are usually administered at the State level by a CN director situated within an SA that may be a department of education, health, or agriculture; and at the local level by SFAs, which are typically individual school districts or groups of smaller districts.

All public and private nonprofit schools and residential child care institutions are eligible to participate in the NSLP and SBP. All students in participating schools or institutions are eligible to obtain school meals and afterschool snacks provided through these programs. Free meals are available to students from families with household incomes at or below 130 percent of the Federal poverty level (FPL), and reduced-price meals are available to students from families with incomes between 130 percent and 185 percent of FPL. Students from families with incomes above 185 percent of FPL pay full price for meals.

Eligibility for free or reduced price (F/RP) meals can be established in multiple ways. Students can be determined eligible through an application. Alternatively, students may be directly certified and approved for free meals because their families participate in the Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid (in some States), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or Food Distribution Programs on Indian Reservations (FDPIR). Students are also categorically eligible for free meals if they are listed by SAs and LEAs as homeless, migrant, runaway, or participating in Head Start. The school meals programs also include multiple streamlined counting and claiming provisions (Provisions 2 and 3) that employ alternative approaches to determining eligibility for F/RP meals and conducting daily meal counts. Provision 2 in 1980 and Provision 3 in 1995 were implemented to reduce burden on parents, make it easier for students to receive F/RP meals, and reduce the paperwork required of SAs and LEAs to administer the school meals programs. The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), a school meals service option for high-poverty schools and SFAs, allows eligible schools and LEAs to provide breakfast and lunch at no cost to all students, without the need for families to submit a household application. CEP was gradually phased in over several school years and was made available nationwide during SY 2014–15. Schools operating under Provisions 2 and 3 and under CEP serve all meals at no cost to participating students.

³ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. 2019. *Child nutrition program operations study (CN-OPS-II): Year one report: SY 2015–2016*. Murdoch, Jim, Angela Campbell, Charlotte Cabili, Eric Zeidman, Roderick Harrison, Allison Ottenbacher, . . . Nick Beyler. Alexandria, VA. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/nslp/child-nutrition-program-operations-study-ii-school-year-2015-2016>

⁴ For the Revenues and Expenditures survey module, SFAs were asked to respond using information from most recent complete school year, which was SY 2015–16.

⁵ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. 2019. *Child nutrition tables*. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/child-nutrition-tables>

Other CN programs include the **NSLP Afterschool Snack Service**, which provides snacks that meet Federal nutrition requirements for children in eligible afterschool programs.

The **CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program** offers reimbursable snacks and suppers independently or through a sponsoring organization.

The **Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)** aims to reduce the nutrition gap that may occur during the summer months, and to curb poor school performance stemming from reduced access to healthy meals among children and teens age 18 and younger when school is out.⁶

The **NSLP Seamless Summer Option (SSO)** is available to any SFA participating in the NSLP or SBP as a streamlined approach to feeding hungry children in low-income areas. Once approved, SFAs serve meals free of charge to children, 18 years and under, at sites and camps. Meals served are reimbursed at the NSLP or SBP “free” rates.

CN-OPS-II SY 2016–17 Data Collection

The research team collected the data needed to address the research questions for CN-OPS-II Year 2 (SY 2016–17) using the State CN Director Survey and the SFA Director Survey, which are included as Appendices B and C, respectively, in the supplemental volume of appendices. To ensure generalizability of the results, all SA Directors that participated in NSLP and/or SBP (except Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands)⁷ were invited to participate in this study. This data collection also included a nationally representative sample of SFA Directors. The research team sent an invitation to complete the State CN Director Survey to 53 SAs with CN operations. All 53 SFAs responded to the request and submitted their survey via the online Qualtrics survey platform.

A nationally representative sample of 2,185 SFA units was invited to complete the SFA Director Survey, thereby creating the final Year 2 sample.⁸ Appendix A provides a detailed description of the Year 2 sample design, data collection, analysis of response rates, sample weight construction, and other statistical considerations. The Year 2 data collection is a part of the 4-year design that ensures SFAs (except for very large SFAs that must be sampled with certainty each year to ensure national representativeness) are only asked to respond to the survey once during the 4-year period.

The SFA Director Survey resulted in 1,679 valid responses – a response rate of 76.8 percent. All but five of the responses were completed by SFAs using the web survey. Five SFAs completed the survey as a printed copy. Characteristics of the responding SFAs are provided in Exhibit 1. The responding SFAs were weighted to represent the characteristics of the full population of public SFAs in terms of SFA size, urbanicity, the percentage of students approved for F/RP meals, and FNS Region. In addition, the research team conducted a nonresponse analysis to ensure that nonresponse did not vary with the SFA subgroups presented above and to ensure the statistical precision of analyses by SFA subgroups. Appendix A, Data Collection and Analysis Methods, in the supplemental volume of appendices, provides additional details about the SFA sample, data collection, and nonresponse analysis.

⁶ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. *How to participate in summer meals*. Accessed July 16, 2020. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/sfsp/SFSP-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

⁷ Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands were not asked to participate in the survey due to hurricanes in that region at the time of data collection.

⁸ The research team excluded one sampled unit from Puerto Rico due to recent hurricanes at the time of data collection. The research team excluded a second sampled unit (SFA) because the State agency could not provide contact information.

Year 2 data collection began in October 2017 and was initially planned to conclude in December 2017. However, because many school districts close for the winter holidays, the research team and FNS decided to extend the data collection period into late January 2018 to give remaining SFAs ample time after the holidays to complete the survey.

Notably, Year 2 data collection occurred during SY 2017–18 but asked for data related to SY 2016–17. Data collection was delayed due to timing issues with the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) review process. In addition, the CN-OPS-II annual school year data collection schedule is ambitious, as the study allows FNS to review, update, and propose additional survey modules and questions for each school year. To account for potential recall errors or errors in which responses referred to SY 2017–18 instead of SY 2016–17, the survey instruments clearly stated the questions for SY 2016–17 on each page, and most questions mentioned the reference year. However, the instrument included some questions that referred to the "current" year or were stated in the present tense, which may have increased the possibility of data for the wrong year being reported. This is a limitation of the Year 2 data.

Exhibit 1 | Sample Sizes by SFA Characteristics

SFA Characteristic	Number of SFAs Weighted (Unweighted)	Percentage of SFAs Weighted (Unweighted)
All SFAs	14,755 (1,679)	100.0% (100.0%)
SFA Size		
Small (1–999 students)	7,493 (516)	50.8% (30.7%)
Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	5,301 (807)	35.9% (48.1%)
Large (5,000–24,999 students)	1,673 (300)	11.3% (17.9%)
Very large (≥ 25,000 students)	288 (56)	2.0% (3.3%)
Urbanicity		
City	1,637 (201)	11.1% (12.0%)
Suburban	3,163 (436)	21.4% (26.0%)
Town	2,397 (346)	16.2% (20.6%)
Rural	6,519 (661)	44.2% (39.4%)
Unknown*	1,039 (35)	7.0% (2.1%)
Percentage of Students Approved for F/RP Meals		
Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	5,527 (659)	37.5% (39.2%)
Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	6,156 (710)	41.7% (42.3%)
High (≥ 60 percent F/RP)	3,072 (310)	20.8% (18.5%)
FNS Region		
Mid-Atlantic	1,502 (198)	10.2% (11.8%)
Midwest	3,745 (416)	25.4% (24.8%)
Mountain Plains	2,297 (200)	15.6% (11.9%)
Northeast	1,645 (180)	11.1% (10.7%)
Southeast	1,255 (195)	8.5% (11.6%)
Southwest	2,240 (259)	15.2% (15.4%)
Western	2,071 (231)	14.0% (13.8%)

* Not all SFAs were matched to the U.S. Department of Education Common Core of Data Local Education Agency Universe Survey File. Therefore, the urbanicity of some SFAs is unknown.

Topics Covered in CN-OPS-II SY 2016–17

CN-OPS-II is designed to enable FNS to package its information needs into “modular” surveys that can be repeated annually. CN-OPS-II surveys are also intended to collect data on issues that are currently, or are likely to become, the focus of the FNS policymaking processes. Some issues require longitudinal data captured by questions included in the surveys for each study year. Other issues can be addressed by cross-sectional data that appear in surveys only once during the study.

The CN-OPS-II Year 2 (SY 2016–17) SFA and State CN Director Surveys included survey topics administered in past studies of CN program operations, plus additional topics designed to measure response to recent changes in program regulations and guidance. Exhibit 2 lists the survey modules included in the SY 2015–16 and SY 2016–17 SFA Director Surveys. The SY 2016–17 SFA Director Survey included seven modules that were also included in the SY 2015–16 SFA Director Survey: eligibility determination and verification, meal counting, meal prices, revenues and expenditures, school participation, SFA director background, and student participation. Four modules were new to the SFA Director Survey for SY 2016–17: F/RP meal application, meal pattern requirements, SFA procurement practices, and Smart Snacks in School standards. Six modules that were included in the SY 2015–16 SFA Director Survey were not included in the SY 2016–17 SFA Director Survey: financial management, food and beverage marketing, food service equipment, food service operations, Smarter Lunchrooms, and training and professional standards.

Exhibit 2 | SFA Director Survey Modules for CN-OPS-II SY 2015–16 and SY 2016–17

Module	CN-OPS-II SY 2015–16	CN-OPS-II SY 2016–17
Eligibility determination and verification	X	X
Financial management	X	
Food and beverage marketing	X	
Food service equipment	X	
Food service operations	X	
F/RP meal application		X
Meal counting	X	X
Meal pattern requirements		X
Meal prices	X	X
Revenues and expenditures	X	X
School participation	X	X
SFA director background	X	X
SFA procurement practices		X
Smart Snacks in School standards		X
Smarter Lunchrooms	X	
Student participation	X	X
Training and professional standards	X	

As shown in Exhibit 3, the SY 2016–17 State CN Director Survey included six modules. Two modules—food service administration and State CN director background—were also included in the SY 2015–16 survey. Four other modules were included for the first time in CN-OPS-II in the

SY 2016–17 survey: F/RP meal application; SFA procurement practices; subsidies, resources, and funding; and USDA grants. The professional standards module included in SY 2015–16 was not included in the SY 2016–17 survey.

Exhibit 3 | State CN Director Survey Modules for CN-OPS-II SY 2015–16 and SY 2016–17

Module	CN-OPS-II SY 2015–16	CN-OPS-II SY 2016–17
F/RP meal application		X
Food service administration	X	X
Professional standards	X	
SFA procurement practices		X
State CN director background	X	X
Subsidies, resources, and funding		X
USDA grants		X

Key Findings from CN-OPS-II SY 2016–17

The report is organized around six research briefs that present the major themes and findings of the study.⁹ Key findings of each topic-based brief are presented below.

PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL MEALS

The NSLP and the SBP provide nutritious meals to students during the school day and are administered at the Federal level by the USDA/FNS. Additional FNS programs provide food to students in out-of-school-time settings, including the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals component and the summer feeding programs, which include the SFSP and the SSO. Participation in these programs helps ensure that students have access to nutritious foods during the school day, evenings, and summers.

In this brief, we present an overview of participation in NSLP and SBP among public SFAs and schools. We examine participation rates among students, and we provide information on the availability of the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals component and the summer feeding programs.

KEY FINDINGS

- Most SFAs and schools participated in both the NSLP and SBP.
- On a typical school day, 61 percent of enrolled students participated in the NSLP and 30 percent participated in the SBP.
- SFA participation in the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals component more than doubled from SY 2015-16 to SY 2016-17.
- Thirty-seven percent of SFAs provide nutrition assistance to students during summers through SFSP and SSO. The percentage of SFAs offering SFSP was higher among very large SFAs compared to smaller SFAs.

⁹ Analytic tables on which the briefs are based can be found in Appendices D through J in the full report.

SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

SFAs participating in the Federal school meal programs must operate school food service¹⁰ on a nonprofit basis. Unless otherwise approved by their State agencies, SFAs must limit the net cash resources of their nonprofit food service to an amount that does not exceed 3 months' average expenditures.¹¹ As a result, most SFAs aim to operate at the break-even level, which occurs when school food service revenues are equal to program costs. Sources of revenue for nonprofit food service accounts include payments for paid and reduced price meals, local revenues, State revenues, revenues from foods other than reimbursable meals (i.e., nonprogram foods), and Federal cash reimbursements. Because account funds must cover the costs of meals served to students not eligible for free or reduced price meals, SFAs may consider increasing the prices of paid meals or increasing revenue from other non-Federal sources. This brief provides a national snapshot of SFA financial management. While survey questions primarily asked about SY 2016-17, the questionnaire asked for financial data from SY 2015-16.

KEY FINDINGS

- About 70 percent of SFAs at least broke even financially in SY 2015–16.
- Larger SFAs broke even more often and were more likely to operate the school food service account at a surplus compared to smaller SFAs, which more often operated at a financial deficit.
- Overall, SFA median revenues have increased over time, such that the gap between SFA revenues and expenditures has narrowed.
- On average, SFAs charged \$1.48 for a paid breakfast and \$2.57 for a paid lunch in SY 2016–17.
- Per-meal reimbursements were the most common State-provided subsidy.

SCHOOL MEAL SERVICE

In order to meet program requirements and receive appropriate Federal reimbursements, SFAs must quantify the number and type of meals served within their schools. SFAs use various methods to count and claim reimbursable meals. These methods may vary based on the location of the meal service and the meal delivery model used. This brief provides an overview of meal service models used in schools, and the techniques employed by schools to track meals served.

KEY FINDINGS

- Approximately one half of SFAs served meals outside the cafeteria in school year (SY) 2016-17.
- SFAs used alternative meal service models more frequently for breakfast than for lunch.

¹⁰ SFAs monitor Child Nutrition (CN) Program revenues and expenditures through their nonprofit food service account. The CN Programs managed by the SFA can include the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, the Summer Food Service Program, the Seamless Summer Option, the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) At-Risk Afterschool Meals component, the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, and the Special Milk Program.

¹¹ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. National School Lunch Program, 7 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), section 210.9. Accessed at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/part-210%E2%80%9494national-school-lunch-program>

- The most popular alternative breakfast service models were ‘grab and go’ meals and breakfasts served in the classroom.
- Most SFAs used personal identification numbers (PINs) to track meals served in the cafeteria.
- Outside the cafeteria, SFAs most frequently used rosters or cashier lists to track meals served.

SCHOOL MEALS ELIGIBILITY: APPLICATIONS, CERTIFICATION, AND VERIFICATION

Eligibility for free or reduced price (F/RP) meals may be established in a variety of ways. Students may be determined eligible for F/RP meals through income applications or may be approved for free meals through direct certification. State agencies provide school meal eligibility guidance and resources, including application materials, to local education agencies (LEAs) that, in turn, provide guidance to schools. LEAs use paper applications and/or electronic applications to determine student eligibility. Each school year, LEAs select a sample of applications for verification, and selected households are asked to provide documentation to confirm student eligibility. This brief presents findings from State agencies and SFAs¹² regarding the eligibility processes for SY 2016–17, including applications, direct certification, and verification.

KEY FINDINGS

- Eighty-four percent of SFAs used F/RP school meal applications. The remaining SFAs operated under special provisions that do not require the use of applications to determine eligibility for F/RP meals.
- About 80 percent of SFAs used a F/RP application for school meals that is identical to, or closely modeled after, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) paper prototype application.
- One-third of SFAs that used school meal applications in SY 2016-17 used electronic, or a combination of electronic and paper, applications. Larger SFAs used electronic applications much more frequently than did smaller SFAs.
- Almost half of responding households had no change in student eligibility status for F/RP meals as a result of verification.

SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAM STAFF CREDENTIALS AND TRAINING

The USDA established Professional Standards for State agency directors and local school nutrition program personnel as a way to bring consistent hiring and training guidelines to school nutrition operations nationwide, and to strengthen the ability of school nutrition personnel to perform their duties effectively and efficiently. State agency directors and local school nutrition program directors must meet minimum education and experience requirements as part of the USDA Professional Standards. This brief discusses the education and experience levels of State agency and local school nutrition program directors during SY 2016–17.

¹² SFA refers to the governing body responsible for activities related to school food service. In most cases, the SFA and LEA are the same entity (i.e., the school district).

KEY FINDINGS

- State agency director education credentials met or exceeded the Professional Standards requirements.
- Education credentials among local food service directors increased since the Professional Standards were implemented. More local food service directors reported holding a bachelor's or master's degree since the implementation of the standards compared to before implementation. In addition, fewer local food service directors reported only holding a high school diploma or equivalent since the implementation of these standards. These results were consistent across SFA sizes.

SFA EXPERIENCES MEETING MEAL PATTERNS AND NUTRITION STANDARDS

In order to receive Federal reimbursement for school breakfasts and lunches, SFAs must meet USDA meal patterns and nutrition standards. The USDA phased in updated school meal patterns and nutrition standards beginning in school year (SY) 2012–13. These requirements, based on recommendations from the National Academy of Medicine (formerly the Institute of Medicine), were designed to improve the diet and health of school children, mitigate the growing rates of childhood obesity, and reflect the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. This brief presents SFA experiences implementing the updated school meal patterns and nutrition standards.

KEY FINDINGS

- SFAs offered fresh fruits and vegetables for lunch more often than canned or frozen options.
- Very few SFAs reported barriers to purchasing vegetable subgroups, while almost all SFAs reported challenges purchasing foods to meet the whole grain-rich requirement.
- Average sodium levels for lunch and breakfast met the Target 1 sodium levels across grade levels.
- Gaining student acceptance and maintaining school meal program participation (while containing program costs) were noted by SFAs as overall barriers to implementing meal pattern requirements.

Limitations and Concluding Remarks

As noted above, one limitation of the Year 2 data was that survey deployment was delayed, and the wording of some questions referring to the “current” year, or those stated in present tense (i.e., questions that did not specify “SY 2016–17”), may have increased the possibility that data were reported for the incorrect school year.

It is also notable that the data collection for this project overlapped with that of the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Characteristics Study. In order to minimize burden on the SFAs, FNS allowed the 141 SFAs that were selected for the CEP Study and for this data collection to be moved to future years of CN-OPS-II. These SFAs were replaced with comparable SFAs that would have been sampled as part of CN-OPS-II in future years. Due to its size, one SFA was included in both the CN-OPS-II and CEP Study data collections, as the generalizability of this sample depended on the inclusion of this very large SFA. To the extent that CEP-eligible SFAs were systematically excluded from this data collection but will be included in the sample for subsequent CN-OPS-II data collections, there is a chance that selection bias was introduced to this data collection. However, because the CEP-eligible SFAs were replaced with SFAs that had

comparable characteristics (e.g., SFA size, urbanicity, FNS Region), this bias should be minimal.

The CN-OPS-II study series provides a robust data collection tool for FNS to examine program and operational outcomes, challenges, and practices in its Child Nutrition Programs. Moreover, this data collection is performed annually, which allows FNS to collect SFA and State agency operational data on issues as they become relevant for inquiry. The data presented annually in this study series can be combined with other data collections to reveal trends over time, providing FNS with data on which policy decisions, support, and guidance can be based.

Research Brief #1

Participation in School Meals



Research Brief Participation in School Meals

Child Nutrition Program Operations Study II (CN-OPS-II) SY 2016–17

Introduction

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP) provide nutritious meals to students during the school day and are administered at the Federal level by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). Additional FNS programs provide food to students in out-of-school-time settings, including the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) At-Risk Afterschool Meals component and the summer feeding programs, which include the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and the Seamless Summer Option (SSO). Participation in these programs helps ensure that students have access to nutritious foods during the school day, evenings, and summers.

In this brief, we present an overview of participation in NSLP and SBP among public school food authorities (SFAs) and schools. We examine participation rates among students, and we provide information on the availability of the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals component and the summer feeding programs (SFSP and SSO).

Key findings include the following:

- Most SFAs and schools participated in both the NSLP and SBP.
- On a typical school day, 61 percent of enrolled students participated in the NSLP and 30 percent participated in the SBP.
- SFA participation in the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals component more than doubled from SY 2015-16 to SY 2016-17.
- Thirty-seven percent of SFAs provide nutrition assistance to students during summers through SFSP and SSO. The percentage of SFAs offering SFSP was higher among very large SFAs compared to smaller SFAs.

Findings

Most schools and SFAs participated in both the NSLP and SBP in SY 2016–17.

In SY 2016–17, 91 percent of public schools participated in both the NSLP and SBP (Exhibit 1), with little variance by school type (elementary, middle, high, other).¹ Most participating SFAs (88 percent) participated in both NSLP and SBP in *all* schools.

On a typical school day in SY 2016–17, 61 percent of enrolled students participated in the NSLP, and 30 percent of enrolled students participated in the SBP.

Students certified to receive F/RP meals participated at higher rates than the general student body for both lunch (71 percent) and breakfast (37 percent). Student participation rates in the NSLP and SBP were highest in elementary schools (63 percent and 34 percent, respectively) and lowest in high schools (51 percent and 20 percent, respectively) (Exhibit 2).

Exhibit 1. Schools Participating in NSLP and/or SBP

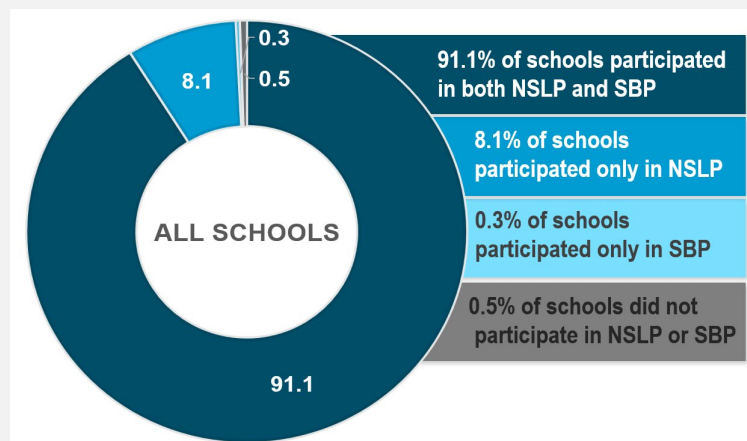
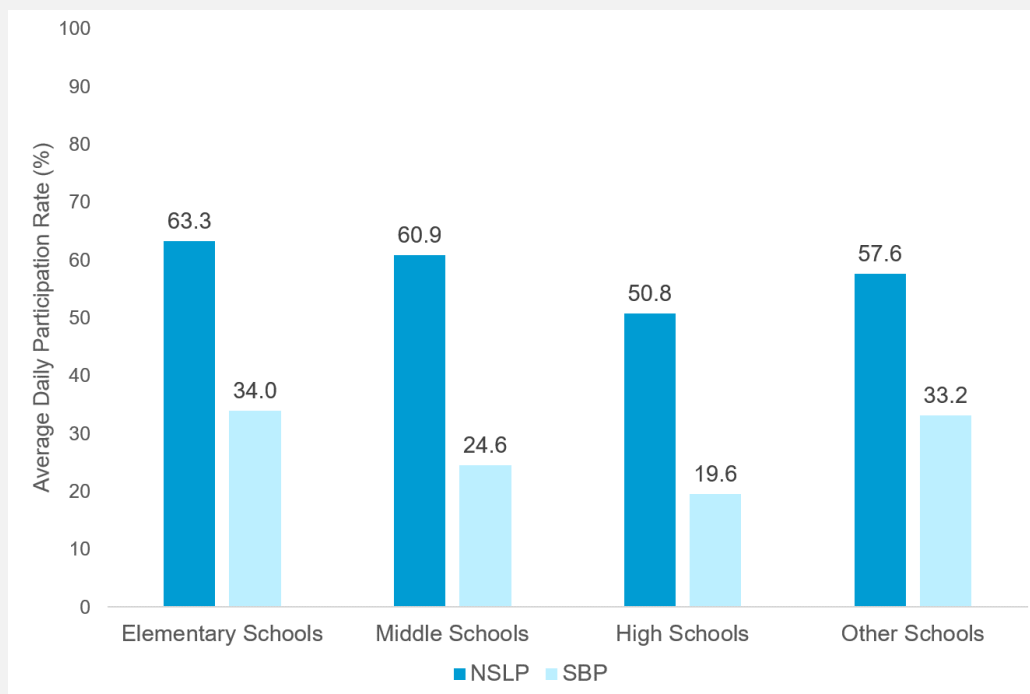


Exhibit 2. Average Daily Student Participation Rates for NSLP and SBP by School Type



¹ "Other" schools are those that have a grade span that does not fall in the range for elementary, middle, or high schools, such as Pre-K–8 or 6–12.

SFA participation in the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals component more than doubled from SY 2015-16 to SY 2016-17.

The CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals component has been available in all States since 2010. In SY 2015–16, 7 percent of SFAs offered the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals component.² In SY 2016–17, 17 percent of SFAs were offering CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals, and 22 percent of schools participated as sites in the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals component (data not shown). Participation in the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals component was significantly higher among SFAs with more than 25,000 students (50 percent) than among SFAs with fewer than 1,000 students (10 percent) and SFAs with 1,000 to 5,000 students (18 percent) (Exhibit 3).

Popular strategies used to build awareness of the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals component among eligible students and within the community at large included newsletters, social media, and advertising at family-focused community events.

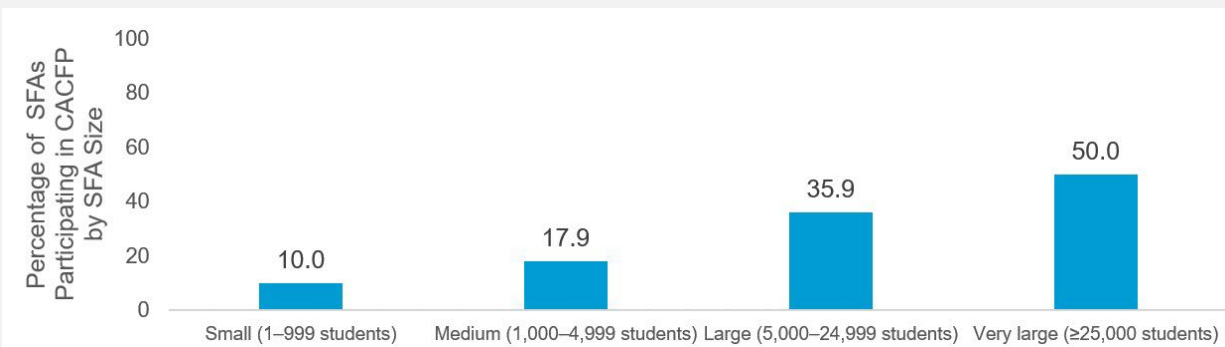
CN Programs that Provide Nutritious Meals and Snacks when School is Not in Session

The **CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals component** provides children attending afterschool enrichment or education programs a snack or an additional meal (usually supper). To participate, a site must be located in a qualifying area. The program serves children age 18 and under.

SFSP provides free meals to children during the summer months when school is not in session.

SSO allows SFAs to provide meals during summer months using the same service rules and claiming procedures that they use for NSLP/SBP during the school year.

Exhibit 3. Percentage of SFAs Offering the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals Component, by SFA Size and School Type



Thirty-seven percent of SFAs participated in summer feeding programs during the summer of 2016.

More SFAs participated in the SFSP than in the SSO in 2016. Approximately 20 percent of SFAs participated solely in the SFSP, 9 percent participated solely in the SSO, and almost 8 percent participated in both the SFSP and the SSO (Exhibit 4). SFA participation in the SFSP was significantly higher among very large SFAs (59 percent) than among small (22 percent) and medium-sized SFAs (28 percent). While the majority of summer meal sites were schools, more than one-third were non-school sites (39 percent for the SFSP and 37 percent for the SSO).

Popular strategies used to build awareness of the summer feeding programs among eligible, nonparticipating students included newsletters, USDA materials, and social media. Strategies employed to build awareness of

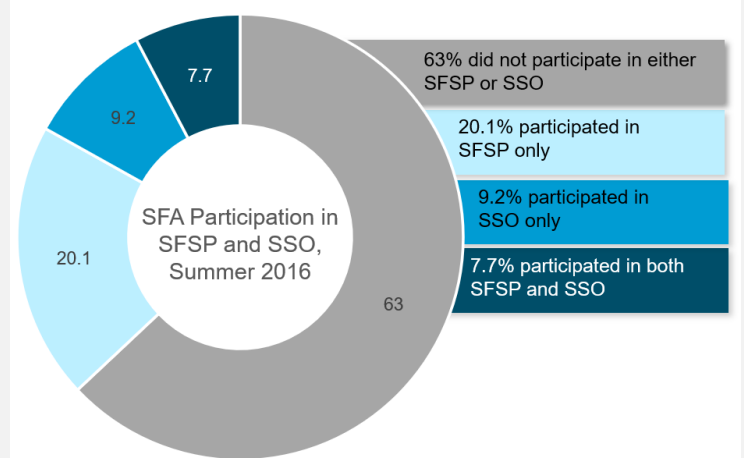
² Percentage of all SFAs participating in the CACFP At-Risk Meals Program was 7.4 percent in SY 2015–16 (Murdoch, J., et al. [2019]. *Child nutrition program operations study [CN-OPS-II]: Year one report: SY 2015–2016* [Table 2.12]).

summer feeding programs within the community at large included USDA materials, social media, and the FNS Summer Meal Site Finder.

Conclusions

Almost all of the country's SFAs participated in the NSLP and the SBP, and most SFAs participated in these programs in all schools. Participation rates for both breakfast and lunch were higher among students certified for F/RP meals than among the general student body. School meals were supplemented by the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals component in 1 in 6 SFAs. The summer feeding programs were also popular, as 37 percent of SFAs participated in summer feeding programs during the summer of 2016.

Exhibit 4: SFA Participation in the Summer Feeding Programs in 2016



About CN-OPS-II

The Child Nutrition Program Operations Study II (CN-OPS-II) is a multi-year study that provides general descriptive information on characteristics and administration of school-based child nutrition (CN) programs. Unless otherwise stated, this brief presents data and results from the CN-OPS-II Year 2 study, covering school year (SY) 2016–17. Data were collected through web-based surveys from a nationally representative sample of 1,679 SFAs across the United States and 53 State CN agencies, including the District of Columbia, Guam, and American Samoa.

For SY 2016–17, data are presented across six research briefs. The full report, including all six research briefs, are available on the FNS website at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/research-and-analysis>.

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Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture

FNS administers the nutrition assistance programs of the USDA. Working with its public, private and non-profit partners, the FNS mission is to increase food security and reduce hunger by providing children and low-income people access to food, a healthful diet and nutrition education in a way that supports American agriculture and inspires public confidence.



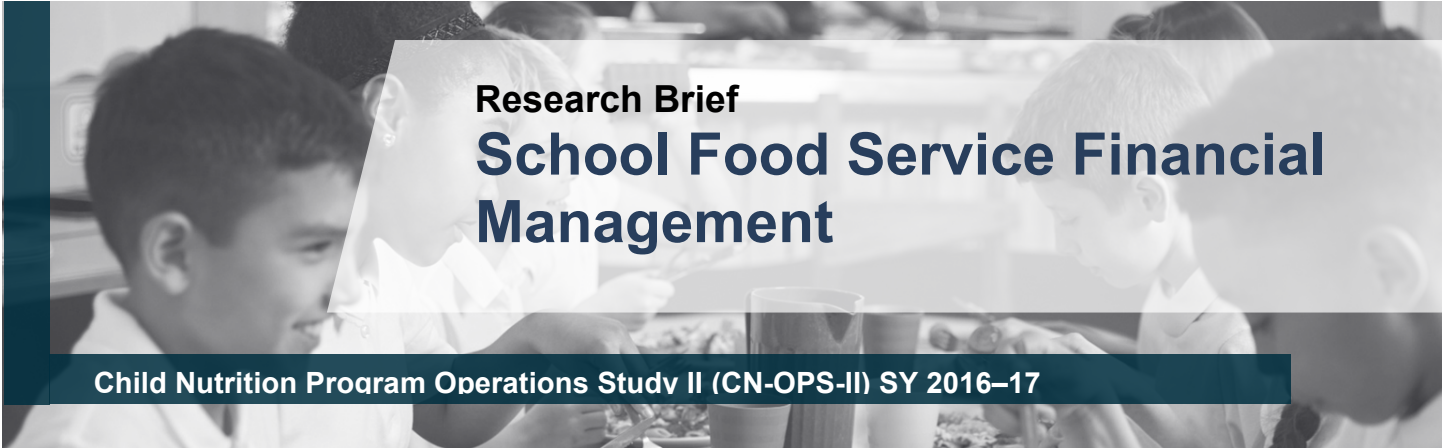
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Research Brief #2

School Food Service Financial Management



Research Brief School Food Service Financial Management

Child Nutrition Program Operations Study II (CN-OPS-II) SY 2016–17

Introduction

School food authorities (SFAs) participating in the Federal school meal programs must operate school food service¹ on a nonprofit basis. Unless otherwise approved by their State agencies, SFAs must limit the net cash resources of their nonprofit food service to an amount that does not exceed 3 months' average expenditures.² As a result, most SFAs aim to operate at the break-even level, which occurs when school food service revenues are equal to program costs. Sources of revenue for nonprofit food service accounts include payments for paid and reduced price meals, local revenues, State revenues, revenues from foods other than reimbursable meals (i.e., nonprogram foods), and Federal cash reimbursements. Because account funds must cover the costs of meals served to students not eligible for free or reduced price meals, SFAs may consider increasing the prices of paid meals or increasing revenue from other non-Federal sources. This brief provides a national snapshot of SFA financial management. While survey questions primarily asked about SY 2016-17, the questionnaire asked for financial data from school year (SY) 2015-16.

Key findings include the following:

- About 70 percent of SFAs at least broke even financially in SY 2015–16.
- Larger SFAs broke even more often and were more likely to operate the school food service account at a surplus compared to smaller SFAs, which more often operated at a financial deficit.
- Overall, SFA median revenues have increased over time, such that the gap between SFA revenues and expenditures has narrowed.
- On average, SFAs charged \$1.48 for a paid breakfast and \$2.57 for a paid lunch in SY 2016–17.
- Per-meal reimbursements were the most common State-provided subsidy.

¹ SFAs monitor Child Nutrition (CN) Program revenues and expenditures through their nonprofit food service account. The CN Programs managed by the SFA can include the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, the Summer Food Service Program, the Seamless Summer Option, the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) At-Risk Afterschool Meals component, the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, and the Special Milk Program.

² U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. National School Lunch Program, 7 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), section 210.9. Accessed at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/part-210%E2%80%9494national-school-lunch-program>

Findings

More than 70 percent of SFAs at least broke even financially in SY 2015–16.

SFAs generally strive to “break even,” which involves ensuring that their total costs and revenues from all school meal programs and from the sale of non-program foods are equal.³ Forty-six percent of SFAs reported breaking even (defined as a ratio of revenue to expenditures between 0.95 and 1.05) in SY 2015–16. Twenty-five percent of SFAs reported greater revenues than expenditures, while 29 percent reported greater expenditures than revenues (Exhibit 1).

While the vast majority of large and very large SFAs reported at least breaking even (81 percent and 94 percent, respectively), small and rural SFAs were less likely to do so. Approximately 24 percent of small SFAs and 20 percent of rural SFAs reported revenues that did not exceed 85 percent of expenditures. Overall, SFAs with fewer students more often operated at a deficit, while larger SFAs more often operated at a surplus (Exhibit 2).

Exhibit 1. Distribution of SFAs’ Annual Revenues to Annual Expenditures, SY 2015–16

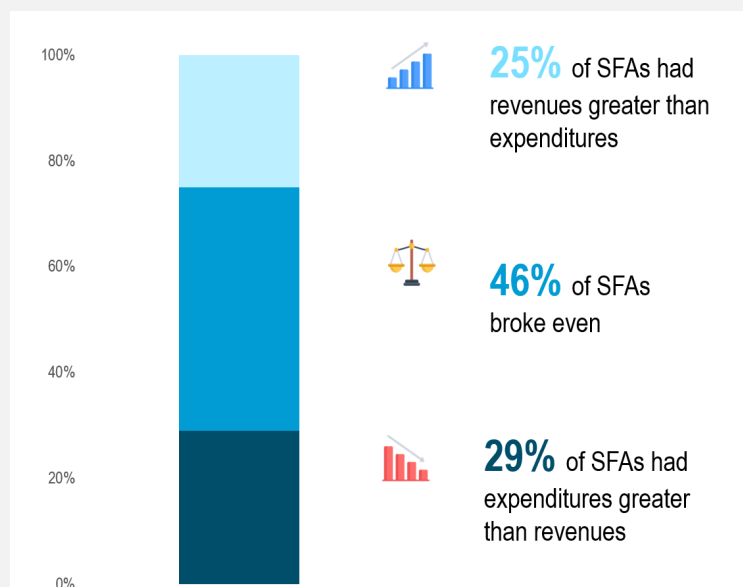
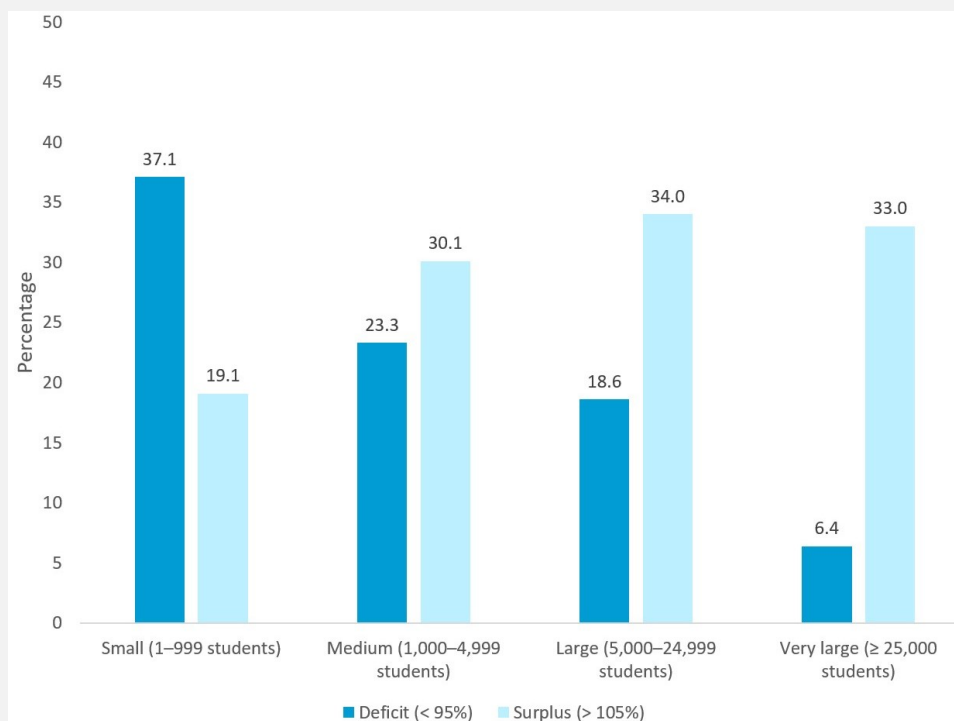


Exhibit 2. Percentage of SFAs Operating at a Surplus or Deficit, by SFA Size



³ Non-program food sales include competitive foods, adult meals, catering, and meals provided to schools or day care programs outside the SFA.

The gap between SFA revenues and expenditures in SY 2015–16 was approximately half the size of the gap in SY 2013–14.

On average, across all SFAs, the ratio of median SFA revenues to expenditures has increased over time since SY 2013–14 (Exhibit 3), meaning that more SFAs are at least breaking even than ever before. The median overall difference between SFA revenues and expenditures was \$10,410 in SY 2015–16, which was a decrease from \$25,432 in SY 2013–14.

Exhibit 3. Ratio of Median Revenues to Expenditures from SY 2013–14 to SY 2015–16



On average, SFAs charged \$1.48 for a paid breakfast and \$2.57 for a paid lunch in SY 2016–17.

In SY 2016–17, the average prices for reduced price breakfasts and lunches were \$0.30 and \$0.39, respectively, which was unchanged from SY 2015–16. In SY 2016–17, SFA prices for meals were lowest in elementary schools (\$1.42 for breakfast and \$2.43 for lunch, on average) and highest in high schools (\$1.52 for breakfast and \$2.65 for lunch).

The average price of a paid lunch increased from \$2.49 in SY 2015–16 to \$2.57 in SY 2016–17. The Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) provision of the NSLA requires that SFAs cover the costs associated with paid meals through the meal price or other non-Federal contributions, which may explain the increase in paid lunch prices from SY 2015–16 to SY 2016–17.⁴

Per-meal reimbursements were the most common State-provided subsidy.

Although the majority (63 percent) of school food revenues comes from Federal reimbursements and donated commodities, about 3 percent comes from State and local government contributions.⁵ States contribute to school food revenues by providing matching funds to each SFA, and some States provide per-meal reimbursements in addition to the Federal reimbursement. Almost three-quarters of SFAs reported receiving per-meal reimbursements from the State for breakfast (71 percent) and lunch (72 percent), respectively.

⁴ PLE regulations were implemented as part of the reauthorization for the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, Section 205 and Section 206.

⁵ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. 2019. *School Nutrition and Meal Cost Study*. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-nutrition-and-meal-cost-study>

Conclusions

Financial management data from the CN-OPS-II Year 2 study provided information on SFA revenues and expenditures, changes in the ability of SFAs to break even over time, changes in SFA meal prices over time, and State-provided breakfast and lunch subsidies during SY 2015–16. Importantly, results show that most SFAs were in good financial standing in terms of their management of school food service during SY 2015–16. Overall, SFA median revenues increased over time, such that the gap between SFA revenues and expenditures has decreased. Larger SFAs broke even more often compared to smaller SFAs. In fact, larger SFAs were more likely to operate the school food service account at a surplus, while smaller SFAs more often operated at a financial deficit. SFAs have increased prices of paid meals over time while prices of reduced price meals stayed the same. SFAs balance meeting nutrition standards with managing program costs, maintaining student acceptance, and retaining meal program participation.

About CN-OPS-II

The Child Nutrition Program Operations Study II (CN-OPS-II) is a multi-year study that provides general descriptive information on characteristics and administration of school-based child nutrition (CN) programs. Unless otherwise stated, this brief presents data and results from the CN-OPS-II Year 2 study, covering school year (SY) 2016–17. Data were collected through web-based surveys from a nationally representative sample of 1,679 SFAs across the United States and 53 State CN agencies, including the District of Columbia, Guam, and American Samoa.

For SY 2016–17, data are presented across six research briefs. The full report, including all six research briefs, are available on the FNS website at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/research-and-analysis>.

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Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture

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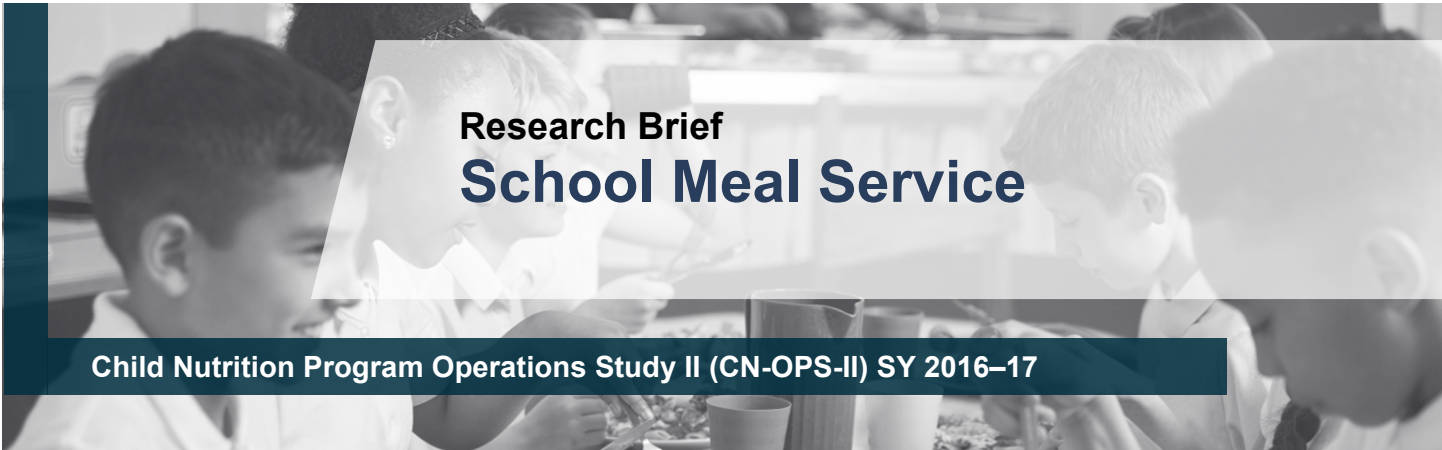
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Research Brief #3

School Meal Service



Research Brief School Meal Service

Child Nutrition Program Operations Study II (CN-OPS-II) SY 2016–17

Introduction

In order to meet program requirements and receive appropriate Federal reimbursements, school food authorities (SFAs) must quantify the number and type of meals served within their schools. SFAs use various methods to count and claim reimbursable meals. These methods may vary based on the location of the meal service and the meal delivery model used. This brief provides an overview of meal service models used in schools, and the techniques employed by schools to track meals served.

Key findings include the following:

- Approximately one half of SFAs served meals outside the cafeteria in school year (SY) 2016-17.
- SFAs used alternative meal service models more frequently for breakfast than for lunch.
- The most popular alternative breakfast service models were 'grab and go' meals and breakfasts served in the classroom.
- Most SFAs used personal identification numbers (PINs) to track meals served in the cafeteria.
- Outside the cafeteria, SFAs most frequently used rosters or cashier lists to track meals served.

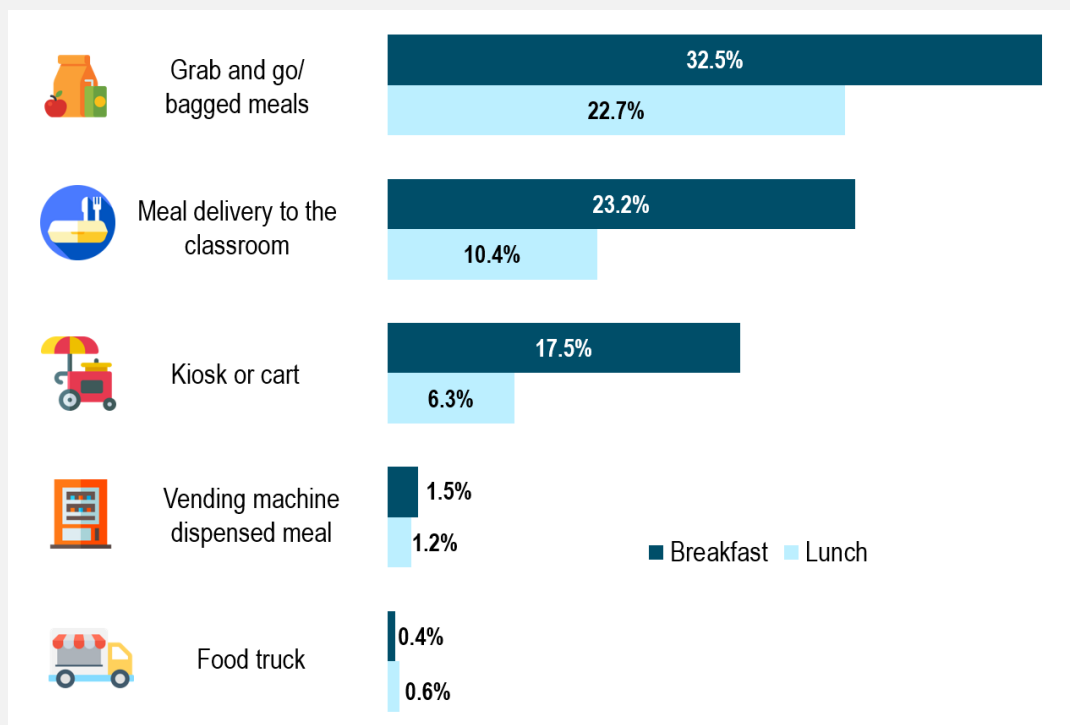
Findings

SFAs were more likely to use alternative meal service models for breakfast than for lunch.

Meal services that take place outside of the traditional cafeteria setting, such as meals served in the classroom, distributed at a kiosk, or dispensed by a vending machine, are considered alternative meal service models. About half (49 percent) of SFAs served school meals outside of the cafeteria in SY 2016-17 and they did so more frequently for breakfast than for lunch. One in four SFAs (25 percent) used alternative meal service models for both breakfast and lunch, 19 percent did so for breakfast only, and slightly less than 6 percent did so for lunch only.

Pre-packaged meals (e.g., grab and go or bagged meals) and meal delivery to the classroom were the most popular alternative meal service models used. One-third of SFAs (33 percent) served pre-packaged meals for breakfast, while 23 percent of SFAs served pre-packaged meals for lunch (Exhibit 1). Around one-quarter of SFAs (23 percent) reported delivering breakfast to the classroom, compared to 10 percent of SFAs that delivered lunch to the classroom. Other alternative meal service models used by SFAs included distributing meals at kiosks or carts (18 percent for breakfast and 6 percent for lunch) and dispensing meals through vending machines (2 percent for breakfast and 1 percent for lunch). Food trucks were used least often, by less than 1 percent of SFAs.

Exhibit 1. Alternative Meal Service Models Used by SFAs for Breakfast and Lunch



In cafeterias, most SFAs reported using PINs to track the number of free, reduced price, and paid meals served to students.

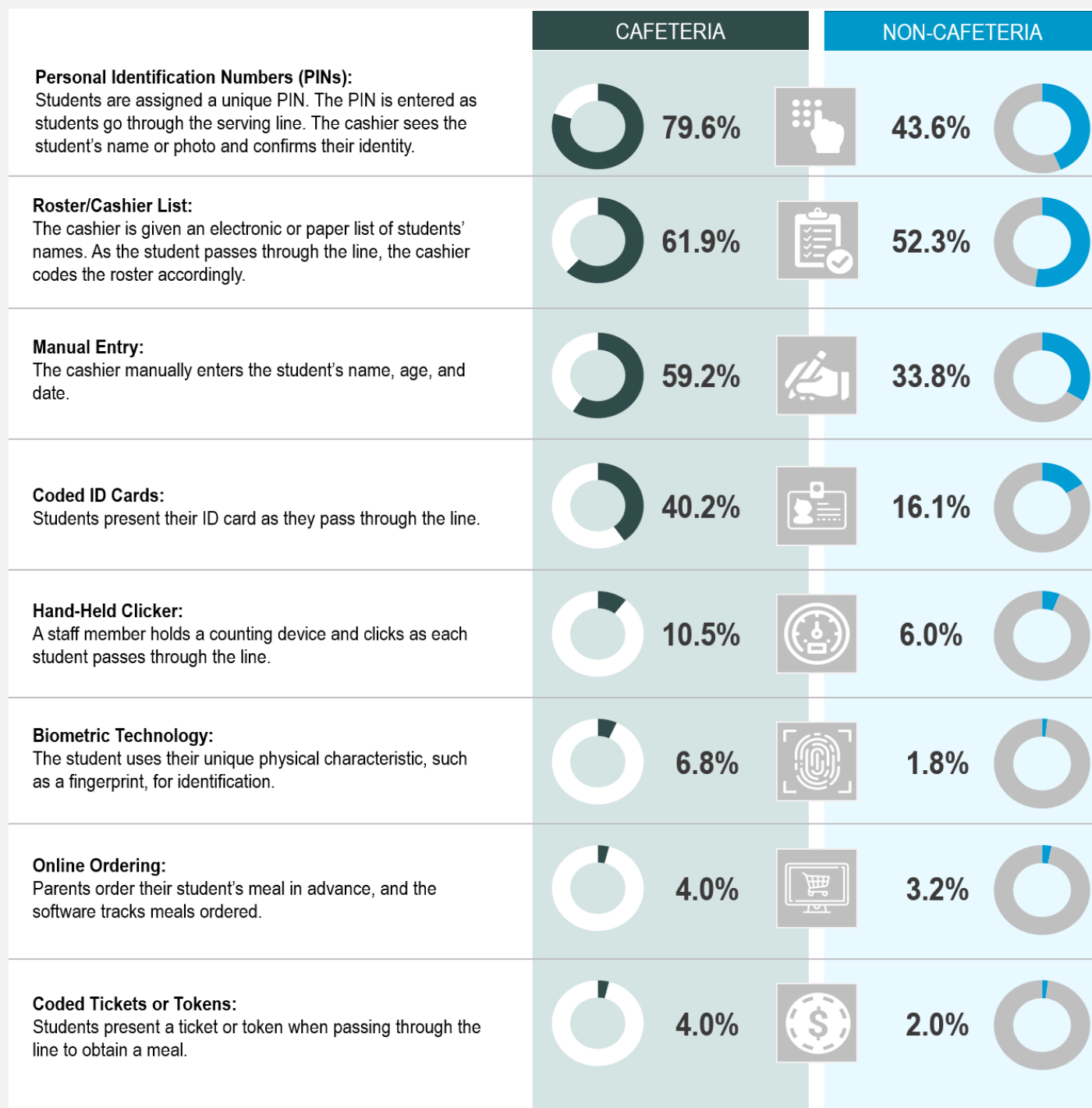
While SFAs indicated the use of multiple methods to track meals served, similarly to what was reported in SY 2015–16 (79 percent), PINs were the most used method to track meals served in the cafeteria in SY 2016–17 (80 percent) (Exhibit 2). More than half of SFAs used rosters or cashier lists to track meals served in the cafeteria (62 percent in SY 2016–17 and 55 percent in 2015–16). Other widely used methods in SY 2016–17 included manual entry (60 percent) and coded identification cards (40 percent). Few SFAs used more advanced technologies, such as biometrics (7 percent) and online ordering (4 percent).¹

In non-cafeteria settings, SFAs most frequently used rosters or cashier lists.

Outside the cafeteria, rosters or cashier lists were the most popular method to track meals served (52 percent), followed by PINs (44 percent) (Exhibit 2). Manual entry was used by 34 percent of SFAs that served meals in non-cafeteria settings, compared to 59 percent of SFAs in cafeteria settings. The less frequently used methods to track meals served in non-cafeteria settings included coded identification cards (16 percent) and handheld clickers (6 percent). Less than 4 percent of SFAs used biometrics, online ordering, or coded tickets or tokens to track non-cafeteria meals. Fifty-one percent of SFAs did not serve meals outside of the cafeteria.

¹ Because SFAs may use various methods to track meals served (by school type or by meal), the survey question permitted multiple responses.

Exhibit 2. SFA Methods Used to Track Meals Served in Cafeteria and Non-Cafeteria Settings



Notes: The survey allowed for multiple responses. Non-cafeteria methods to track the number of meals served are presented only for SFAs that served meals outside of cafeterias.

Overall, SFAs seemed to be taking steps to implement more advanced technology for meal tracking, though the increases in use of these methods were minor. From SY 2015–16 to SY 2016–17, the use of coded identification cards increased from 34 to 40 percent for cafeteria settings and from 12 to 16 percent for non-cafeteria settings. Other methods (e.g., biometric technology, coded tickets or tokens) did not show a

significant change in use between the two school years. Data on use of online ordering, handheld clickers, and manual entry methods were not collected for SY 2015–16 and thus could not be compared.

Conclusions

SFAs used alternative meal service models more frequently for breakfast than for lunch, and pre-packaged 'grab and go' meals were the most commonly used non-cafeteria meal service method. While a variety of meal counting systems were utilized in SY 2016–17, SFAs most often reported using PINs, rosters, and manual entry, both inside and outside the cafeteria, to accurately track meal counts. Although less common, technology-based tracking methods were used by some SFAs, including coded ID cards, biometric data (such as fingerprints), and online ordering.

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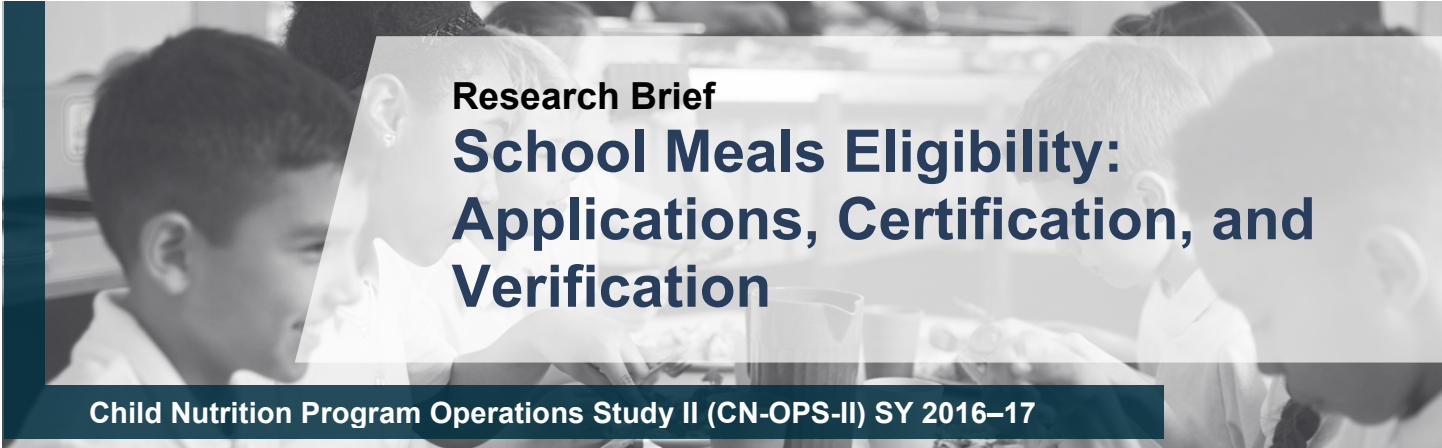
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Research Brief #4

School Meals Eligibility: Applications, Certification, and Verification



Research Brief

School Meals Eligibility: Applications, Certification, and Verification

Child Nutrition Program Operations Study II (CN-OPS-II) SY 2016–17

Introduction

Eligibility for free or reduced price (F/RP) meals may be established in a variety of ways. Students may be determined eligible for F/RP meals through income applications or may be approved for free meals through direct certification. State agencies provide school meal eligibility guidance and resources, including application materials, to local education agencies (LEAs) that, in turn, provide guidance to schools. LEAs use paper applications and/or electronic applications¹ to determine student eligibility. Each school year, LEAs select a sample of applications for verification, and selected households are asked to provide documentation to confirm student eligibility. This brief presents findings from State agencies and school food authorities (SFAs)² regarding the eligibility processes for school year (SY) 2016–17, including applications, direct certification, and verification.

Key findings include the following:

- Eighty-four percent of SFAs used F/RP school meal applications. The remaining SFAs operated under special provisions that do not require the use of applications to determine eligibility for F/RP meals.
- About 80 percent of SFAs used a F/RP application for school meals that is identical to, or closely modeled after, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) paper prototype application.
- One-third of SFAs that used school meal applications in SY 2016-17 used electronic, or a combination of electronic and paper, applications. Larger SFAs used electronic applications much more frequently than did smaller SFAs.
- Almost half of responding households had no change in student eligibility status for F/RP meals as a result of verification.

Findings

Most SFAs used paper applications that were modeled after the USDA prototype application.

SFAs may use paper or electronic applications to determine student eligibility for F/RP meals; however, SFAs must be able to provide paper applications even if they have an electronic application process. State agencies

¹ The phrase used in the State agencies and SFA surveys included "electronic or web-based applications." For brevity, this was shortened to electronic applications. In all cases, the term refers to applications that were submitted electronically using a web-based portal.

² SFA refers to the governing body responsible for activities related to school food service. In most cases, the SFA and LEA are the same entity (i.e., the school district).

can encourage SFAs to use State-developed guidance or materials, which could include use of a F/RP application modeled after the prototype application developed by the USDA.³

Of the 53 responding State agencies, 36 created F/RP application guidance and supporting materials according to their policies, while 17 State agencies did not have policies in place. These 36 State agencies all created policies for the use of paper F/RP applications, and seven of these State agencies also reported developing guidance regarding electronic applications. Thirty-two of the 36 State agencies reported developing guidance materials to accompany F/RP applications. Moreover, 47 State agencies reported that their paper F/RP application was identical to, or closely modeled after, the USDA prototype, while most State agencies reported using application instructions (46 State agencies), letters to households (49 State agencies), and FAQs (41 State agencies) that were identical to or closely modeled after the USDA prototype.

Similarly, most SFAs (78 percent) reported that their paper F/RP application and accompanying materials were identical to, or closely modeled after, the USDA prototype (Exhibit 1). SFAs had generally positive perceptions of the USDA prototype application and rated it as

equally or more useful compared to other F/RP applications (58 percent). Most SFAs indicated the USDA prototype application was not challenging for SFAs to use (63 percent) and considered the quality of information collected through the application to be adequate or high quality (96 percent).

Most SFAs more often used paper F/RP applications compared to electronic applications.

Eighty-four percent of SFAs collected household applications in SY 2016–17.⁴ Of these, 11.7 percent of SFAs used electronic applications most often, and 72.7 percent used paper applications most often (Exhibit 2). Thirty-three percent of SFAs reported using electronic applications at all.

Exhibit 1. SFA Use of the USDA Prototype Application

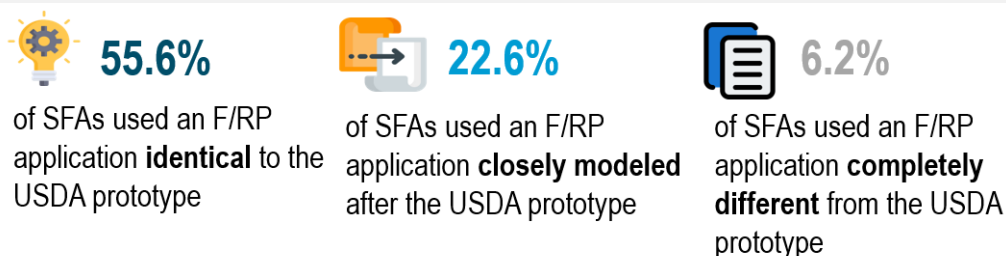
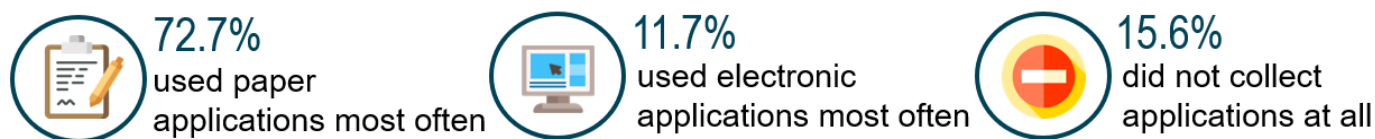


Exhibit 2. Application Type Used Most Often by SFAs



³ At the time of this survey, only the hard copy USDA prototype for F/RP school meals had been developed. Since then, USDA has developed a web-based prototype for F/RP school meals.

⁴ SFAs participating in National School Lunch Program/School Breakfast Program do not use F/RP school meal applications if they have elected to participate in a special assistance alternatives, including Provision 2, Provision 3, or the Community Eligibility Provision.

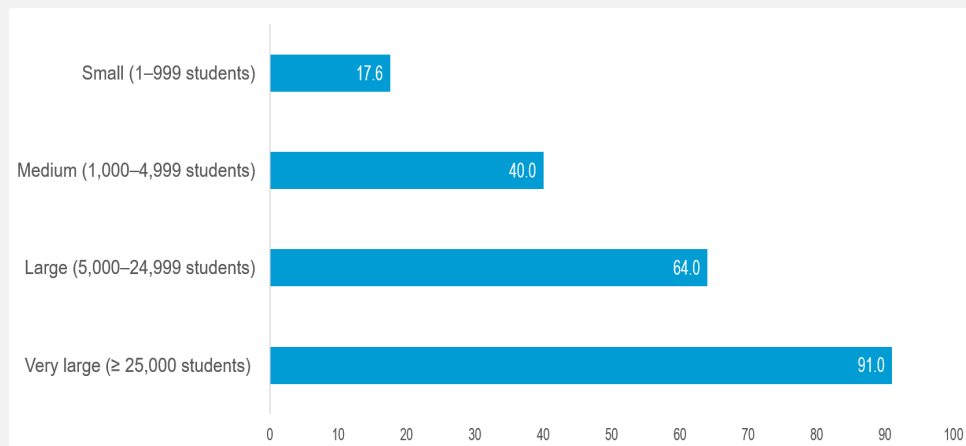
Large SFAs used electronic applications more often than smaller SFAs.

Larger SFAs were more likely to use electronic applications than smaller SFAs (Exhibit 3). Ninety-one percent of SFAs with more than 25,000 students used electronic applications, compared to 18 percent of SFAs with fewer than 1,000 students.

Larger SFAs also encouraged schools to use electronic applications more than smaller SFAs (not shown).

SFAs reported benefits of using electronic applications, such as decreased application processing time (86 percent of SFAs) and decreased administrative burden (75 percent of SFAs). A key challenge of using electronic applications, reported by 53 percent of SFAs, was that some families had limited internet access.

Exhibit 3. Use of Electronic Applications, by SFA Size



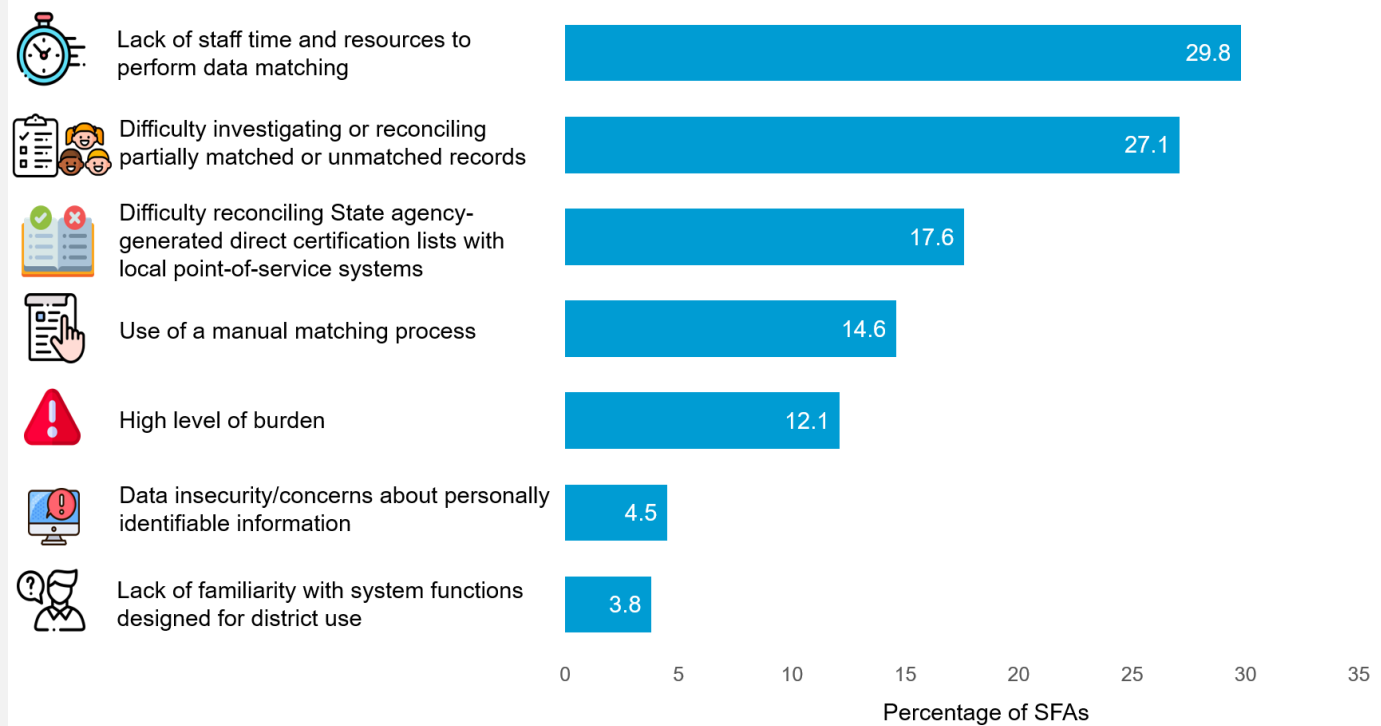
SFAs directly certified most students by October 31.

Among students directly certified for free meals, most (70 percent) were directly certified on or before October 31.

More than 40 percent of SFAs reported no challenges conducting direct certification. Among the 38 percent of SFAs that were responsible for performing direct certification, the most prevalent challenges related to performing direct certification at the local level included lack of time and resources (reported by 30 percent of SFAs) and difficulty reconciling student records with those provided by the State (reported by 27 percent of SFAs) (Exhibit 6).

Direct certification, implemented as part of the 2004 Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act, establishes student eligibility for free meals based on participation data obtained from other means-tested programs, eliminating the need for a household to submit an application. Specifically, students may be directly certified for free school meals based on their or a household member's participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, or Medicaid (in pilot demonstration States). SFAs are required to report the number of students directly certified through SNAP and through other programs by the last day of October on the annual FNS Verification Collection Report.

Exhibit 4. Challenges with Direct Certification



Note: An additional 8.1 percent of SFAs reported “Other” challenges, such as difficulties matching students with Social Security numbers and issues establishing extended eligibility for students in the households of directly certified students.

Almost half of responding households had no change in student eligibility status for F/RP meals as a result of verification.

Among responding households, 48 percent of verification efforts resulted in no change to students’ eligibility status. Changes to student eligibility as a result of verification for responding households were most often from *free to reduced price* (10 percent), from *reduced price to paid* (8 percent), and from *free to paid* (4 percent), based on income and the number of household members. Twenty-four percent of F/RP applications were changed to *paid* as a result of household non-response to verification efforts.

Verification confirms the accuracy of household size and income information submitted through the F/RP application. Verification is only required when eligibility is determined through the application process, and is not required for direct certification. LEAs must conduct verification annually, and the standard sample size for verification is the lesser of 3 percent or 3,000 of the approved applications on file as of October 1 during that school year.

SFAs contacted households selected for verification using letters (98 percent), telephone calls (14 percent), and emails (10 percent). Almost half of SFAs made three or more attempts to contact households to request documentation required for verification. Most SFAs translated verification notices into the primary language of the recipient household (77 percent) and/or accepted verification documents by email (74 percent).

Conclusions

State agencies provided guidance on the use of applications and supporting materials to determine eligibility for F/RP school meals. Most SFAs used the USDA prototype for their paper F/RP application and supporting materials. The use of electronic applications increased with SFA size. Seemingly, SFAs with large numbers of applications to process found efficiencies by using electronic applications; SFAs that used electronic applications reported decreased processing time and decreased administrative burden.

Most students who were directly certified for free meals were determined to be eligible prior to October 31 in the relevant school year. About 60 percent of SFAs responsible for direct certification reported challenges, including lack of staff time and resources to perform data matching. While about half of verification efforts (48 percent) did not change a student's eligibility status, the most common changes were from *free* to *reduced price* eligibility and from *reduced price* to *paid* status.

About CN-OPS-II

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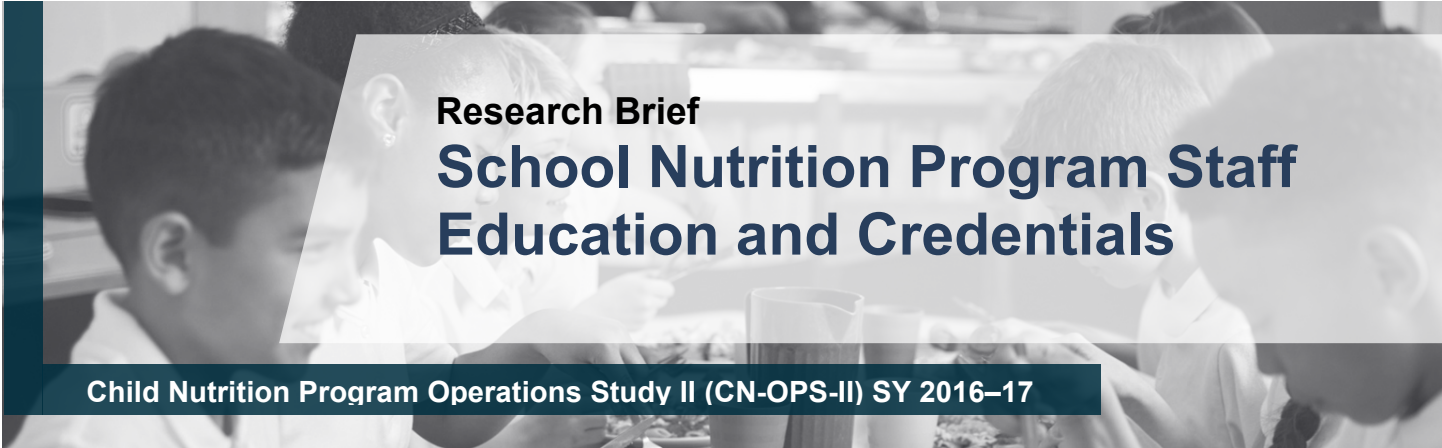
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Research Brief #5

School Nutrition Program Staff Education and Credentials



Research Brief School Nutrition Program Staff Education and Credentials

Child Nutrition Program Operations Study II (CN-OPS-II) SY 2016–17

Introduction

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) established Professional Standards for State agency directors and local school nutrition program personnel as a way to bring consistent hiring and training guidelines to school nutrition operations nationwide, and to strengthen the ability of school nutrition personnel to perform their duties effectively and efficiently.¹ State agency directors and local school nutrition program directors must meet minimum education and experience requirements as part of the USDA Professional Standards (Exhibit 1).² This brief discusses the education and experience levels of State agency and local school nutrition program directors during school year (SY) 2016–17.

Key findings include the following:

- State agency director education credentials met or exceeded the Professional Standards requirements.
- Education credentials among local food service directors increased since the Professional Standards were implemented. More local food service directors reported holding a bachelor's or master's degree since the implementation of the standards compared to before implementation. In addition, fewer local food service directors reported only holding a high school diploma or equivalent since the implementation of these standards. These results were consistent across school food authority (SFA) sizes.

Findings

Most State agencies required State Child Nutrition (CN) directors to hold a bachelor's degree or higher.

Fifty of 53 State agencies required State CN directors to have a bachelor's degree or higher. This included 38 State agencies that noted that the minimum education requirement for State CN directors in their State was a

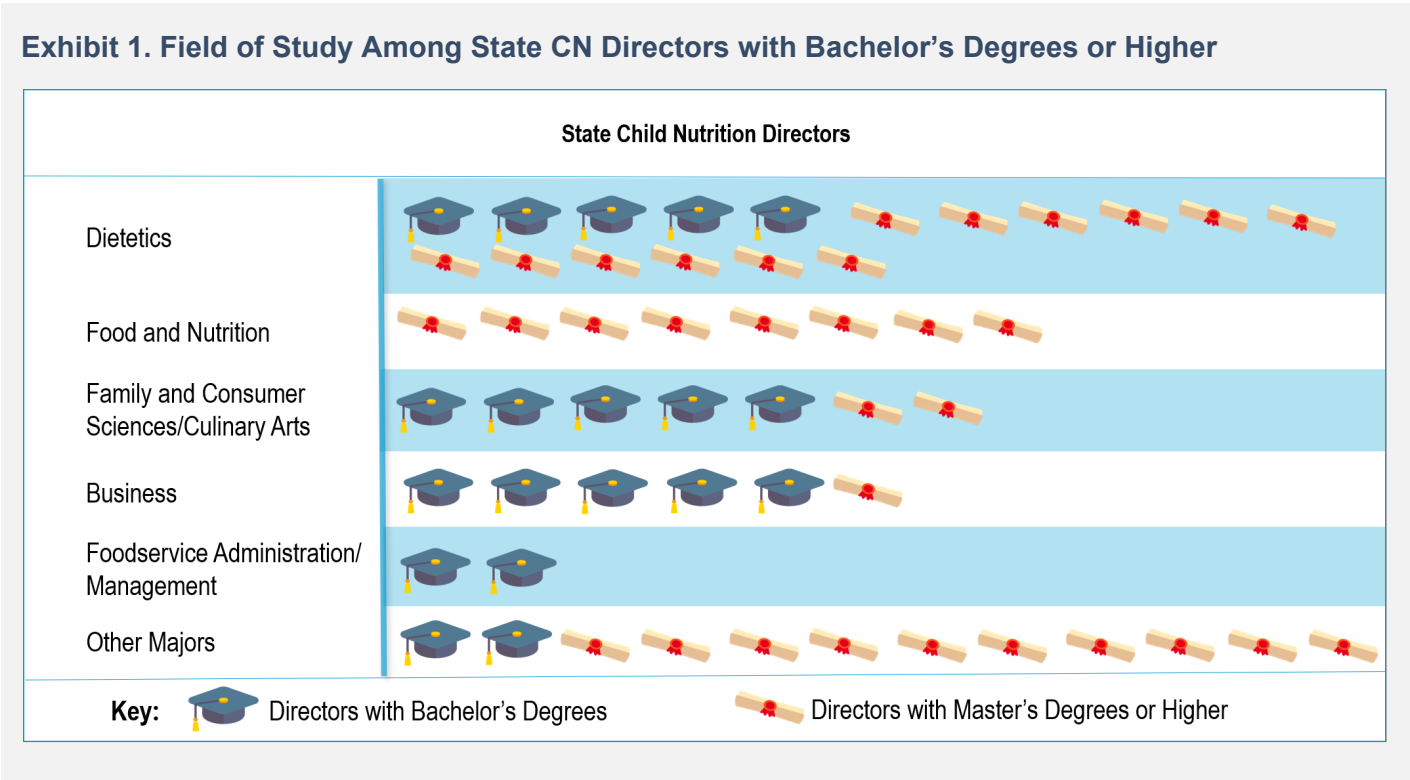
¹ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. 2015. *Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Programs Personnel*, 80 Fed. Reg. 40, pp. 11077–11096. <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-03-02/pdf/2015-04234.pdf>.

² On March 1, 2019, USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) published a final rule adding four flexibilities to the hiring standards for new school nutrition program directors in small local educational agencies (LEAs) and new State directors of school nutrition programs. This brief reflects the requirements that were in effect prior to the publication of that final rule. The term "LEA" refers to the governing body responsible for activities related to but not directly under the school food service. In most cases, the LEA is the school district.

bachelor’s degree, and 12 State agencies that noted that the minimum education requirement in their State was a graduate degree. Notably, three State agencies required only a high school diploma.

State CN director education credentials met or exceeded the Professional Standards requirements.

Almost all State CN directors (52 out of 53) met the Professional Standards education requirement of a bachelor’s degree or higher, and nearly two-thirds (33) had a master’s degree or higher.³ Most State CN director degrees, both undergraduate and graduate, were in dietetics (Exhibit 1). Other majors reported included public administration, social policy, management and accounting, home economics, organizational leadership, health and human services, communications, and other education majors.⁴ Almost all State CN directors (50) reported 5 years or more of relevant experience at the time of hire.



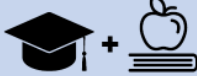
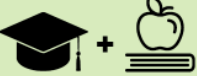
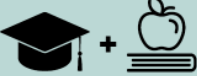
³ The State CN director who did not have a bachelor’s degree was hired before the Professional Standards went into effect. This person was grandfathered in and is not required to meet the current standards.

⁴ One State CN director did not provide college major information.

SFA directors hired after the Professional Standards went into effect had higher levels of education than those hired before the standards went into effect.

The education and experience requirements for school nutrition program directors are outlined in Exhibit 2. SFA directors hired after the standards went into effect were more likely to have a bachelor's or master's degree compared to those hired before the standards went into effect (Exhibit 3). Relatedly, fewer SFA directors had completed only high school or GED requirements after the Professional Standards were implemented relative to before, and this was the case across SFAs of all sizes.

Exhibit 2. Minimum Education Requirements for New School Nutrition Program Directors

Directors of Small SFAs (2,499 or fewer students) must possess ONE of the following:	Directors of Mid-Sized SFAs (2,500–9,999 students) must possess ONE of the following:	Directors of Large SFAs (10,000 or more students) must possess ONE of the following:
 +   +  +   +  +  1  +  +  1  +  3	 +   +  +   +  +  2  +  +  2 Preferred but not required: Directors hired without a bachelor's degree are strongly encouraged to work toward attaining a bachelor's degree.	 +   +  +   +  +  5 Preferred but not required: At least three credit hours at the university level in food service management, plus at least three credit hours in nutritional sciences at the time of hiring; a master's degree or willingness to work toward one; and at least one year of management experience, preferably in school nutrition.
 Bachelor's degree  Associate's degree  High school diploma	 Related academic major  Unrelated academic major	 State-recognized certificate  Years of school nutrition program experience

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. 2015. *Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Programs Personnel*, 80 Fed. Reg. 40, pp. 11077–11096. <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-03-02/pdf/2015-04234.pdf>

Exhibit 3. Education Background of SFA Directors Hired Before and After July 1, 2015, by SFA Size

	Percentage of SFA directors hired before and after July 1, 2015					
	Small SFAs (1–999 students)		Mid-Sized SFAs (1,000–4,999 students)		Large SFAs (≥ 5,000 students)	
Highest degree	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
Master's degree or higher	18.9	23.1	15.6	20.3	31.4	37.4
Bachelor's degree	13.4	23.5	29.7	32.8	43.0	51.0
High school or GED, some college (no degree), or associate degree	67.2	53.1	54.5	46.9	25.4	11.8

Conclusions

CN-OPS II Year 2 study data regarding the educational background of State CN directors and SFA directors demonstrated that State agencies and SFAs were meeting the minimum education credentials for hiring, as required by the USDA Professional Standards. Most State CN directors met or exceeded the minimum education requirements. Education levels of SFA Directors also met the outlined professional standards, as more SFA Directors reported having at least a bachelor's degree after the Professional Standards went into effect compared to reported education levels prior to the implementation of the standards.

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Research Brief #6

SFA Experiences Meeting Meal Patterns and Nutrition Standards

Research Brief

SFA Experiences Meeting Meal Patterns and Nutrition Standards

Child Nutrition Program Operations Study II (CN-OPS-II) SY 2016–17

Introduction

In order to receive Federal reimbursement for school breakfasts and lunches, school food authorities (SFAs) must meet U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) meal patterns and nutrition standards. The USDA phased in updated school meal patterns and nutrition standards beginning in school year (SY) 2012–13. These requirements, based on recommendations from the National Academy of Medicine (formerly the Institute of Medicine), were designed to improve the diet and health of school children, mitigate the growing rates of childhood obesity, and reflect the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* (Exhibit 1).¹ This brief presents SFA experiences implementing the updated school nutrition standards.

Key findings include the following:

- SFAs offered fresh fruits and vegetables for lunch more often than canned or frozen options.
- Very few SFAs reported barriers to purchasing vegetable subgroups, while almost all SFAs reported challenges purchasing foods to meet the whole grain-rich requirement.
- Average sodium levels for lunch and breakfast met the Target 1 sodium levels across grade levels.
- Gaining student acceptance and maintaining school meal program participation (while containing program costs) were noted by SFAs as overall barriers to implementing meal pattern requirements.

Findings

SFAs offered fresh fruits and vegetables for lunch more often than canned or frozen options.

SFAs reported how often they offered different types of fruits and vegetables. Nearly all SFAs (89 percent) said they often or always offered fresh whole fruit. Most SFAs (84 percent) often or always offered 100-percent fruit juice with lunches. Canned fruit was the next most commonly offered type of fruit. Forty-seven percent of SFAs reported often or always offering canned fruit in juice, and 36 percent of SFAs reported often or always offering canned fruit in water. Canned fruit in syrup was often or always offered by only 8 percent of SFAs.²

Fresh vegetables, either whole or precut, were the type of vegetable offered most frequently at lunch. More than half of SFAs (53 percent) often or always offered fresh precut vegetables, and 70 percent often or always offered fresh whole vegetables at lunch. Frozen vegetables were somewhat less prevalent but still a common choice: 48 percent of SFAs often or always offered frozen precut vegetables, and 36 percent often or always offered frozen whole vegetables. No salt added and reduced sodium canned vegetables were often or always

¹ Institute of Medicine. 2010. *School meals: Building blocks for healthy children*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

² The low use of canned fruit in regular or heavy syrups may also be due to the types of canned fruits available for purchase through USDA Foods, a common procurement vehicle for SFAs.

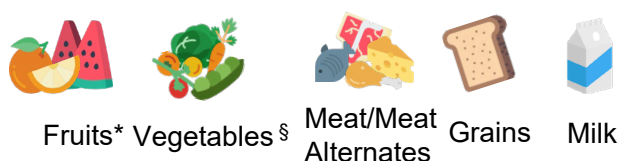
offered by 37 and 31 percent of SFAs, respectively. Seventy percent of SFAs reported planning to purchase lower sodium products to meet the sodium requirements.

Exhibit 1. School Meal Requirements in SY 2016–17

Required components of BREAKFAST



Required components of LUNCH⁺



At both lunch and breakfast, school meal requirements state the following:



All grains must be whole grain-rich. Exemptions from whole grain-rich requirements were granted in SY 2016–17 based on demonstrated hardships in offering whole grain-rich products.



Meals must meet average weekly minimum and maximum calorie levels, must meet limits on sodium and saturated fat content, and must eliminate *trans* fat.



No more than 50 percent of fruit or vegetable offerings over the course of a week can be in the form of juice.



Fluid milk must be fat-free (flavored or unflavored) or low-fat unflavored.

*Fruits can include 100-percent juice, fresh, frozen, canned, and dried fruit.

*Meat/meat alternates can be substituted for part of the grains, and vegetables can be substituted for the fruit requirements.

§Including minimum amounts for five vegetable subgroups, including dark green, red/orange, starchy, beans and peas, and other vegetables.

Most SFAs reported that it was easy to buy vegetables in all five required subgroups.

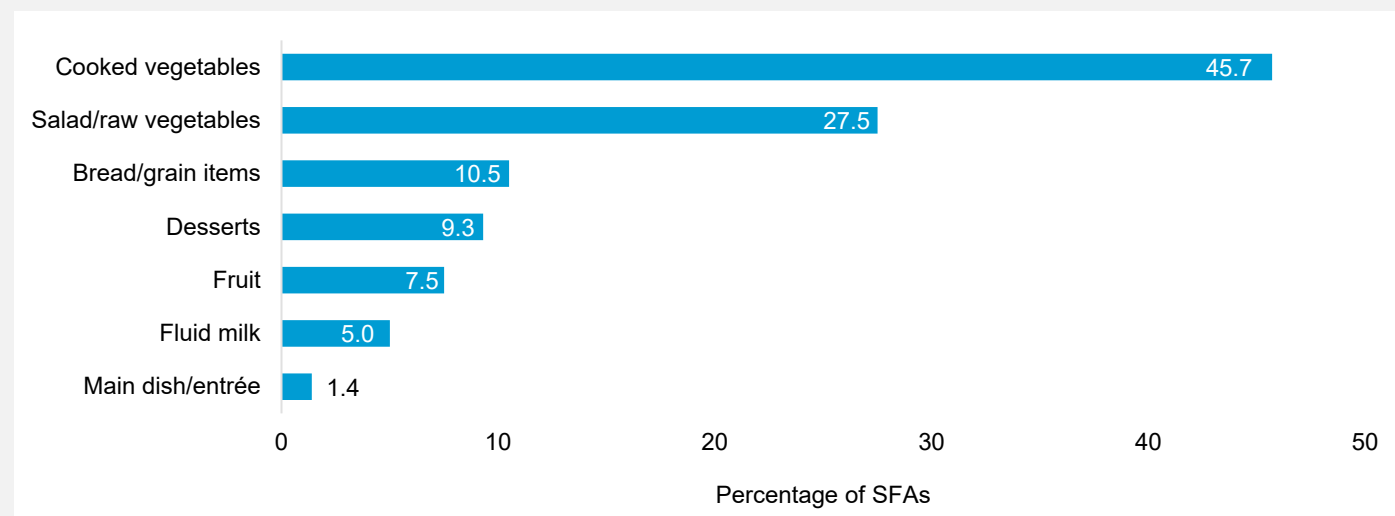
Only a small percentage (18 percent) of SFAs reported barriers to purchasing vegetables from any of the five required subgroups. Dark green and red/orange vegetables were noted as the most challenging to purchase (by 10-11 percent of SFAs each). Among the SFAs reporting any barriers, the most common reasons for purchasing difficulties reported were limited variety of items on the market (58 percent of SFAs) and/or limited availability (53 percent of SFAs). Additionally, about two-thirds of these SFAs (65 percent) reported some difficulties purchasing vegetables because the items were not acceptable to students.

SFAs perceived vegetables as the food group that students wasted most often.

Food waste, a measure of the amount of food that students discard rather than consume, is a concern for the school meal programs.³ SFA Directors reported how frequently students consumed all of the foods they were served in order to capture their perceptions of food waste across food types. More than half of SFAs (58 percent) reported that elementary schools had the largest proportion of students who did not consume all of their foods at lunch, followed by high schools (14 percent) and middle schools (9 percent). When SFAs reported the types of foods and how frequently they were consumed at lunch, cooked and raw vegetables were the food types most often perceived as rarely consumed (that is, perceived by SFAs to be wasted) (Exhibit 2).

³ U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2018. *Reducing food waste at K-12 schools*. <https://www.usda.gov/foodlossandwaste/schools>

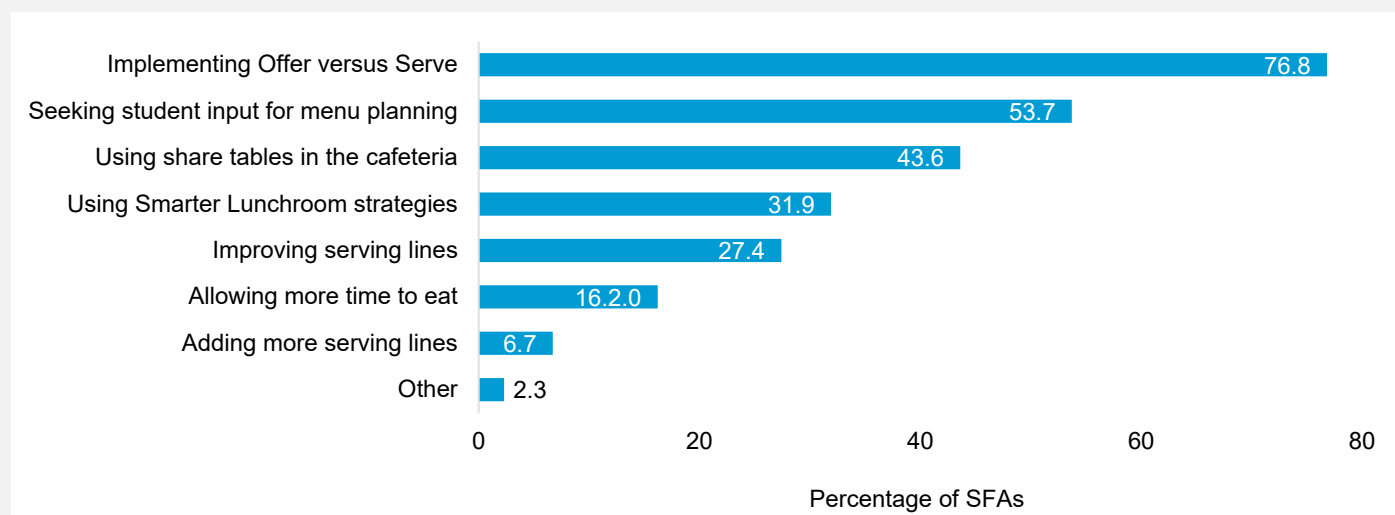
Exhibit 2. Percentage of SFAs that Perceived Lunch Food Types as “Rarely Consumed”



Note: The survey allowed for multiple responses.

Nearly all SFAs used strategies to reduce food waste (Exhibit 3). The most common strategies were using Offer versus Serve,⁴ seeking student input on menu planning, and using “share tables” in the cafeteria, where students can exchange foods they do not want to eat.

Exhibit 3. Strategies Implemented to Reduce or Prevent Food Waste



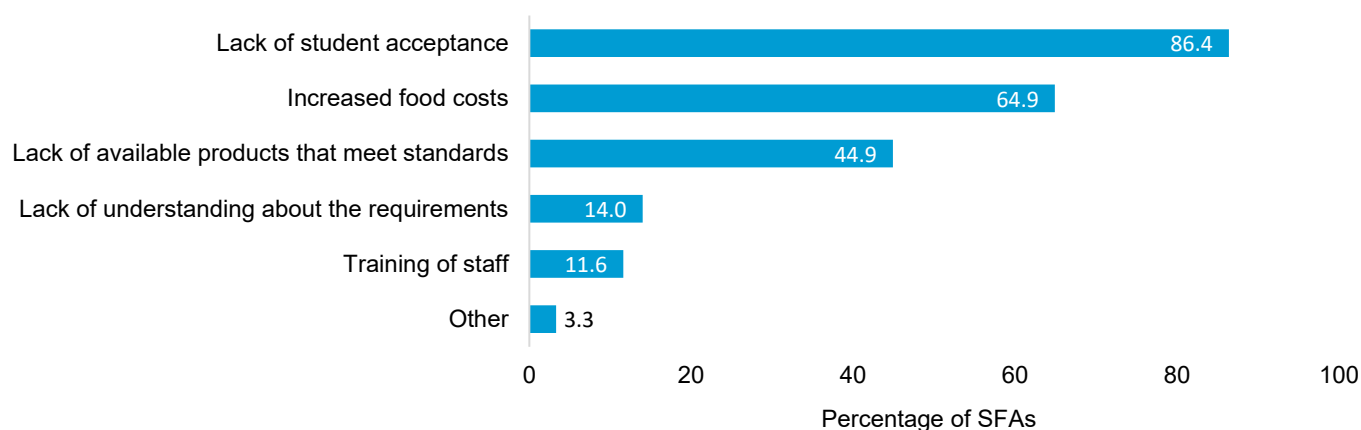
SFAs reported challenges in meeting the whole grain-rich requirement.

Most SFAs reported encountering some difficulty meeting the whole grain-rich requirement: 56 percent found that it was a little or moderately challenging, and another 27 percent reported that it was very or extremely challenging. Among the 83 percent of SFAs reporting some type of challenge, the most commonly reported

⁴ Offer versus Serve allows students to decline some components of a reimbursable meal with the goal of reducing food waste or foods taken that students do not intend to eat. Students must take three of five meal components and one must be at least ½ cup of fruit or vegetable for the meal to be reimbursable. For additional details see U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. 2015. *Updated Offer versus Serve Guidance for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Beginning School Year 2015-2016*. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/updated-offer-vs-serve-guidance-nsfp-and-sbp-beginning-sy2015-16>

challenge was a lack of student acceptance (86 percent). Other reported challenges included higher food costs and a lack of available products that met the standards (Exhibit 4).

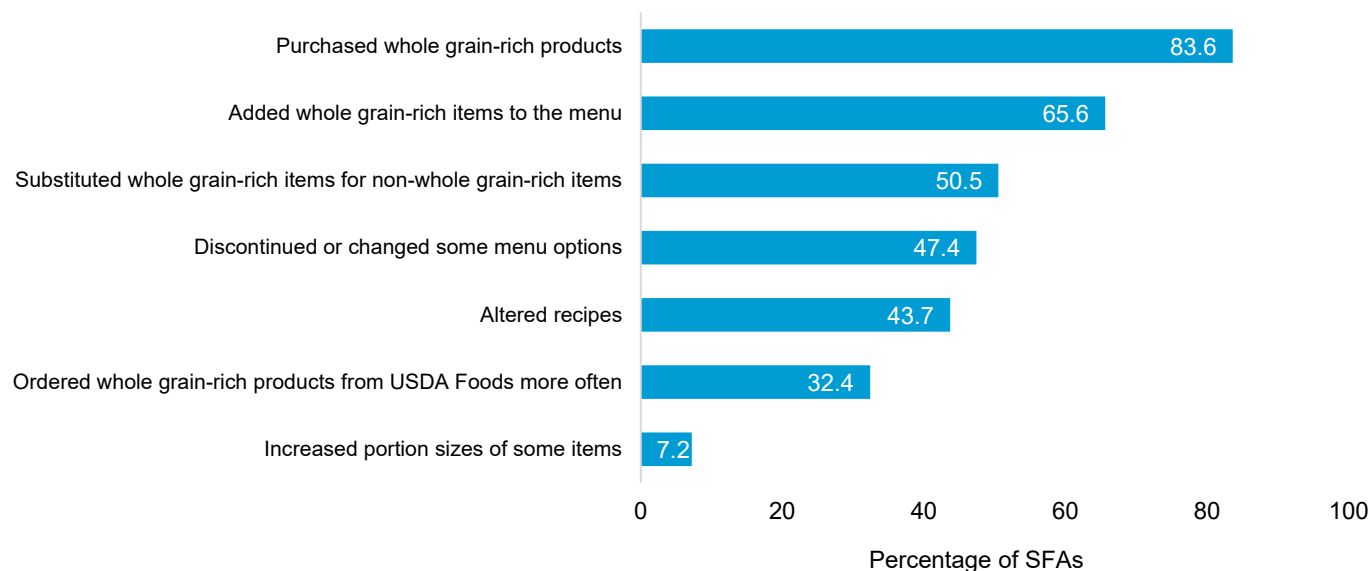
Exhibit 4. Challenges to Meeting the Whole Grain-Rich Requirement



Note: The data shown are among the 83 percent of SFAs that reported some type of challenge meeting the whole grain-rich requirement.

Despite experiencing challenges, SFAs implemented a variety of practices to meet the whole grain-rich requirement. While the most common practice was to purchase whole grain-rich products (84 percent), SFAs also incorporated whole grain-rich items through various menu additions, substitutions, deletions, and updated recipes (Exhibit 5). Eleven percent of SFAs reported that they met the whole grain-rich requirements prior to the updated standards.

Exhibit 5. Practices Implemented to Meet the Whole Grain-Rich Requirement



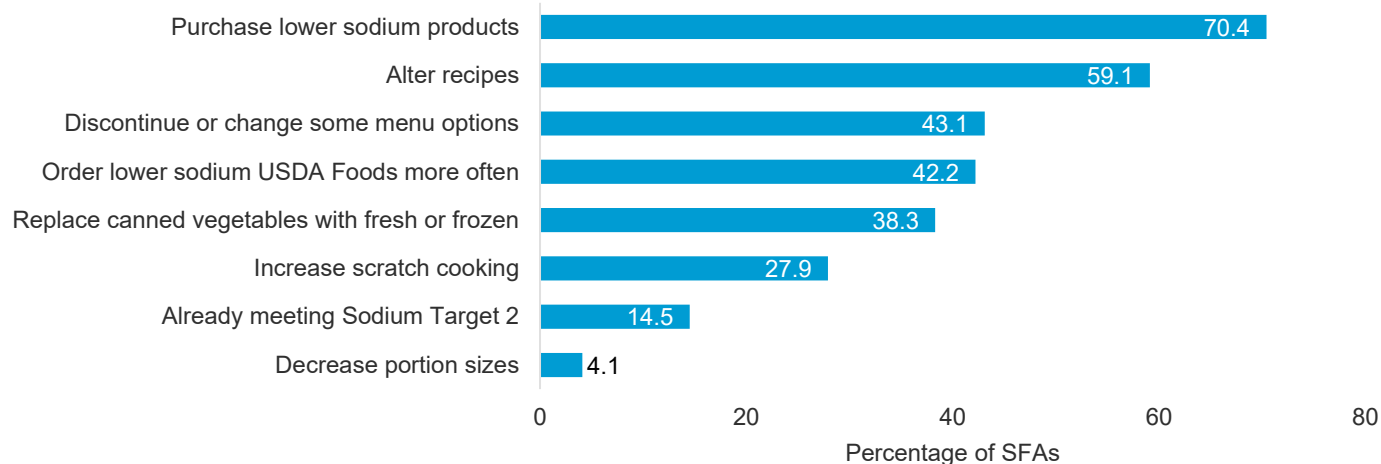
SFAs served meals with acceptable sodium content across grade levels.

Nearly half of SFAs (44 percent) said they knew the average daily sodium content of the meals they served. Among those that knew the sodium content, the reported average sodium content ranged from 939 to 1,115 mg at lunch and 490 to 558 mg at breakfast. Reported average sodium levels at both lunch and breakfast met

the Target 1 sodium levels for all grade levels and came close to meeting Target 2 sodium levels across grade levels.

SFAs planned to use several strategies to meet sodium requirements, including buying lower sodium products and altering recipes (for example, by limiting the use of salt and using spices in place of salt); discontinuing or changing menu options; ordering lower sodium USDA Foods more often; and replacing canned vegetables with fresh or frozen vegetables (Exhibit 6).

Exhibit 6. Practices Planned to Meet the Sodium Requirement for SY 2017–18



Meeting calorie range requirements was not challenging for most SFAs.

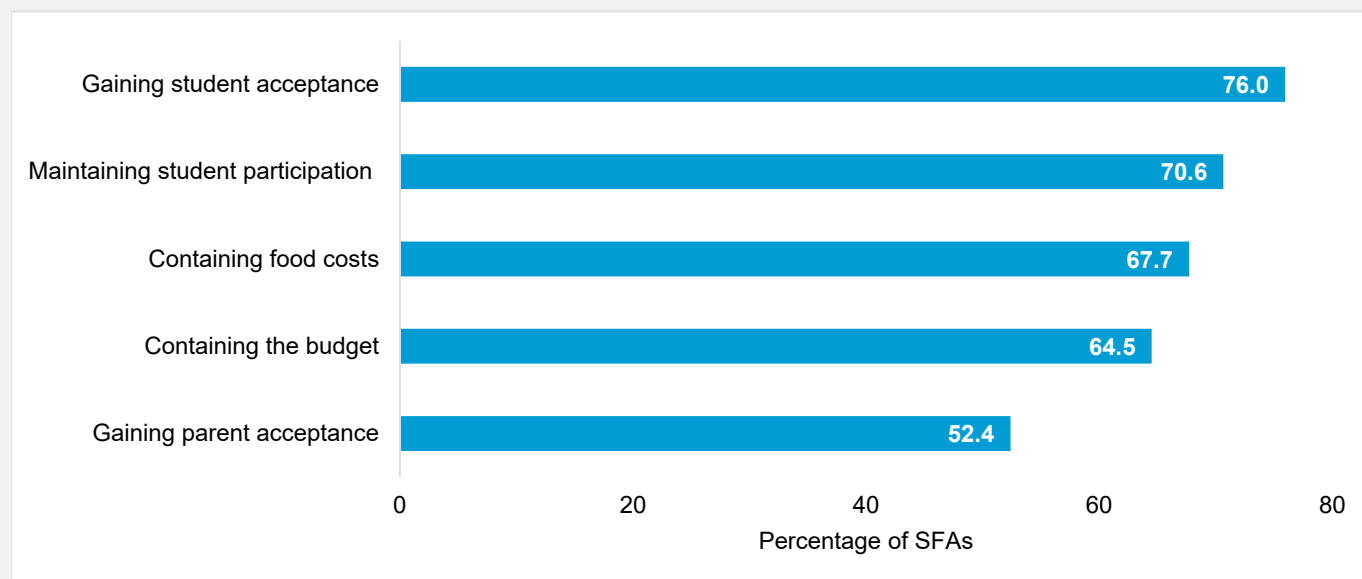
Most SFAs (61 percent) reported no problems meeting calorie requirements for school meals. Of the 39 percent of SFAs that did experience challenges, the most cited challenge included staying within the calorie requirements for meals. Concerns about meeting *minimum* calorie requirements was the least cited challenge. This pattern of findings was consistent across school levels and meal type.

Across school levels, SFAs most often increased fruit and vegetable offerings to meet student demand for foods (ranged from 58 percent to 72 percent of SFAs). SFAs also increased or chose new à la carte offerings (ranged from 19 percent to 52 percent of SFAs), offered a second serving of milk (ranged from 24 percent to 35 percent of SFAs), or allowed students to purchase a second meal (ranged from 17 percent to 34 percent of SFAs).

The biggest challenges involved gaining student acceptance and maintaining participation.

Almost all SFAs reported that implementing the meal pattern requirements presented some level of challenge. About three-quarters of SFAs (76 percent) reported that gaining student acceptance was moderately to extremely challenging. Many SFAs also reported that maintaining student participation (71 percent), containing food costs (68 percent), and containing the budget (64 percent) were moderately to extremely challenging (Exhibit 7). The meal pattern component that most SFAs (82 percent) reported no problems meeting was the fluid milk requirement.

Exhibit 7. Biggest Challenges Implementing School Meal Patterns Requirements



Note: The data shown are the top five types of challenges that SFAs indicated were the “moderately challenging”, “extremely challenging” or “very challenging”.

Conclusions

SFAs implemented strategies to meet the updated school meal patterns and nutrition standards while attempting to balance budgets and maintain student participation. Student acceptance of foods was the most common obstacle SFAs reported experiencing while implementing the updated standards, especially for whole grain-rich items and vegetables. SFAs reported fewer challenges meeting the calorie and fluid milk requirements.

About CN-OPS-II

The Child Nutrition Program Operations Study II (CN-OPS-II) is a multi-year study that provides general descriptive information on characteristics and administration of school-based child nutrition (CN) programs. Unless otherwise stated, this brief presents data and results from the CN-OPS-II Year 2 study, covering school year (SY) 2016–17. Data were collected through web-based surveys from a nationally representative sample of 1,679 SFAs across the United States and 53 State CN agencies, including the District of Columbia, Guam, and American Samoa.

For SY 2016–17, data are presented across six research briefs. The full report, including all six research briefs, are available on the FNS website at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/research-and-analysis>.

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The Food and Nutrition Service administers the nutrition assistance programs of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Working with its public, private and non-profit partners, the FNS mission is to increase food security and reduce hunger by providing children and low-income people access to food, a healthful diet and nutrition education in a way that supports American agriculture and inspires public confidence.



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APPENDIX A. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS METHODS

A.1 Overview

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Child Nutrition Program Operations Study II (CN-OPS-II) collects data over a period of four years via a State Child Nutrition (CN) Director Survey and a School Food Authority (SFA) Director Survey. The surveys include some modules that are asked every year and some modules that are asked less frequently. The data for school year (SY) 2016–17 were collected using the Year 2 State CN Director Survey (Appendix B) and the Year 2 SFA Director Survey (Appendix C).

The State CN Director Survey was sent to 53 of the 55 State Agencies (SAs) that participated in Year 1; Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands were not asked to participate in the Year 2 survey because of hurricanes in the region at the time of data collection. All 53 SAs responded to the request and submitted their surveys.

A nationally representative sample of 2,185 public SFA directors was administered the SFA Director Survey,¹ and 1,679 provided valid responses, yielding a response rate of 76.8 percent after removing ineligible and exempt cases. This Appendix provides a detailed description of the Year 2 sample design, data collection, response rates, sample weight construction, and other statistical considerations. The Year 2 sample design is part of a 4-year design that ensures SFAs (except for the largest sampled SFAs) are only asked to respond to the survey once during the four-year period.

A.2 Sample Design and Sample Selection

Using SY 2014–15 Verification Collection Report (FNS-742) data provided by FNS, four nationally representative samples of SFAs were derived to minimize the probability that smaller (in terms of students served) SFAs would be selected for participation in multiple years of CN-OPS-II. For the SFA Director Survey, a stratified probability proportional-to-size (PPS) sample of SFAs was selected.² Fifty-three SAs were invited to participate in the State CN Director Survey.³

A.2.1 SFA TARGET UNIVERSE

The target universe for the Year 2 SFA survey included all SFAs operating in public school districts in the United States and outlying Territories that were required to submit FNS-742 to

¹ In each year, 2,187 SFAs were designated as the primary sample. In Year 2, one sampled unit from Puerto Rico was excluded, owing to recent hurricanes. A second sampled unit was excluded because the SA could not provide contact information. At the close of the Year 2 SFA survey, all of the remaining 2,185 units from the primary sample were released to create the final Year 2 sample.

² Selection with probability proportional to size is a sampling procedure under which the probability of a unit being selected is proportional to the size of the unit (see Marriott, Francis Henry Charles [1990]. *A dictionary of statistical terms* (5th ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.).

³ The CN Director Survey is treated as a census, to which all 55 directors are expected to respond each year. However, two SAs were not asked to participate in data collection in Year 2 due to natural disasters.

FNS in SY 2014–15.⁴ In general, all SFAs that participated in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or the School Breakfast Program (SBP) were included in the respondent universe, with the following exceptions: SFAs that operated in residential child care institutions that did not have daytime students; SFAs with no students; SFAs in some outlying Territories that were not required to complete FNS-742; and private schools.

A.2.2 SFA SAMPLING FRAME

The SY 2014–15 FNS-742 database was used to construct the SFA sampling frame (i.e., the universe file) from which the respondent samples were drawn. There were more than 19,000 SFAs in the 2014–15 FNS-742 database. Approximately 15,000 SFAs that operated in public school districts, including charter schools, were included in the sampling frame. The unit of analysis for the study was the SFA. SFAs usually coincided with a single local education agency (LEA)⁵ or school district, as defined in the Local Education Agency Universe Survey Directory.⁶ In some cases, however, SFAs operated school food programs for multiple school districts and for individual schools (e.g., some public charter schools). In the 2014–15 FNS-742 database, approximately 96 percent of the eligible SFAs matched a district (LEA) in the LEA Universe Survey Directory. Those SFAs that did not match remained in the sample frame with an indicator denoting that they did not have associated National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) data.

A.2.3 SFA SAMPLE REQUIREMENTS AND STRATIFICATION

The CN-OPS-II SFA sample design satisfied the following requirements established by FNS:

- (1) Population estimates with precision not to exceed ± 5 percentage points for proportions or 5 percent for means at the 95 percent level of confidence
- (2) Subgroup estimates with precision not to exceed ± 10 percentage points for proportions or 10 percent for means at the 95 percent level of confidence, where subgroups are defined as comprising at least 25 percent of the population of SFAs
- (3) Support population and subgroup estimates of school-aged children attending schools participating in NSLP and SBP
- (4) Minimize the likelihood that SFAs will need to complete the survey in more than one of the four study years

The sample design was a stratified, multiyear design, as summarized in Table A.1. The research team stratified the sampling frame of 14,854 SFAs into 10 strata consisting of a combination of SFA size (number of students enrolled) and estimated percentage of students certified for free or reduced price (F/RP) meals (high = 60 percent or more of students certified for F/RP meals; low = 0–59 percent of students certified for F/RP meals). The research team

⁴ Samples for the four years were created at the beginning of the study using SY 2014–15 data. The samples are further revised using the FNS-742 data for each SY, to include newly established SFAs and omit those that no longer exist.

⁵ An LEA is a governmental administrative unit at the local level which exists primarily to operate schools or to contract for educational services. LEAs may or may not be coterminous with county, city, or town boundaries. Not all LEAs operate schools; some provide support to other agencies and do not necessarily have teachers or students permanently assigned to them. See Glander, Mark 2018. *Documentation to the NCES Common Core of Data Preliminary Directory Files: School Year 2017-18* (NCES 2018-112). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. <https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch>.

⁶ The Local Education Agency Universe Survey Directory is part of the U.S. Department of Education Common Core of Data (CCD), which is maintained by NCES.

implicitly stratified the 10 strata by sorting SFAs within each stratum by FNS Region and by urbanicity status, defined by the SFA's location in one of four urbanicity classifications according to the NCES data prior to sampling, to ensure the sample selected was balanced on these additional factors.

Precision calculations confirmed that a responding sample of 1,750 SFAs allocated among the strata would meet the statistical requirements of the study. Therefore, assuming an 80 percent response rate, a sample of 2,187 SFAs, referred to as the primary sample, was needed each study year.⁷ In addition, the research team included a reserve sample of 309 SFAs for each year in case it appeared during data collection that fewer than 1,750 survey responses would be received (i.e., the response rate was going to be below 80 percent). By releasing the reserve sample to obtain additional survey responses, the responding sample could total 1,750 responses even if the response rate were 70 percent.

⁷ In each year, 2,187 SFAs were designated as the primary sample, as 80 percent of 2,187 equals 1,750. In Year 2, one sampled unit from Puerto Rico was excluded, due to recent hurricanes. A second sampled unit was excluded because the SA could not provide contact information. At the close of the Year 2 SFA survey, all of the remaining 2,185 units from the primary sample were released to create the final Year 2 sample.

Table A.1—SFA Stratification and Sample Allocation Plan Based on Target of 1,750 Completes Per Year

Stratum	SFA Size (Student Enrollment)	Percentage Students Certified for F/RP Meals	Total Population in Stratum		Sample (SFAs)			
	Range		SFAs	Student Enrollment	Sample to Support All 4 Study Years	Primary Sample Per Year	Reserve Sample Per Year	Expected Responses Per Year ^a
1	0–2,499	≥ 60 percent	3,186	2,062,994	1,567	343	49	274
2	0–2,499	< 60 percent	7,810	6,587,739	4,514	988	141	790
3	2,500–4,999	≥ 60 percent	421	1,457,686	421	92	13	74
4	2,500–4,999	< 60 percent	1,472	5,214,147	1,472	322	46	258
5	5,000–9,999	≥ 60 percent	260	1,818,285	260	57	8	46
6	5,000–9,999	< 60 percent	793	5,514,825	793	173	25	139
7	10,000–99,999	≥ 60 percent	256	5,940,334	256	56	8	45
8	10,000–99,999	< 60 percent	625	14,508,774	625	137	19	109
9	100,000–299,999	NA	24	3,534,678	24 ^b	12	0	10
10	≥ 300,000	NA	7	4,330,908	7 ^c	7	0	6
Total			14,854	50,970,370	9,939	2,187	309	1,750

NA = Not applicable. Stratum did not account for F/RP certification rates.

^a Based on an 80 percent response rate.

^b Half of the SFAs in stratum 9 were asked to complete the survey in two of the four years. The other half of the SFAs in stratum 9 were asked to complete the survey in the other two years.

^c All SFAs in stratum 10 were asked to complete the survey in all 4 years.

A.2.4 SFA SAMPLE SELECTION AND ALLOCATION

In the strata with smaller SFAs (strata 1 and 2), which contained more than 10,000 SFAs, subsets of SFAs were selected using PPS sampling procedures. Since the analytical objectives of CN-OPS-II included estimates of SFA-level and student enrollment–weighted SFA estimates, the research team designed the sampling procedures to compromise between two competing objectives. Specifically, the use of equal probability sampling of SFAs best supports SFA-level analyses, while the use of PPS selection of SFAs with a measure of size (MOS) based on SFA student enrollment best supports student enrollment–weighted SFA unit analyses. To balance these two objectives, for stratum 1 and stratum 2, the SFA samples were selected using PPS procedures, for which the MOS was the square root of the number of students enrolled in each SFA.¹ In strata 3–10 (larger SFAs), the research team selected all 3,858 SFAs to participate in the four-year study for at least one of the study years.

The process for allocating the selected SFAs across study years varied by stratum. The SFAs in strata 1–8 were divided into four random subsamples to ensure that SFAs in these strata were only asked to respond to the survey once during the four-year study period. The allocation was conducted by selecting a random stratified sample of one-fourth the size of the total sample for strata 1–8, eliminating that sample from the overall list, and repeating the process two more times to create four subsamples, which were then randomly assigned across Year 1 to Year 4. Each of the four subsamples was compared to the distribution of SFAs overall, to each urbanicity category and FNS Region, and within strata. The results of these comparisons demonstrated that the four yearly samples were basically identical in their profiles for these characteristics. For stratum 9, the research team randomly divided the 24 SFAs into two groups of 12, with each group asked to complete the survey in two of the four study years. The seven largest selected SFAs (stratum 10) were allocated to participate in all four years.

A.2.5 YEAR 2 SFA SAMPLE LIST UPDATES AND CONCURRENT FNS STUDIES

The research team updates the sample lists each year in response to changes to the SFA population using updated FNS-742 sampling frames. The research team randomly assigns newly sampled SFAs to the remaining years of the study to ensure complete coverage of the current SFA population each year. The research team also compared the Year 2 sample list with SY 2016–17 FNS-742 data to identify SFAs that were no longer in the universe; 24 SFAs no longer existed. Of these, 21 SFAs were in the primary sample, and three were in the reserve. The 21 primary sample units were dropped and replaced using 21 units from the Year 2 reserve sample. Reserve units were from the same stratum and FNS Region as the deleted cases.

The CN-OPS-II Year 2 data collection period overlapped with data collection for two other FNS studies involving SFAs. The research team and FNS decided to minimize the number of SFAs participating in multiple data collection activities by modifying the lists of SFAs sampled to participate in CN-OPS-II. For the first overlapping study, 141 SFAs selected for the CN-OPS-II Year 2 sample also were selected into that study sample. One of the 141 SFAs was in CN-OPS-II stratum 10 and was therefore included in both studies. The remaining 140 SFAs were moved to future years of CN-OPS-II and were replaced with SFAs from future years that were not selected for participation in the overlapping study. For the second study, another 87 SFAs were included in both study samples. Fourteen were SFAs in stratum 9 that were allocated to

¹ Valliant, Richard, Jill A. Dever, & Frauke Kreuter. 2013. Domain estimates. In *Practical tools for designing and weighting survey samples*. New York: Springer-Verlag New York.

participate in multiple years of CN-OPS-II; their inclusion in the yearly CN-OPS-II samples was not modified in any way. Forty-three SFAs were replaced with SFAs from the CN-OPS-II Year 2 reserve sample. Another 21 SFAs were replaced with SFAs from the CN-OPS-II Year 4 sample. The remaining nine SFAs were in the CN-OPS-II Year 2 reserve sample and were removed from that sample.

A.3 Data Collection

A.3.1 OVERVIEW

State directors received a link to the CN Director Year 2 web survey on October 4, 2017. The CN Director Survey was a census—all 55 directors were expected to respond. However, two SAs were not asked to participate in Year 2 data collection because of natural disasters near the time of data collection. All 53 SAs not exempted responded to the survey by December 26, 2017.

SFA data collection began on October 23, 2017 and was extended beyond December 22, 2017, the end date initially planned, to give nonresponding SFAs additional time after the holidays to complete the survey. While the survey closed on January 26, 2018, the research team continued to receive and accepted survey responses through the third week of February 2018. All 2,185 eligible units from the primary sample were released by the close of the SFA survey.² SFAs in the reserve sample were not contacted. The SFA Director Survey had 1,679 valid responses.

A.3.2 SFA RECRUITMENT

SFA recruitment to participate in CN-OPS-II Year 2 began with the research team contacting State CN Directors on September 18, 2017. Each State CN Director, after notification from their FNS Regional Office (RO), was sent the list of sampled SFAs for their State for Year 2 and was asked to provide or verify current SFA contact information. The research team used web searches and phone calls to obtain SFA contact information to supplement information provided by SAs. Throughout the SFA data collection process, contact information was updated as SFA directors, phone numbers, mailing addresses, and web addresses changed.

Each SFA was sent a letter on October 19, 2017 inviting them to participate in the survey. The letter was followed by an email invitation that included a link to the web survey, which was sent on October 23, 2017. Throughout the data collection period, seven rounds of emails were sent, and four rounds of reminder telephone calls were placed to encourage survey submission to any SFAs that had not yet submitted their survey. The reminders targeted SFAs who had not started the survey, as well as SFAs currently in the process of completing the survey. SFAs that notified the research team indicating they could not complete the survey for various reasons received emails informing them about the importance of their participation in the study. Additionally, on January 2, 2018, the research team notified the ROs that the research team would be contacting the SAs to solicit assistance with reaching out to SFAs that had not yet submitted the survey. On January 4, 2018, the research team emailed the SAs asking them to remind and encourage SFAs to complete and submit the survey.

² From the primary sample of 2,187 SFAs, one sampled SFA from Puerto Rico was excluded due to recent hurricanes. A second sampled SFA was excluded because the SA could not provide contact information.

A.3.3 DETERMINING A VALID SFA RESPONSE

The research team employed a two-step methodology for determining a valid response that included identifying critical survey questions and a response threshold for these questions.³ Table A.2 reports questions that were determined by FNS and the research team to be critical in each of the major sections of the survey. Table A.3 summarizes response rates to the critical questions listed in Table A.2. Table A.3 shows, for example, that 84.9 percent of respondents answered two or more critical questions in section 1, 84.3 percent answered three or more questions in section 1, and 83.4 percent answered all four questions. The research team and FNS examined the effect on the sample of valid responses for a range of response thresholds and determined a survey response was valid if 50 percent or more of the critical questions were answered in six or more of the nine identified sections.

Table A.2—Critical Questions from the SFA Director Survey Used to Determine Response Validity

Section	Question Numbers	Summary
1	1.1, 1.3, 1.13, and 1.15	Total number of schools by type in SY 2016–17—elementary, middle, high, and other; SFAs with schools participating in CACFP, SSO, and SFSP.
2	2.1–2.5	Total student enrollment by school type; total number of breakfasts and lunches served/claimed as paid, reduced price, or free by school type during October 2016.
3	3.2–3.4, 3.7	Lunch prices; actions taken by SFAs in response to the Paid Lunch Equity provision; average weighted price of all paid NSLP lunches during October 2016.
4	4.5 and 4.8	SFA use of FSMCs to manage procurement of goods and services; whether SFA belongs to cooperative purchasing group.
5	5.5 and 5.7	Format of parent-completed applications; percentage of applications through web.
6	6.1 and 6.18	School year in which SFA first received the additional reimbursement of 6 cents per lunch; preventing/reducing food waste.
8	8.1, 8.2, 8.13, 8.14, and 8.15	Use of hard copy and electronic meal applications.
9	9.1, 9.5, and 9.6	Methods for meal counting; point of service methods for breakfast and lunch.
10	10.1 and 10.11	Revenues and expenditures.

Note: Sections 11 and 12 of the survey, gathering data on SFA Director Background and Final Remarks, were not used in determining nonresponse. FNS did not select any critical questions for survey section 7.

³ The American Association for Public Opinion Research. 2016. *Standard definitions: Final dispositions of case codes and outcome rates for surveys* (9th ed.). Oakbrook Terrace, IL: AAPOR.
http://www.aapor.org/AAPOR_Main/media/publications/Standard-Definitions20169theditionfinal.pdf.

Table A.3—Responses to Critical Questions

Number of Questions Answered	Number of Responses	Section Response Rate
Section 1 Critical Questions: 1.1, 1.3, 1.13, 1.15		
Answered two or more	1,855	84.9%
Answered three or more	1,842	84.3%
Answered all four	1,823	83.4%
Section 2 Critical Questions: 2.1–2.5		
Answered three or more	1,685	77.1%
Answered four or more	1,629	74.6%
Answered all five	1,436	65.7%
Section 3 Critical Questions: 3.2–3.4, 3.7		
Answered two or more	1,662	76.1%
Answered three or more	1,417	64.9%
Answered all four	982	44.9%
Section 4 Critical Questions: 4.5, 4.8		
Answered one	1,706	78.1%
Answered both	1,648	75.4%
Section 5 Critical Questions: 5.5, 5.7		
Answered one	1,668	76.3%
Answered both	1,594	73.0%
Section 6 Critical Questions: 6.1, 6.18		
Answered one	1,686	77.2%
Answered both	1,540	70.5%
Section 8 Critical Questions: 8.1, 8.2, 8.13, 8.14, 8.15		
Answered three or more	1,614	73.9%
Answered four or more	1,426	65.3%
Answered all five	1,328	60.8%
Section 9 Critical Questions: 9.1, 9.5, 9.6		
Answered two or more	1,665	76.2%
Answered all three	1,622	74.2%
Section 10 Critical Questions: 10.1, 10.11		
Answered one	1,395	63.8%
Answered both	1,225	56.1%

A.3.4 SFA SURVEY RESPONSE AND RESPONSE RATE CALCULATION

The SFA Director Survey had 1,679 valid responses based on the methodology for assessing a valid response.⁴ A summary of the full SFA sample relative to the valid responses by SFA characteristics is provided in Table A.4. For each SFA characteristic reported in Table A.4, the unweighted percentage of SFAs among the valid responses is within two percentage points of the unweighted percentage of SFAs in the full sample. See the Analysis of Nonresponse for additional details.

⁴ All but five of these responses were completed by SFAs using the web survey. The other five responses were printed copies of the survey mailed to the research team by the SFA.

Table A.4—Full SFA Sample and Valid Responses by SFA Characteristics

SFA Characteristic	Unweighted Number of SFAs (Unweighted Percentage of SFAs)	
	Full Sample	Valid Responses
All SFAs	2,185 ^a (100.0%)	1,679 (100.0%)
SFA Size (Student Enrollment)		
Small (1–999 students)	703 (32.2%)	516 (30.7%)
Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	1,034 (47.3%)	807 (48.1%)
Large (5,000–24,999 students)	382 (17.5%)	300 (17.9%)
Very large (≥ 25,000 students)	66 (3.0%)	56 (3.3%)
Urbanicity		
Urban/city	257 (11.8%)	201 (12.0%)
Suburban	610 (27.9%)	436 (26.0%)
Town	434 (19.9%)	346 (20.6%)
Rural	832 (38.1%)	661 (39.4%)
No match to CCD	52 (2.4%)	35 (2.1%)
Percentage of Students Certified for F/RP Meals		
Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	862 (39.5%)	659 (39.2%)
Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	918 (42.0%)	710 (42.3%)
High (≥ 60 percent F/RP)	405 (18.5%)	310 (18.5%)
FNS Region		
Mid-Atlantic	271 (12.4%)	198 (11.8%)
Midwest	558 (25.5%)	416 (24.8%)
Mountain Plains	260 (11.9%)	200 (11.9%)
Northeast	251 (11.5%)	180 (10.7%)
Southeast	228 (10.4%)	195 (11.6%)
Southwest	318 (14.6%)	259 (15.4%)
Western	299 (13.7%)	231 (13.8%)

^a From the primary sample of 2,187 SFAs, one sampled SFA from Puerto Rico was excluded due to recent hurricanes. A second sampled SFA was excluded because the SA could not provide contact information.

The unweighted unit response rate was calculated at 76.8 percent⁵ using the following formula:⁶

$$\% \text{ response rate} = \frac{R}{R + I + O_1 + O_2 + (ER * NL)} * 100$$

Where

R = the number of valid responses

I = the number of units that answered at least 50 percent of the critical questions in five sections but not six or more

O_1 = the number of units that completed some questions but are not counted in R or I

O_2 = the number of hard refusals and refusals due to extant circumstances

NL = the number of sampled SFAs that never logged on

ER = the eligibility rate calculated as follows:

$$ER = \frac{R + I + O}{R + I + O_1 + O_2 + E}$$

E = number of ineligible records identified during data collection

Note that for Year 2, the eligibility rate (ER) is one, given that the two excluded SFAs were already removed from the sample.⁷ Table A.5 reports sample counts for each element in the response rate formula.

Table A.5—Response Rate Calculation

Case Disposition	Full Sample
R = Valid Response	1,679
I = 50–70% critical questions answered	23
O_1 = < 50% critical questions answered	123
O_2 = Hard refusals and extant circumstances	66
NL = Invalid Response (Never Logged On)	294
E = Ineligible	0
Sample Size	2,185
Response Rate (%)	76.8

A.4 Sample and Replicate Weights

Sample weights that account for the complex sample design, nonresponse, and school year are required to calculate SY 2016–17 nationally representative estimates from the CN-OPS-II Year 2 SFA Director Survey data. Base weights accounted for the complex sample design and were defined as the inverse of the probability of an SFA being selected into the sample. However,

⁵ The weighted response rate is 74.6 percent. This reflects lower response rates by units with greater weights, which was addressed in the nonresponse analysis.

⁶ This formula is similar to RR1 on page 61 of The American Association for Public Opinion Research. 2016. *Standard definitions: Final dispositions of Case codes and Outcome rates for surveys* (9th ed.). Oakbrook Terrace, IL: AAPOR. http://www.aapor.org/AAPOR_Main/media/publications/Standard-Definitions20169theditionfinal.pdf. The main difference is that this revised formula allows the eligibility rate to be consistent with CN-OPS-II Year 1 calculations. Additionally, RR1 has placeholders for additional information related to household surveys that are not relevant here.

⁷ From the primary sample of 2,187 SFAs, one sampled SFA from Puerto Rico was excluded due to recent hurricanes. A second sampled SFA was excluded because the SA could not provide contact information.

because some SFAs in the sample did not respond, a nonresponse analysis was conducted to determine whether the patterns of nonresponse were systematically associated with any of the key study design variables (e.g., SFA size, urbanicity, percentage of students approved for F/RP meals, and FNS Region). Understanding whether nonresponse was associated with these key variables is important because systematic relationship to some SFA characteristics could bias national and subgroup estimates. The following section explains the nonresponse analysis and the construction of final weights to be used to calculate SY 2016-17 nationally representative estimates.

A.4.1 NONRESPONSE ANALYSIS

The analysis of nonresponse was conducted to determine whether nonresponse varied by key SFA characteristics: SFA size based on student enrollment, urbanicity, FNS Region, percentage of students certified for F/RP meals, SFA size based on number of schools, and SFA national percentile in terms of percentage of minority (non-Hispanic whites) students.

To assess the impacts of nonresponse, a binary variable (0, 1) was created where 1 indicated a valid response and 0 indicated nonresponse. This variable was regressed against the characteristics listed above. The base weights were adjusted by factors created using SUDAAN WTADJX to compensate for nonresponse.⁸ A raking (or “calibration”) procedure was applied to the weights so that they reproduced the universe of SFAs from the SY 2016–17 FNS-742 data. Table A.6 shows the parameter estimates of the model, and indicates that only the coefficients for small SFAs (one school) and SFAs located in suburban and rural areas are statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level.⁹ Table A.6 also shows that only the SFA Size (Schools) and Urbanicity classifications are significant as groups in the model.¹⁰ This result suggests that systematic variation in nonresponse was not widespread. This procedure addressed any systematic nonresponse while using the current SY 2016–17 FNS-742 data so that survey responses may be interpreted in terms of SY 2016–17.

⁸ SUDAAN WTADJX procedures estimate a logistic model to determine the predicted response in each category. Then, an adjustment to the base weight is made from a model of the inverse of the predicted response. The idea is that for cases with low predicted response rates, a response is adjusted higher to compensate for the likely nonresponses. Once nonresponse adjustments are made, WTADJX performs a raking procedure to further adjust the weights to the universe margins of interest.

⁹ Statistical significance of a category within a classification is tested against an omitted category. For example, the coefficient for SFAs with one school is significantly different than that of SFAs with more than 14 schools (the omitted category). Correspondingly, the coefficient estimates for SFAs with 2–5 schools and 6–14 schools are not statistically significantly different from the estimated coefficient for SFAs with more than 14 schools.

¹⁰ Significance of the classification is determined by comparing the fit of the model with and without the classification (Wald *F*-test).

Table A.6—Parameter Estimates of the Logistic Model of Nonresponse

Variable	Estimate	t-Value	Odds Ratio [†]	Lower CL ^{††}	Upper CL ^{†††}
Intercept	1.2061	9.05			
SFA Size (Student Enrollment)^a					
Small (1–999 students)	0.0522	0.22	1.80	0.46	7.10
Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	0.3063	1.48	2.33	0.62	8.77
Large (5,000–24,999 students)	0.1791	0.85	2.05	0.59	7.07
Urbanicity^b					
Urban/City	0.0525	0.24	1.37	0.42	4.50
Suburban	-0.3094	-1.98	0.95	0.32	2.88
Town	0.1556	1.00	1.51	0.52	4.42
Rural	0.3606	2.40	1.86	0.64	5.37
Percent of Students Certified F/RP^c					
Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	0.0784	0.85	1.23	0.84	1.79
Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	0.049	0.55	1.19	0.82	1.73
FNS Region^d					
Mid-Atlantic	-0.1717	-1.06	0.68	0.40	1.16
Midwest	-0.1489	-0.94	0.70	0.42	1.16
Mountain Plains	0.3348	1.73	1.13	0.66	1.94
Northeast	-0.1522	-1.22	0.70	0.44	1.12
Southeast	0.1354	0.80	0.93	0.57	1.50
Southwest	-0.2066	-1.24	0.66	0.39	1.11
SFA Size (Schools)^e					
1 school	-0.5801	-2.70	0.20	0.06	0.66
2 - 5 schools	-0.279	-1.48	0.27	0.09	0.86
6 - 14 schools	-0.1601	-0.81	0.31	0.11	0.89
SFA Minority Percentile^f					
Percentile < 5	-0.1026	-0.66	0.95	0.44	2.03
5 ≤ Percentile < 20	0.0291	0.23	1.08	0.52	2.27
20 ≤ Percentile < 50	0.245	1.73	1.34	0.62	2.90
Percentile ≥ 50	-0.1222	-0.77	0.93	0.42	2.05

[†]. The odds ratio is computed relative to the omitted category.

^{††}. Lower bound of the 95 percent confidence interval for the odds ratio.

^{†††}. Upper bound of the 95 percent confidence interval for the odds ratio.

^a The omitted category is “≥ 25,000 Students”

^b The omitted category is “No match to CCD”

^c The omitted category is “> 60 percent”

^d The omitted category is “Western RO”

^e The omitted category is “> 14 schools”

^f The omitted category is “No match to CCD”

Note: Of the classification variables, only Urbanicity and SFA Size (Schools) are statistically significant (p-values are 0.003 and 0.04, respectively).

Table A.7 reports the results of the weighting adjustments. The second column shows the cell percentages for each classification variable as calculated from the SY 2016–17 FNS-742 data. The third column shows the cell percentages using the base (“unadjusted”) weights. Note the significant underpredictions of the size of the universe when using the base weights in column 2 in contrast to the universe percentages in column 1. This is a consequence of survey

nonresponse. The last column shows the cell percentages using the adjusted weights. The adjusted weights perfectly reproduce the universe percentages and should be used for analysis of the survey data.

Finally, to estimate variances of estimates from the survey data, the research team created jackknife replicate weights.¹¹ Replicate weights facilitate the estimation of standard errors for summary statistics when using sample data with complex weighting schemes and confidentiality considerations preclude identifying the stratum for all responding SFAs.¹²

¹¹ In the jackknife, sample units are grouped into replicate groups with portions of the sample (replicates) formed by repeatedly omitting one half of the units in one of the replicate groups and calculating the desired statistic (replicate estimate). The variability among the replicate estimates is used to estimate the overall sampling variability. Jackknife replicate weights are suited to complex sample designs.

¹² Using the replicate weights included with these data ensures that all users obtain the same standard errors for their estimates (see National Center for Education Statistics. 2019. *The National Assessment of Education Progress glossary of terms*. <https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/glossary.aspx#jackknife>).

Table A.7—Comparison of Sample to Universe Using Base and Adjusted Weights

SFA Characteristic	SY 2016–17 FNS-742 Universe Percentage	Base Weighted Sample Percentage	Adjusted Weighted Sample Percentage ¹
SFA Size (Student Enrollment)			
Small (1–999 students)	50.8	48.1	50.8
Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	35.9	37.3	35.9
Large (5,000–24,999 students)	11.3	12.6	11.3
Very large (≥ 25,000 students)	2.0	1.9	2.0
Urbanicity			
Urban/City	11.1	11.1	11.1
Suburban	21.4	20.5	21.4
Town	16.3	17.5	16.3
Rural	44.2	47.9	44.2
No match to CCD	7.0	2.9	7.0
Percent of Students Certified F/RP			
Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	37.5	37.6	37.5
Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	41.7	42.3	41.7
High (≥ 60 percent F/RP)	20.8	20.0	20.8
FNS Region			
Mid-Atlantic	11.2	10.1	11.2
Midwest	10.2	10.1	10.2
Mountain Plains	8.5	9.2	8.5
Northeast	25.4	24.6	25.4
Southeast	15.2	16.4	15.2
Southwest	15.6	14.5	15.6
Western	14.0	15.0	14.0
SFA Size (Schools)			
> 0 & ≤ 2 schools	43.0	39.6	43.0
> 2 & ≤ 8 schools	42.8	45.5	42.8
> 8 & ≤ 26 schools	11.0	11.4	11.0
> 26 schools	3.2	3.6	3.2
Total N	14,755	10,759	14,755

¹ Sample weights account for the complex sample design, nonresponse, and school year in order to calculate SY 2016–17 nationally representative estimates.

Note: Percentages within each classification may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

A.5 Study Limitations

CN-OPS-II is a descriptive study. Causality cannot be established with CN-OPS-II data. This study presents findings from surveys of State CN and SFA directors. Some tabulations may suggest causal relationships and can be used to formulate new hypotheses. FNS conducts many targeted studies to assess causal impacts, and the findings from CN-OPS-II provide real-world context for those studies.

The sample of SFAs was designed to represent the universe of SFAs and their students within the design categories discussed in section A.2. Estimates for other quantities, such as the total number of schools, are accurate only to the extent that such quantities are highly correlated with the universe of SFAs and their students. When considering estimates for the total number of schools, even though the estimates for the national total number of schools may be accurate, estimates for some subgroups may be less accurate because the relationship between number

of students and number of schools within subgroups may be less correlated. Therefore, estimates for the total number of schools for subgroups should be used cautiously.

The surveys were designed and tested to elicit accurate responses. Nevertheless, some response error is likely. Respondents may have unknowingly reported incorrect information, inadvertently checked the wrong response, or intentionally skipped a question. Importantly, the survey asked for data related to SY 2016–17, but data collection occurred during SY 2017–18. The survey instruments clearly stated that questions were for SY 2016–17 on each page and most questions mentioned the reference year to minimize potential errors due to responses incorrectly referencing SY 2017–18. Nevertheless, some respondents for some questions may have incorrectly reported data for SY 2017–18.

APPENDIX B. STATE CN DIRECTOR SURVEY

Child Nutrition Program Operations Study-II CNOPS

State Child Nutrition Director
Survey 2016-2017

FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY

Please complete the survey using the unique link sent to
you by email.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-0606. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average one hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering the data needed, and completing and reviewing the information collection.



U.S. Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service

This survey is being conducted for the Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture as part of a study of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and other USDA food programs throughout the country. All responses will be treated in strict privacy; no names will be used in our reports, and only aggregated results will be reported.

The study is authorized by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA) and cooperation by selected states, local education agencies, and schools is required under Section 305 of the HHFKA. Section 305 of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 states that “States, State educational agencies, local educational agencies, schools, institutions, facilities, and contractors participating in programs authorized under this Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1771 et seq.) shall cooperate with officials and contractors acting on behalf of the Secretary, in the conduct of evaluations and studies under those Acts.”

Send comments regarding this burden estimate (2 hours) or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to:

**U.S. Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service
Office of Policy Support
Alexandria, VA 22302
Attn: Dr. Devin Wallace-Williams**

If you have any questions about completing this survey, please email CNOPS2@2mresearch.com or call toll-free at 1.844.503.7045.

We thank you for your cooperation and participation in this very important study.

Instructions for Completing the Survey

- Click the **"Save & Continue"** button to progress in the survey. You must click this button to save your responses. **If you cannot complete the survey in one sitting, click the "Save & Continue" button before you close your browser.** Your answers will be saved.
- Click the **"Back"** button to go to the previous question. Please note that clicking the "Back" button will not save your response to the current question. You must first click the "Save & Continue" button to save your response.
- Use the **"Table of Contents"** on the left hand side of your page to navigate to different sections in the survey. **To hide and unhide the "Table of Contents" click the icon with the three lines. Please note that if you use the "Table of Contents" to navigate to a partially completed section you will be brought to the first incomplete question.** You can use the "back" button to navigate to previous questions.
- **If you need a colleague to complete a section of the survey, you should forward them the email with your unique link.** They do not need a separate link.
- **Avoid having multiple people logged into the survey at once.** Responses may not be recorded correctly if multiple users are logged in the survey at the same time.
- If you or a colleague are returning to finish your saved survey, the user will return to the point where you left off. You can use the "Table of Contents" menu to return to previous questions.
- **Use the buttons and links within the survey.** For example, using "Enter" on your keyboard or your browser's "Back" function may cause errors.
- **Questions will not always be numbered sequentially,** and some may be skipped because they do not apply to you.
- If you have any questions about the study or about completing this survey, please email CNOPS2@2mresearch.com or call **1-844-503-7045 (toll-free).**

Back (Button)

Save & Continue (Button)

Contact Information

Before starting the survey please fill in the requested contact information below. If the information below is prefilled please review and update the information as necessary.

Please fill in the contact information for the Child Nutrition Director below:

First Name:

Last Name:

Street Address 1:

Street Address 2:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone Number: Ext.

Email:

If you are not the Child Nutrition Director please fill out your name and contact information:

First Name:

Last Name:

Title:

Street Address 1:

Street Address 2:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone Number: Ext.

Email:

1. FOOD SERVICE ADMINISTRATION

- 1.1** The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 requires Local Education Agencies (LEAs) with high levels of, or a high risk for, certification error to have an independent review of initial eligibility determinations for free and reduced price school meals. State agencies are to use two criteria to select LEAs for independent review, including (1) all LEAs with 10 percent or more of the certification/ benefit issuances in error based on administrative review, and (2) other LEAs not identified in Criterion 1 that are determined "at risk" based on State agency discretion.

Which of the following criteria, if any, does your State use to determine LEAs that require an Independent Review of Applications under the "at risk" criterion?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY OR NA

- ☐ LEAs with more than 5 percent but less than 10 percent certification/ benefit issuance error 1
- ☐ LEAs that are newly participating in NSLP or SBP 2
- ☐ LEAs that have recently hired new administrative staff..... 3
- ☐ LEAs that recently implemented a new electronic system 4
- ☐ Other (specify) 99
- Specify (STRING (NUM))
- ☐ N/A - Our State has no established criteria at this time..... 5

The next few questions are about SFAs and schools in your State currently operating under Provision 2 and Provision 3 in 2016-2017 school year. The questions will ask separately about those operating both NSLP and SBP, NSLP only, and SBP only. We understand that you may have been asked to provide similar information to the USDA, however, providing this information in the current survey is very important because it will help improve the accuracy of this study's analysis. We thank you in advance for your understanding and the time you put into answering these questions.

- 1.2** Please provide the number of SFAs and schools in your State that are currently operating both NSLP and SBP under Provision 2 and Provision 3.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

	PROVISION 2	PROVISION 3
a. SFAs		
b. SCHOOLS		

- 1.3** Please provide the number of SFAs and schools in your State that are currently operating NSLP only under Provision 2 and Provision 3.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

	PROVISION 2	PROVISION 3
a. SFAs		
b. SCHOOLS		

1.4 Please provide the number of SFAs and schools in your State that are currently operating SBP only under Provision 2 and Provision 3.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

	PROVISION 2	PROVISION 3
a. SFAs		
b. SCHOOLS		

1.5 How many SFAs and schools in your State that are currently operating under the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)?

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

	CEP
a. SFAs	
b. SCHOOLS	

SKIP TO 1.7 IF 1.5b = 0 OR MISSING

1.6 Of the [FILL 1.5b VALUE] CEP schools, how many have operated under CEP continuously for less than 1 year, 1 year, or 2 or more years?

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

	LESS THAN 1 YEAR	1 YEAR	2 OR MORE YEARS	TOTAL
CEP				FILLS WITH SUM

The next few questions are about charter schools and residential child care institutions (RCCIs) in your State. RCCIs are any distinct part of a public or non-profit private institution which maintains children in residence, operates principally for the care of children, and if private, is licensed by the State or local government to provide residential childcare services under the appropriate licensing code.

1.7 Does your State have any charter schools? Charter schools are independent public schools that operate within a school district.

- ☐ Yes..... 1
☐ No 2 SKIP TO 1.12

1.8 How many charter schools are currently operating in your State?

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

CHARTER SCHOOLS

1.9 How many of the [FILLNUMBER FROM 1.8] charter schools currently participate in both NSLP and SBP programs?

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

CHARTER SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN BOTH NSLP AND SBP

1.10 How many of the [FILLNUMBER FROM 1.8] charter schools currently participate in NSLP program only?

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

CHARTER SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN NSLP ONLY

1.11 How many of the [FILLNUMBER FROM 1.8] charter schools currently participate in SBP program only?

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

CHARTER SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN SBP ONLY

1.12 How many residential child care institutions (RCCIs) in your State currently participate in the NSLP and/or SBP programs?

RCCIs are any distinct part of a public or non-profit private institution which maintains children in residence, operates principally for the care of children, and if private, is licensed by the State or local government to provide residential childcare services under the appropriate licensing code. Please include RCCIs with *and* without schools on location.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

RCCIs PARTICIPATING IN NSLP AND/OR SBP

2. SUBSIDIES, RESOURCES, AND FUNDING

The following questions are about subsidies and resources your State provides to SFAs.

2.1 Did your State provide subsidies for breakfasts to SFAs in school year (SY) 2016-2017?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
☐ No 2 SKIP TO 2.4

2.2 Which of the following subsidies did your State provide to SFAs for breakfasts?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Per-meal reimbursement..... 1
☐ Annual lump sum..... 2
☐ Supplement to cover specific costs 3
☐ Amount based on a percentage of low-income students 4
☐ Other (specify) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

2.3 What was the total dollar amount of subsidies given to all SFAs in your State for breakfast during school year (SY) 2015-2016?

.00 DOLLAR AMOUNT OF SUBSIDIES

2.4 Did your State provide subsidies for lunches to SFAs in SY 2016-2017?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
☐ No 2 SKIP TO 2.7

2.5 Which of the following subsidies did your State provide to SFAs for lunches?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Per-meal reimbursement..... 1
☐ Annual lump sum..... 2
☐ Supplement to cover specific costs 3
☐ Amount based on a percentage of low-income students 4
☐ Other (specify) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

2.6 What was the total dollar amount of subsidies given to all SFAs in your State for lunches during school year (SY) 2015-2016?

.00 DOLLAR AMOUNT OF SUBSIDIES

2.7 Did your State provide financial or personnel support to SFAs for any of the following school food service operations in SY 2016-17?

Select one per row

YES	NO
-----	----

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| a. Preparation of reimbursable meals | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |
| b. Preparation of non-reimbursable meals | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |
| c. Equipment | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |
| d. Preparing claims | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |
| e. Storage | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |
| f. Contracted services | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |
| g. Overhead/indirect costs | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |
| h. Other (Specify) | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |

(STRING (NUM))

The next questions ask about staff who are responsible for monitoring school meal operations. School meal operations include the school breakfast and lunch program, summer meals programs, and CACFP in SY 2016-17. While your State should ultimately define the activities that are related to monitoring, some of these activities may include (but are not limited to) program compliance, technical assistance and training.

2.8a. How many State agency staff engaged in any monitoring activities for school meal operations in SY 2016-17? Please include any staff who monitor school meal operations regardless of whether or not this is their main responsibility.

NUMBER OF STATE STAFF

2.8b. Of these [FILL NUMBER] State agency staff, how many of them spend half of their time or more monitoring school meal operations?

NUMBER OF STATE STAFF WHO SPEND MORE THAN HALF OF THEIR TIME MONITORING

2.8c. On average, what percentage of their total hours worked is devoted to monitoring school meal operations? Please provide your best estimate.

PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL HOURS WORKED

2.9 Was State agency staffing for monitoring program operations adequate in SY 2016-17?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2

The following questions are about State Administrative Expense (SAE) funds your State received during **Federal Fiscal Year (FY) 2016** (October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016). SAE funds are Federal funds that USDA provides to State agencies to administer Child Nutrition programs.

2.10 Has your State fully obligated (that is, received and committed) FY 2016 SAE funds that expired September 30, 2016? SAE funds are available for use by the State agency for two FYs.

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2

2.11 Were any of the following challenges to your State's ability to fully obligate all FY 2016 SAE funds?

Select one per row

YES	NO
-----	----

- | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| a. State policy | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |
| b. Governor's mandates | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |
| c. State legislation | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |
| d. Union agreements | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |
| e. Hiring freezes | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |
| f. Work furloughs | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |
| g. Travel restrictions | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |
| h. Work shutdowns | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |
| i. Other (Specify) | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |

(STRING (NUM))

2.12 Did your State obligate any of the SAE funds to improve the USDA Foods program's operations?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 2.14
- ☐ Not Applicable..... n SKIP TO 2.14

2.13 How did your State obligate SAE funds to improve the USDA Foods program's operations?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ USDA Foods storage 1
- ☐ USDA Foods distribution 2
- ☐ Staff skills to administer USDA Foods (for example, training) 3
- ☐ Salaries or fringe benefits for staff administering USDA Foods 4
- ☐ Other (specify) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

The next few questions are about reallocation of SAE funds in FY 2016. Reallocation pertains to requesting additional SAE funds above the initial authorized funding level or returning unneeded funds.

2.14. Did your State request additional SAE funds above the initial authorized level?

- ☐ Yes 1 SKIP TO 2.16
- ☐ No 2

2.15 What was the primary reason your State did not request SAE funding reallocation?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Requesting reallocated funds would exceed the 20 percent carryover limitation 1
- ☐ Did not have eligible projects or activities to fund 2
- ☐ Would have been unable to spend reallocated funds in the specified time limit.. 3
- ☐ Reallocation request process was too burdensome..... 4
- ☐ Alternate funding sources were available..... 5
- ☐ Reallocation reporting process was too burdensome 6
- ☐ Other (specify) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

2.16 Did your State return any unneeded SAE funds?

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2

2.17 Did your State use contracted staff for any of the following functions in SY 2016-17?

Select one per row

YES	NO
-----	----

a. Training/Technical assistance

1 ☐

2 ☐

b. Monitoring

1 ☐

2 ☐

c. Nutrition education

1 ☐

2 ☐

d. 6-cent certification

1 ☐

2 ☐

e. Nutrient analysis

1 ☐

2 ☐

f. Claims processing

1 ☐

2 ☐

h. Other (*Specify*)

1 ☐

2 ☐

(STRING (NUM))

3. SFA PROCUREMENT PRACTICES

The following questions are about food service management companies (FSMCs), cooperative purchasing agreements, and other procurement practices.

3.1 In your State, how many SFAs are using FSMCs? If none, please enter 0.

SFAs

If none of the SFAs in your State are using FSMCs then SKIP TO 3.5.

3.2 How many of these [FILL WITH NUMBER IN 3.1] SFAs are using one of the following national FSMCs (that is, operating within states from several regions)?

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

	SFAS
a. Sodexo	
b. Chartwells	
c. Aramark	
d. Preferred Meal Systems	
e. Other national FSMC (<i>Specify</i>)	
(STRING (NUM))	
f. Other national FSMC (<i>Specify</i>)	
(STRING (NUM))	

3.3 How many SFAs are using regional FSMCs (that is, operating within states from a single region)? If none, please enter 0.

SFAs

3.4 How many SFAs are using local FSMCs (that is, within your State)? If none, please enter 0.

SFAs

3.5 Please select the procurement training that all SFAs in your State have received for the following contract types, agreements, or solicitation types in SY 2016-2017. SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ FSMC contracts (fixed-price and cost-reimbursable) 1
 - ☐ Cooperative purchasing agreements (for a group with SFAs only)..... 2
 - ☐ Group Purchasing Organization (GPO) contracts (for a group with SFAs and a third party provider)..... 3
 - ☐ Small purchase procedures 4
 - ☐ Micro-purchases 5
 - ☐ Sealed bids 6
 - ☐ Competitive proposals 7
 - ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99
- Specify (STRING (NUM))
- ☐ SFAs have not received procurement training on any agreement or contract types 6

The next set of questions are about your State's contract monitoring procedures, the frequency with which your State reviews SFA procurement contracts and agreements, whether your State has prototype documents or models for these contracts or agreements, and contract elements for which SFAs are required to use the prototype documents or models.

Examples of goods and services include food, equipment, and supplies purchased for use in the production of school meals, or personnel hired to serve school meals. By school meals, we mean the meals provided under the School Breakfast Program (SBP), the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the Child and Adult Care Feeding Program (CACFP), and summer meals provided in summer through the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) and/or the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

3.6 Does [FILL WITH SFA'S STATE] have State-level policies on SFA procurement of goods and services?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2

3.6a In addition to reviewing FSMC contracts, does your State monitor SFA policies and/or practices, through contract review or other methods, as they relate to procurement of goods and services used for school meals?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2

3.7 Please indicate whether your State reviews all, some, or none of the SFA contracts listed in the table below.

Select one per row

	ALL	SOME	NONE	N/A
a. FSMCs	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	n ☐
b. Cooperative Purchasing Agreements (for a group with SFAs only)	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	n ☐
c. Group Purchasing Organizations (GPOs) (for a group with SFAs and a third party provider)	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	n ☐

Continue to 3.8 if you selected “some” for FSMCs, Cooperative Purchasing Agreements or Group Purchasing Organizations (GPOs). Otherwise, skip to 3.9.

3.8 In the table below, please indicate under which circumstances your State reviews SFA contracts prior to their execution.

Select all that apply

	CONTRACT TYPE		
	FSMCs	Cooperative Purchasing Agreements	Group Purchasing Organizations
a. Dollar value of contract	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐
b. SFA history	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐
c. New vendor	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐
d. New FSMC, co-op, or GPO	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐
e. Length of contract term	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐
f. Contract types (e.g. cost-reimbursable, fixed-price contracts)	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐
g. Scope of services, including changes in programs operated	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐
h. Replacement, improvement, or investment in equipment	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐
i. Reporting requirements in the contract	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐
j. Other method (<i>Specify</i>)	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐

(STRING (NUM))

3.9 How often does your State review SFA FSMC contracts that include the procurement of goods and services for school meals?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ More than once a year..... 1
- ☐ Once a year 2
- ☐ Less than once a year 3
- ☐ Never 4

3.10 Does your State have a prototype procurement document or model contract that SFAs can use for FSMC contracts?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Yes, and use is required under all circumstances..... 1 SKIP TO 3.12
- ☐ Yes, and use is required under some circumstances..... 2
- ☐ Yes, but use is not required..... 3 SKIP TO 3.12
- ☐ No 4 SKIP TO 3.12

3.11 For which contract elements are SFAs required to use the prototype procurement document or model contract for FSMC contracts?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Dollar value of contract..... 1
- ☐ SFA history 2
- ☐ New vendor..... 3
- ☐ Length of contract term..... 4
- ☐ Potential co-op size 5
- ☐ Contract types (e.g. cost-reimbursable, fixed-price contracts)..... 6
- ☐ Scope of services 7
- ☐ Reporting requirements 8
- ☐ If FSMC replaces, improves, or invests in equipment..... 9
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

The next questions are about your State's monitoring of SFA small purchases for the procurement of goods and services for school meals.

3.12 What is your State's small purchase threshold?

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

ENTER DOLLAR AMOUNT

3.13 Does your State review SFA small purchases?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 3.19

3.14 How often does your State review SFA small purchases?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ More than once a year 1
- ☐ Once a year 2
- ☐ Less than once a year 3

3.15 Does your State review all or some of the small purchases made by SFAs?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Yes, all are reviewed 1 SKIP TO 3.19
- ☐ Yes, some are reviewed 2

3.16 Which elements of SFA small purchases does your State review?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Name of vendor 1
- ☐ Goods/services provided 2
- ☐ Dollar value paid to vendor 3
- ☐ Number of purchases made from vendor during school year 4
- ☐ Involvement of a purchasing group in the small purchase 5
- ☐ If more than one bidder responded to solicitation 6
- ☐ Equitable distribution among qualified vendors 7
- ☐ Documentation to support why a lower-priced bid wasn't chosen 8
- ☐ If contract cost splitting occurred to avoid a formal contract 9
- ☐ Other (*Specify*) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

3.17 Does your State have a prototype procurement document or model solicitation that SFAs can use for small purchases?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Yes, and use is required under all circumstances 1 SKIP TO 3.19
- ☐ Yes, and use is required under some circumstances 2
- ☐ Yes, but use is not required 3 SKIP TO 3.19
- ☐ No 0 SKIP TO 3.19

3.18 For which elements are SFAs required to use the prototype procurement document or model solicitation for small purchases?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Name of vendor 1
- ☐ Goods/services provided 2
- ☐ Dollar value paid to vendor 3
- ☐ Number of purchases made from vendor during school year 4
- ☐ Involvement of a purchasing group in the small purchase 5
- ☐ If more than one bidder responded to solicitation 6
- ☐ Equitable distribution among qualified vendors 7
- ☐ Documentation to support why a lower-priced bid wasn't chosen 8
- ☐ If contract cost splitting occurred to avoid a formal contract 9
- ☐ Other (*Specify*) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

The next questions are about your State's monitoring of SFA micro-purchases for the procurement of goods and services for school meals.

3.19 What is your State's micro-purchases threshold?

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

Enter Dollar Amount

- ☐ Uses the Federal threshold of \$3,500 1

3.20 Does your State review all SFA micro-purchases after the fact?

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 3.22

3.21 Which elements of SFA micro-purchases does your State review?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Name of vendor 1
- ☐ Goods/services provided 2
- ☐ Dollar value paid to vendor 3
- ☐ Number of purchases made from vendor during school year 4
- ☐ Involvement of a purchasing group in the small purchase 5
- ☐ Equitable distribution among qualified vendors 6
- ☐ Documentation to support why micro-purchasing was used 7
- ☐ If contract cost splitting occurred to avoid a formal contract 8
- ☐ Other (*Specify*) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

The next questions are about your State's monitoring of SFA contracts with commercial food processors to convert raw/bulk USDA Foods into selected processed end products.

3.22 Does your State review SFA contracts with any commercial food processors?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 3.26

3.23 How often does your State review SFA contracts with commercial food processors?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ More than once a year..... 1
- ☐ Once a year 2
- ☐ Less than once a year 3

3.24 Does your State review all or some SFA contracts with commercial food processors?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Yes, all are reviewed 1 SKIP TO 3.26
- ☐ Yes, some are reviewed 2

3.25 Which elements of SFA contracts with commercial food processors does your State review?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Dollar value of contract..... 1
- ☐ SFA history 2
- ☐ New vendor..... 3
- ☐ Length of contract term..... 4
- ☐ Contract type (e.g. cost-reimbursable, fixed-price contracts)..... 5
- ☐ Scope of services 6
- ☐ Reporting requirements in the contract 7

The next questions are about your State's monitoring of SFA contracts with commercial distributors to sell raw/bulk USDA Foods and commercial foods.

3.26 Does your State review SFA contracts with any commercial distributors?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO NEXT SECTION

3.27 How often does your State review SFA contracts with commercial distributors?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ More than once a year..... 1
- ☐ Once a year 2
- ☐ Less than once a year 3

3.28 Does your State review all or some SFA contracts with commercial distributors?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Yes, all are reviewed 1 SKIP TO NEXT SECTION
- ☐ Yes, some are reviewed 2

3.29 Which elements of SFA contracts with commercial distributors does your State review?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Dollar value of contract 1
- ☐ SFA history 2
- ☐ New vendor 3
- ☐ Length of contract term 4
- ☐ Contract type (e.g. cost-reimbursable, fixed-price contracts) 5
- ☐ Scope of services 6
- ☐ Reporting requirements in the contract 7

3.30. Is there anything you would like FNS to know about how procurement is being implemented by SFAs in your State? (*Please describe*)

Specify (STRING (NUM))

4. THE FREE AND REDUCED PRICE MEAL APPLICATION

The next few questions are about your State's prototype application for free and reduced price (F/RP) meals. This section begins with questions about your State's hard copy application form and then follows with questions about materials your State may provide to accompany the hard copy form (i.e. instructions, letters, FAQs, and any other information),

4.1a. Does your State agency have a policy in place governing the use of your State's hard copy F/RP meal application?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 4.2

4.1b. Which of the following describes your State's policy for SFA use of the State's hard copy F/RP meal application?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Our State endorses or encourages the use of the State F/RP meal application..... 1 SKIP TO 4.2
- ☐ Our State requires some SFAs to use the State F/RP meal application..... 2
- ☐ Our State requires all SFAs to use the State F/RP meal application, no modifications allowed 3 SKIP TO 4.2
- ☐ Our State requires all SFAs use the State F/RP meal application, with State-approved modifications 4 SKIP TO 4.2
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99 SKIP TO 4.2

Specify (STRING (NUM))

4.1c. What criteria determine that an SFA is required to use your State's hard copy F/RP meal application?

Specify (STRING (NUM))

4.2. Is your State agency's hard copy prototype application identical to the *USDA Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals*? By identical, we mean that your State's Application and the USDA Prototype application are exactly the same.

- ☐ Yes..... 1 SKIP TO 4.4
- ☐ No 2

4.2a Is your State agency's hard copy prototype application closely modelled after the *USDA Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals*? By closely modeled, we mean that your State's application draws heavily from the USDA's Prototype Application, but your State has made state-specific changes to the application.

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 4.3

4.2b What elements of your State's hard copy prototype F/RP meal application are different from the *USDA Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals*?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ The content..... 1
- ☐ The formatting..... 2
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

4.3. Whose materials contributed to the design or layout of your State's hard copy prototype F/RP meal application?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ *USDA Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals* 1
- ☐ The State's design/layout 2
- ☐ State contractor design/layout 3
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

- ☐ Don't know d

4.4. In which other format(s) is your State's prototype F/RP meal application available?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY OR NONE

- ☐ Electronic or web-based application (that is, information is entered and submitted electronically and not printed out for hard copy completion) 1 GO TO 4.5a
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99 SKIP TO 4.6a

Specify (STRING (NUM))

- ☐ None - our State just uses a hard copy prototype F/RP meal application..... 0 SKIP TO 4.6a

Answer 4.5a, b, c if 4.4 = 1

4.5a. Does your State agency have a policy in place governing the use of your State's electronic or web-based F/RP meal application?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 4.6a

4.5b. Which of the following describes your State's policy for SFA use of the State's electronic or web-based F/RP meal application?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Our State endorses or encourages the use of the State F/RP meal application..... 1 SKIP TO 4.6a
- ☐ Our State requires some SFAs to use the State F/RP meal application..... 2
- ☐ Our State requires all SFAs to use the State F/RP meal application, no modifications allowed 3 SKIP TO 4.6a
- ☐ Our State requires all SFAs use the State F/RP meal application, with State-approved modifications 4 SKIP TO 4.6a
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99 SKIP TO 4.6a

Specify (STRING (NUM))

4.5c. What criteria determine that an SFA is required to use your State's electronic or web-based F/RP meal application?

Specify (STRING (NUM))

The next set of questions is about the design of your State's prototype materials that accompany the F/RP meal application. Examples of accompanying materials include instructions, letters and FAQs, plus other information like charts about family and income size.

4.6a. Does your State agency have a policy in place governing SFAs' use of your State's prototype materials that accompany your State's F/RP meal application?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No (SFAs may develop or select their own materials to accompany the FR/P meal application) 2 SKIP TO 4.7

4.6b. Which of the following describes your State's policy governing SFA use of your State's prototype materials that accompany your State's F/RP meal application?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Our State endorses or encourages the use of some/all materials that accompany our State's F/RP meal application..... 1 SKIP TO 4.7
- ☐ Our State requires some SFAs to use the State F/RP meal application..... 2
- ☐ Our State requires the use of some/all materials that accompany our State's F/RP meal application, no modifications allowed 3 SKIP TO 4.7
- ☐ Our State requires the use of some/all materials that accompany our State's F/RP meal application, State-approved modifications allowed 4 SKIP TO 4.7
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99 SKIP TO 4.7

Specify (STRING (NUM))

4.6c. What criteria determine that an SFA is required to use your State's prototype materials that accompany your State's F/RP meal application?

Specify (STRING (NUM))

4.7. Which of the following prototype materials that accompany your State's F/RP meal application does your State agency issue or endorse?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY OR NONE

- ☐ Application instructions 1
- ☐ Letter for households 2
- ☐ FAQ for households..... 3
- ☐ Other communications with households (*Specify*) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

None – SKIP TO NEXT SECTION

IF 4.7=1, GO TO 4.8. OTHERWISE, SKIP TO 4.11.

4.8. Are your State agency's accompanying application instructions identical to the *USDA Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals*? By identical, we mean that your State's instructions and the USDA Prototype instructions are exactly the same.

- ☐ Yes 1 SKIP TO 4.11
☐ No 2

4.9a. Is your State agency's accompanying application instructions closely modelled after the *USDA Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals*? By closely modeled, we mean that your State's application draws heavily from the USDA's Prototype, but your State has added some state-specific components to the instructions.

- ☐ Yes 1
☐ No 2 SKIP TO 4.10

4.9b What elements of your State's prototype F/RP meal application instructions are different from the *USDA Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals*?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ The content 1
☐ The formatting 2
☐ Other (*Specify*) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

4.10. Whose materials contributed to the design or layout of the instructions that accompany your State's F/RP meal application?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ *USDA Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals* 1
☐ The State's design/layout 2
☐ State contractor design/layout 3
☐ Other (*Specify*) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

- ☐ Don't know d

IF 4.7=2, GO TO 4.11. OTHERWISE, SKIP TO 4.13.

4.11. Are your State agency's accompanying letter for households identical to the *USDA Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals*? By identical, we mean that your State's accompanying letter and the USDA Prototype accompanying letter are exactly the same.

- ☐ Yes 1 SKIP TO 4.13
☐ No 2

4.11a. Is your State agency's accompanying letter closely modelled after the *USDA Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals*? By closely modeled, we mean that your State's accompanying letter draws heavily from the USDA's Prototype accompanying letter, but your State has added some state-specific components to the letter.

- ☐ Yes 1
☐ No 2 SKIP TO 4.12

4.11b. What elements of your letter that accompanies the State's prototype F/RP meal application are different from the *USDA Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals*?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ The content..... 1
- ☐ The formatting..... 2
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

4.12. Whose materials contributed to the design or layout of the prototype letter that accompanies your State's F/RP meal application?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ *USDA Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals* 1
- ☐ The State's design/layout 2
- ☐ State contractor design/layout..... 3
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

- ☐ Don't know d

IF 4.7=3, GO TO 4.13, OTHERWISE SKIP TO 4.15.

4. 13. Are your State agency's FAQs for households identical to the *USDA Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals*? By identical, we mean that your State's FAQs for households and the USDA Prototype FAQs for households are exactly the same.

- ☐ Yes..... 1 SKIP TO 4.15
- ☐ No 2

4.13a. Is your State agency's accompanying FAQ for households closely modelled after the *USDA Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals*? By closely modeled, we mean that your State's FAQ for households draws heavily from the USDA's Prototype Application, but your State has added some state-specific components to the FAQ.

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 4.14

4.13b. What elements of your State's FAQ for households are different from the *USDA Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals*?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ The content..... 1
- ☐ The formatting..... 2
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

4.14. Whose materials contributed to the design or layout of the prototype FAQ for households that accompanies your State's F/RP meal application?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ USDA *Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals* 1
 - ☐ The State's design/layout 2
 - ☐ State contractor design/layout 3
 - ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99
- Specify (STRING (NUM))
- ☐ Don't know d

IF 4.7=99, ANSWER 4.15, OTHERWISE GO TO NEXT SECTION.

4.15. Whose materials contributed to the design or layout of other prototype communications that accompany your SFA's primary F/RP meal application?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ USDA *Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals* 1
 - ☐ The State's design/layout 2
 - ☐ State contractor design/layout 3
 - ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99
- Specify (STRING (NUM))
- ☐ Don't know d

5. USDA Grants

The next set of questions asks about Team Nutrition Training Grants, which have funded State agencies to establish or enhance sustainable infrastructures for implementing Team Nutrition's goal of improving children's lifelong eating and physical activity habits since 1994.

5.1 Have you heard about Team Nutrition Training Grants before now?

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 5.6

5.2 Has your State ever received a Team Nutrition Training Grant?

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 5.4
- ☐ Don't know d SKIP TO 5.4

5.3 What is the date of your State's most recent Team Nutrition Training Grant award?

AWARD DATE
MONTH YEAR

- ☐ Don't know d

5.4 Has your State encouraged schools to become Team Nutrition schools?

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 5.6

5.5 What communication channels has your State used to encourage schools to become Team Nutrition schools?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Mailings 1
- ☐ Emails 2
- ☐ Newsletters 3
- ☐ Social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) 4
- ☐ Posting information on your State's website 5
- ☐ Webinars and/or trainings 6
- ☐ Meetings with key school staff, such as nurses and physical education teachers 7
- ☐ Other (*Specify*) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

The next set of questions asks about the Administrative Review and Training (ART) Grants, which help State agencies to identify, review, monitor and train LEAs with high levels (or high risk) of school meal program administrative error. ART Grants may be for planning or implementation.

5.6 Have you heard about ART Grants before now?

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 5.11

5.7 Has your State ever received funding from an ART Planning Grant?

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 5.9
- ☐ Don't know d SKIP TO 5.9

5.8 What is the date of your State's most recent ART Planning Grant award?

- AWARD DATE
MONTH YEAR
- ☐ Don't know d

5.9 Has your State ever received funding for an ART Implementation Grant?

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 5.11
- ☐ Don't know d SKIP TO 5.11

5.10 What is the date of your State's most recent ART Implementation Grant award?

- AWARD DATE
MONTH YEAR
- ☐ Don't know d

The next set of questions asks about the Direct Certification Improvement Grant, which funds State agencies as they plan and implement direct certification improvement projects. These projects help States reach and maintain the direct certification rate benchmarks mandated by the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA) of 2010. Direct Certification Improvement Grants may be Tier 1 (Limited Scope Planning and Implementation) or Tier 2 (Full-Scope Implementation) Grants.

5.11 Have you heard about the Direct Certification Improvement Grant before now?

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO NEXT SECTION

5.12 Has your State ever received a Direct Certification Improvement Tier 1 Limited Scope Planning and Implementation Grant?

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 5.14
- ☐ Don't know d SKIP TO 5.14

5.13 What is the date of your State's most recent Direct Certification Improvement Tier 1 Limited Scope Planning and Implementation Grant award?

AWARD DATE

MONTH YEAR

☐ Don't know d

5.14 Has your State ever received a Direct Certification Improvement Tier 2 Full-Scope Implementation Grant?

☐ Yes 1

☐ No 2 SKIP TO NEXT SECTION

☐ Don't knowd SKIP TO NEXT SECTION

5.15 What is the date of your State's most recent Direct Certification Improvement Tier 2 Full-Scope Implementation Grant award?

AWARD DATE

MONTH YEAR

☐ Don't know d

6. STATE CHILD NUTRITION DIRECTOR BACKGROUND

This section asks about the background of the current State Child Nutrition Director. If you are responding on behalf of the State Child Nutrition Director, please obtain the information from the State Child Nutrition Director and enter it here.

6.1 How would you describe your role as State Child Nutrition Director?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ I am the State director of school nutrition programs..... 1
- ☐ I am the State director of food distribution programs 2
- ☐ I am an interim State director 3
- ☐ Other (Specify)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

6.2 In what month and year did you start your position as the State Child Nutrition Director?

MONTH YEAR

6.3 Prior to your position as the State Child Nutrition Director, how much experience did you have in institutional food service operations, management, business, and/or nutrition education?

Please enter the number of years and months of experience below. For example, if you have two years of prior experience, enter 2 years and 0 months

 AND

YEARS MONTHS

6.4 What is the highest level of education you completed?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Less than high school..... 1 SKIP TO 6.6
- ☐ High school (or GED) 2 SKIP TO 6.6
- ☐ Some college, no degree..... 3 SKIP TO 6.6
- ☐ Associate's degree 4
- ☐ Bachelor's degree..... 5
- ☐ Master's degree 6
- ☐ Graduate credits beyond a Master's degree but no degree 7
- ☐ Doctorate 8

6.5 What was your major in college?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Food and Nutrition 1
- ☐ Foodservice Administration/Management 2
- ☐ Family and Consumer Sciences 3
- ☐ Dietetics 4
- ☐ Culinary Arts 5
- ☐ Nutrition Education 6
- ☐ Business 7
- ☐ Other (*Specify*) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

6.6 What is the current minimum education requirement for the Child Nutrition Director position in your State?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ High school diploma (or GED) 1 SKIP TO SURVEY VERIFICATION SCREEN
- ☐ Some college, no degree 2
- ☐ Associate's degree 3
- ☐ Bachelor's degree 4
- ☐ Graduate degree 5

6.7 What types of college majors are currently accepted for the Child Nutrition Director position in your State?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Food and Nutrition 1
- ☐ Foodservice Administration/Management 2
- ☐ Family and Consumer Sciences 3
- ☐ Dietetics 4
- ☐ Culinary Arts 5
- ☐ Nutrition Education 6
- ☐ Business 7
- ☐ Other (*Specify*) 8

Specify (STRING (NUM))

- ☐ Other (*Specify*) 9

Specify (STRING (NUM))

- ☐ Other (*Specify*) 10

Specify (STRING (NUM))

VERIFICATION SCREEN

You have just completed the CN-OPS II State Child Nutrition Director survey. Are you ready to submit your responses? (If you are ready, select "**Yes**" and press the "**Save and Continue**" button below; you will be directed to the **SUBMIT** page. If you need to double check an answer, press the "**Back**" button below or use the "**Table of Contents**" to go back to a section).

- Yes

SURVEY SECTION VERIFICATION SCREEN

Are you ready to complete?

Please review the list below. A check next to the survey section indicates that you have viewed all of the questions in the section.

Before you click "Submit" please make sure you have completed all sections of the survey. You can click the section links below to navigate back into the survey. Once you click the "Submit" button you will not be able to edit your survey.

Submit (Button)

THANK YOU SCREEN

Thank you for completing this survey! If you have any questions about this survey, please email CNOPS2@2mresearch.com or call toll-free at 1.844.503.7045.

APPENDIX C. SFA DIRECTOR SURVEY

Child Nutrition Program Operations Study II

CNOPS

School Food Authority (SFA) Director
Survey 2016-2017

FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY

Please complete the survey using the unique link sent to
you by email.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-0607. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 2 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering the data needed, and completing and reviewing the information collection.



U.S. Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service

This survey is being conducted for the Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture as part of a study of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and other USDA food programs throughout the country. All responses will be treated in strict privacy; no names will be used in our study reports, and only aggregated results will be reported.

The study is authorized by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA) and cooperation by selected states, local education agencies, and schools is required under Section 305 of the HHFKA. Section 305 of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 states that “States, State educational agencies, local educational agencies, schools, institutions, facilities, and contractors participating in programs authorized under this Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C 1771 et seq.) shall cooperate with officials and contractors acting on behalf of the Secretary, in the conduct of evaluations and studies under those Acts.”

Send comments regarding the burden estimate (2 hours) or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to:

**U.S. Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service
Office of Policy Support
Alexandria, VA 22302
Attn: Dr. Devin Wallace-Williams**

If you have any questions about this survey, please email CNOPS2@2mresearch.com or call toll-free at 1.844.503.7045.

We thank you for your cooperation and participation in this very important study.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE SURVEY

- The survey has been optimized to run on a desktop computer and is best viewed in the latest versions of Chrome, Firefox, or Internet Explorer.
- Click the **"Save & Continue"** button to progress in the survey. You must click this button to save your responses. **If you cannot complete the survey in one sitting, click the "Save & Continue" button before you close your browser.** Your answers will be saved.
- **Helpful Hint:** If you hover your cursor over the blue text you can see more information about the term.
- Click the **"Back"** button to go to the previous question. Please note that clicking the "Back" button will not save your response to the current question. You must first click the "Save & Continue" button to save your response.
- Use the **"Table of Contents"** on the left hand side of your page to navigate to different sections in the survey. **To hide and unhide** the "Table of Contents" click the icon with the three lines. Please note that **if you use the "Table of Contents" to navigate to a partially completed section you will be brought to the first incomplete question.** You can use the "back" button to navigate to previous questions.
- **If you need a colleague to complete a section of the survey, you should forward them the email with your unique link.** They do not need a separate link.
- **Avoid having multiple people logged into the survey at once.** Responses may not be recorded correctly if multiple users are logged in the survey at the same time.
- If you or a colleague are returning to finish your saved survey, the user will return to the point where you left off. You can use the "Table of Contents" menu to return to previous questions.
- **Use the buttons and links within the survey.** For example, using "Enter" on your keyboard or your browser's "Back" function may cause errors.
- **Questions will not always be numbered sequentially,** and some may be skipped because they do not apply to you.
- If you have any questions about the study or about completing this survey, please email CNOPS2@2mresearch.com or call **1-844-503-7045 (toll-free).**

Back (Button)

Save and Continue (Button)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Before starting the survey please fill in the requested contact information below. If the information below is prefilled please review and update the information as necessary.

School District Name

Please fill in the contact information for the SFA Director below: *(Update where necessary)*

First Name:

Last Name:

Address 1:

Address 2:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone Number:

Ext.

Email Address:

If you are not the SFA Director please fill out your name and contact information:

First Name:

Last Name:

Title:

Street Address 1:

Street Address 2:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone Number: Ext.

Email:

1. SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

This section includes questions about schools in your school food authority (SFA) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), the Seamless Summer Option (SSO), and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). When providing counts of schools, you may group schools together as you would for administrative reporting. For example, you may group two schools with a shared cafeteria.

1.1 What is the total number of schools in your SFA? Please enter your responses by school type.

- **Elementary schools** are schools composed of any span of grades from kindergarten through 6th grade, such as K-4, 4-6, or K-5.
- **Middle schools** are schools that have no grade lower than 6 and no grade higher than 9, such as 6-8, 6-7, 7-8, or 6-9. These schools may also be known as junior high schools.
- **High schools** are schools that have no grade lower than 9 and continue through 12th grade, such as grade 9 only, 9-10, or 9-12.
- **Other schools** are schools that do not meet the elementary, middle, or high school definitions, such as 6-12, K-8, or K-12.

If none, please enter 0.

Helpful Hint: If you hover your cursor over the blue text you can see more information about the term.

	a. ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	b. MIDDLE SCHOOLS	c. HIGH SCHOOLS	d. OTHER SCHOOLS	TOTAL
Total number of <u>schools</u> in your SFA					FILLS WITH SUM

1.2.1 This question is about the number of elementary schools that participated in school meal programs in the 2016-2017 school year (SY).

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

Helpful Hint: If you hover your cursor over the blue text you can see more information about the term.

	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
a. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.1a] elementary schools, how many participate in NSLP <u>only</u> ?	
b. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.1a] elementary schools, how many schools participate in SBP <u>only</u> ?	
c. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.1a] elementary schools, how many schools participate in <u>both</u> SBP <u>and</u> NSLP?	
d. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.1a] elementary schools, how many schools participate in <u>neither</u> SBP <u>nor</u> NSLP?	

1.2.2 This question is about the number of middle schools that participated in school meal programs in the 2016-2017 school year (SY).

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

Helpful Hint: If you hover your cursor over the blue text you can see more information about the term.

	MIDDLE SCHOOLS
a. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.2a] middle schools, how many participate in NSLP <u>only</u> ?	
b. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.2a] middle schools, how many schools participate in SBP <u>only</u> ?	
c. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.2a] middle schools, how many schools participate in <u>both</u> SBP <u>and</u> NSLP?	
d. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.2a] middle schools, how many schools participate in <u>neither</u> SBP <u>nor</u> NSLP?	

1.2.3 This question is about the number of high schools that participated in school meal programs in the 2016-2017 school year (SY).

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

	HIGH SCHOOLS
a. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.3a] high schools, how many participate in NSLP <u>only</u> ?	
b. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.3a] high schools, how many schools participate in SBP <u>only</u> ?	
c. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.3a] high schools, how many schools participate in <u>both</u> SBP <u>and</u> NSLP?	
d. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.3a] high schools, how many schools participate in <u>neither</u> SBP <u>nor</u> NSLP?	

1.2.4 This question is about the number of other schools that participated in school meal programs in the 2016-2017 school year (SY).

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

	OTHER SCHOOLS
a. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.4a] other schools, how many participate in NSLP <u>only</u> ?	
b. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.4a] other schools, how many schools participate in SBP <u>only</u> ?	
c. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.4a] other schools, how many schools participate in <u>both</u> SBP <u>and</u> NSLP?	
d. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.4a] other schools, how many schools participate in <u>neither</u> SBP <u>nor</u> NSLP?	

The following questions deal with participation in the CACFP during SY 2016-2017. For this program, USDA funds afterschool programs to serve a meal or snack to children in low-income areas.

1.3 Do any schools in your SFA participate in the CACFP?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 1.7

1.4 Is your SFA the only CACFP sponsor?

A sponsor is an organization that has entered into an agreement with their administering State agencies to assume administrative and financial responsibilities for CACFP operations. Examples of sponsors include public or private nonprofit schools, private nonprofit organizations, public or private nonprofit camps, and units of local, municipal, county, tribal, or State government, including school food authorities.

- ☐ Yes..... 1 SKIP TO 1.6
- ☐ No 2

1.5 How many schools in your SFA currently participate as sponsors in the CACFP ? Please do not count schools that are expected to participate in the future.

A sponsor is an organization that has entered into an agreement with their administering State agencies to assume administrative and financial responsibilities for CACFP operations. Examples of sponsors include public or private nonprofit schools, private nonprofit organizations, public or private nonprofit camps, and units of local, municipal, county, tribal, or State government, including school food authorities.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

NUMBER OF SPONSORS

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| a. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.1a] elementary schools, how many schools participate as sponsors? | <input type="text"/> |
| b. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.1b] middle schools, how many schools participate as sponsors? | <input type="text"/> |
| c. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.1c] high schools, how many schools participate as sponsors? | <input type="text"/> |
| d. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.1d] other schools, how many schools participate as sponsors? | <input type="text"/> |

1.6 How many schools in your SFA participate as sites in the CACFP in SY 2016-2017? Please do not count schools that are expected to participate in the future.

A site is a physical location, approved by the State agency, where CACFP meals are served during a supervised time period. Examples of sites include child care centers, afterschool care programs, and schools.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

NUMBER OF SITES

a. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.1a] elementary schools, how many schools participate as sites?

b. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.1b] middle schools, how many schools participate as sites?

c. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.1c] high schools, how many schools participate as sites?

d. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.1d] other schools, how many schools participate as sites?

1.7 Do any schools in your SFA not currently participating in the CACFP intend to participate next year (SY 2017-2018)?

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 1.9
- ☐ Don't know d SKIP TO 1.9
- ☐ Not applicable (All schools participate in the CACFP Afterschool At-risk Supper Program) n SKIP TO 1.9

1.8 Approximately how many additional schools plan to participate in the CACFP next year?

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

Schools

1.9 Is your SFA, or are schools in your SFA, using strategies to build awareness of the availability of the CACFP among eligible, non-participating students?

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 1.11
- ☐ Don't know d SKIP TO 1.11

1.10 What strategies are being used to build awareness of the CACFP among eligible, non-participating students in your schools?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Mass mailings 1
- ☐ Newsletters 2
- ☐ Social media (for example, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) 3
- ☐ Public service announcements 4
- ☐ Texting campaign 5
- ☐ USDA materials (for example, flyers, bookmarks, or postcards) 6
- ☐ Advertising at family-friendly events 7
- ☐ Presentations to faith-based organizations 8
- ☐ Discussion at community meetings 9
- ☐ Partnering with local agencies 10
- ☐ Other (*Specify*) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

1.11 Is your SFA, or are schools in your SFA, using strategies to build awareness of the availability of the CACFP to the local community at large?

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 1.13
- ☐ Don't know d SKIP TO 1.13

1.12 Please select the strategies used in your SFA to promote the CACFP to the local community at large.

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Social media (for example, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) 1
- ☐ Public service announcements 2
- ☐ USDA materials (flyers, bookmarks, and postcards) 3
- ☐ Advertising at family-friendly events 4
- ☐ Presentations to faith-based organizations 5
- ☐ Discussion at community meetings 6
- ☐ Partnering with local agencies 7
- ☐ Other (*Specify*) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

- ☐ Don't know d

The following questions are about your SFA's participation in two summer meal programs, the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). Both SSO and SFSP provide free meals to children in low-income areas when school is not in session. Only SFAs participating in the NSLP and SBP are eligible to sponsor the SSO.

1.13 Did your SFA sponsor any feeding sites under the SSO in summer of 2016?

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 1.15

1.14 How many school and non-school feeding sites in your SFA participated in the SSO during the summer of 2016?

A site is a physical location, approved by the State agency, where meals are served during a supervised time period. Examples of sites include child care centers, afterschool care programs, and schools.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

NUMBER OF SITES

a. School sites

b. Non-school sites

1.15 Did your SFA sponsor the SFSP in summer of 2016?

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 1.17

1.16 How many school and non-school feeding sites did your SFA sponsor through the SFSP during the summer of 2016?

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

NUMBER OF SITES

a. School sites

b. Non-school sites

1.17 How many schools in your SFA sponsored the SFSP during the summer of 2016? Please also include school sponsors regardless of whether they also act as a site.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS

1.18 Do you anticipate increasing the number of feeding sites operating through the SSO and/or the SFSP during the summer of 2017?

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 1.20
- ☐ Don't know d SKIP TO 1.20

1.19 Approximately how many additional school and non-school feeding sites do you anticipate will participate during the summer of 2017? Please respond for each program.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

SEAMLESS SUMMER
OPTION

SUMMER FOOD SERVICE
PROGRAM

a. School sites

b. Non-school sites

1.20 Is your SFA, or are any schools in your SFA, using strategies to build awareness of the availability of summer feeding programs among eligible, non-participating students?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 1.22
- ☐ Don't know d SKIP TO 1.22

1.21 What strategies are being used to build awareness of the summer feeding programs among eligible, non-participating students in your schools?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Mass mailings..... 1
- ☐ Newsletters 2
- ☐ Social media (for example, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) 3
- ☐ Public service announcements..... 4
- ☐ Texting campaign 5
- ☐ USDA materials (flyers, bookmarks, and postcards)..... 6
- ☐ Advertising at family-friendly events 7
- ☐ Presentations to faith-based organizations 8
- ☐ Discussion at community meetings 9
- ☐ Partnering with local agencies 10
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

1.22 Is your SFA or are any schools in your SFA using strategies to build awareness of the availability of summer feeding programs to the local community at large?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 2.1
- ☐ Don't know d SKIP TO 2.1

1.23 What strategies are being used to build awareness of the summer feeding programs in the local community at large?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Promoting the FNS Mapping Tools 1
 - ☐ Promoting the National Hunger Hotline 2
 - ☐ Promoting the FNS Summer Meal Site Finder 3
 - ☐ Social media (for example, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) 4
 - ☐ Public service announcements..... 5
 - ☐ USDA materials (flyers, bookmarks, and postcards) 6
 - ☐ Advertising at family-friendly events 7
 - ☐ Presentations to faith-based organizations 8
 - ☐ Discussion at community meetings 9
 - ☐ Partnering with local agencies..... 10
 - ☐ OTHER (*Specify*) 99
- Specify (STRING (NUM))
- ☐ Don't Know d

2. STUDENT PARTICIPATION

This section includes questions about student enrollment and National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) participation at the schools in your SFA during SY 2016-2017.

For this question, please record your responses separately by school type:

- **Elementary schools** are schools composed of any span of grades from kindergarten through 6th grade, such as K-4, 4-6, or K-5.
- **Middle schools** are schools that have no grade lower than 6 and no grade higher than 9, such as 6-8, 6-7, 7-8, or 6-9. These schools may also be known as junior high schools.
- **High schools** are schools that have no grade lower than 9 and continue through 12th grade, such as grade 9 only, 9-10, or 9-12.
- **Other schools** are schools that do not meet the elementary, middle, or high school definitions, such as 6-12, K-8, or K-12.

2.1 As of October 31, 2016, what was the total number of students enrolled in your SFA?

The total student enrollment should include prekindergarten and kindergarten students who attend school for half a day and may not have access to meals. Children attending a school that does not participate in the NSLP or the SBP should also be included in this count.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

Helpful Hint: If you hover your cursor over the blue text you can see more information about the term.

	a. ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	b. MIDDLE SCHOOLS	c. HIGH SCHOOLS	d. OTHER SCHOOLS
Total number of <u>students</u> enrolled in your SFA				

2.1.1 This question is about the number of elementary school students who participated in school meal programs in SY 2016-2017.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
a. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 2.1a] total enrolled elementary school students, how many <u>do not have access to SBP</u> ?	
b. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 2.1a] total enrolled elementary school students, how many <u>do not have access to NSLP</u> ?	
c. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 2.1a] total enrolled elementary school students, how many were <u>approved to receive free meals</u> ?	
d. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 2.1a] total enrolled elementary school students, how many were <u>approved to receive reduced price meals</u> ?	

2.1.2 This question is about the number of middle school students who participated in school meal programs in SY 2016-2017.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

	MIDDLE SCHOOLS
a. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 2.1b] total enrolled middle school students, how many <u>do not have access to SBP</u> ?	
b. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 2.1b] total enrolled middle school students, how many <u>do not have access to NSLP</u> ?	
c. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 2.1b] total enrolled middle school students, how many were <u>approved to receive free meals</u> ?	
d. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 2.1b] total enrolled middle school students, how many were <u>approved to receive reduced price meals</u> ?	

2.1.3 This question is about the number of high school students who participated in school meal programs in SY 2016-2017.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

	HIGH SCHOOLS
a. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 2.1c] total enrolled high school students, how many <u>do not have access to SBP</u> ?	
b. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 2.1c] total enrolled high school students, how many <u>do not have access to NSLP</u> ?	
c. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 2.1c] total enrolled high school students, how many were <u>approved to receive free meals</u> ?	
d. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 2.1c] total enrolled high school students, how many were <u>approved to receive reduced price meals</u> ?	

2.1.4 This question is about the number of other school students who participated in school meal programs in SY 2016-2017.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

	OTHER SCHOOLS
a. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 2.1d] total enrolled other school students, how many <u>do not have access to SBP</u> ?	
b. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 2.1d] total enrolled other school students, how many <u>do not have access to NSLP</u> ?	
c. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 2.1d] total enrolled other school students, how many were <u>approved to receive free meals</u> ?	
d. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 2.1d] total enrolled other school students, how many were <u>approved to receive reduced price meals</u> ?	

2.2 What was the total number of students in attendance in October 2016? The total is the cumulative sum of the daily attendance counts for October.

For example, 300 students attended elementary schools for 21 days and 250 students attended elementary schools for 20 days. The cumulative sum would be 11,300 students in daily attendance for elementary schools in October 2016.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

Total number of students in attendance in October 2016.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	MIDDLE SCHOOLS	HIGH SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOLS

2.3 What was the total number of days that meals were served in October 2016?

If the total number of days that meals were served varies within a school type, please provide the average total number of days for that school type.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

Total number of days that meals were served in October 2016

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	MIDDLE SCHOOLS	HIGH SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOLS

The following questions ask you to report the number of school meals served or claimed as paid, reduced price, or free during SY 2016-2017. If your SFA operates under Provisions 1, Provision 2, Provision 3, or CEP, you may indicate the number of student lunches and student breakfasts claimed in each appropriate category. Provide counts for October 2016, excluding second meals taken by students.

2.4 For each school type, how many student breakfasts were either served/claimed as paid, reduced price, and free breakfasts during October 2016?

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

STUDENT BREAKFASTS

a. What was the total number of paid breakfasts served/claimed?

b. What was the total number of reduced price breakfasts served/claimed?

c. What was the total number of free breakfasts served/claimed?

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	MIDDLE SCHOOLS	HIGH SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOLS

2.5 For each school type, how many lunches were either served/claimed as paid, reduced price, and free lunches during October 2016?

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

STUDENT LUNCHES	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	MIDDLE SCHOOLS	HIGH SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOLS
a. What was the total number of paid lunches served/claimed?				
b. What was the total number of reduced price lunches served/claimed?				
c. What was the total number of free lunches served/claimed?				

3. MEAL PRICES

The next questions are about average meal prices charged during SY 2016-2017. For these questions, please record your responses separately for:

- **Elementary schools** are schools composed of any span of grades from kindergarten through 6th grade, such as K-4, 4-6, or K-5.
- **Middle schools** are schools that have no grade lower than 6 and no grade higher than 9, such as 6-8, 6-7, 7-8, or 6-9. These schools may also be known as junior high schools.
- **High schools** are schools that have no grade lower than 9 and continue through 12th grade, such as grade 9 only, 9-10, or 9-12.
- **Other schools** are schools that do not meet the elementary, middle or junior high, or high school definition, such as 6-12, K-8, or K-12.

If prices vary within a school type, please provide the average price for that school type.

3.1 What was the average price charged for paid and reduced price breakfasts in your SFA at the beginning of SY 2016-2017? If no students in your SFA are charged for breakfast, please check the appropriate box.

	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	MIDDLE SCHOOLS	HIGH SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOLS
a. Paid breakfast	\$	\$	\$	\$
b. Reduced price breakfast	\$	\$	\$	\$
c. Not Applicable – No School Breakfast Program	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐
d. Not Applicable – Breakfast at schools are served free of charge	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐

3.2 What was the average price charged for paid and reduced price lunches in your SFA at the beginning of SY 2016-2017? If no students in your SFA are charged for lunch, please check the “not applicable” box.

LUNCH PRICES	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	MIDDLE SCHOOLS	HIGH SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOLS
a. Paid lunch	\$	\$	\$	\$
b. Reduced price lunch	\$	\$	\$	\$
c. Not Applicable – Lunches at schools are served free of charge	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐

- 3.3 What was the average price charged for paid and reduced price lunches in your SFA at the beginning of SY 2015-2016? If no students in your SFA were charged for lunch, please check the "not applicable" box.

LUNCH PRICES	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	MIDDLE OR JUNIOR HIGHS	HIGH SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOLS
a. Paid lunch	\$	\$	\$	\$
b. Reduced price lunch	\$	\$	\$	\$
c. Not Applicable – Lunches at schools were served free of charge	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐

- 3.4 SFAs participating in the NSLP are required to increase the prices charged for paid meals until their weighted average lunch prices meet the difference between Federal reimbursements for free and paid lunches. This is called the Paid Lunch Equity provision in the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.

During SY 2016-2017, what actions did your SFA take in response to the Paid Lunch Equity provision in the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Increased paid lunch prices in all schools 1
- ☐ Increased paid lunch prices in some schools 2
- ☐ Added funds from non-Federal sources to the nonprofit school food services account 3
- ☐ Requested an exemption/waiver from the Paid Lunch Equity requirement from the State 4
- ☐ No action taken - Paid lunch pricing already complied with new provision 5
- ☐ No action taken – Price increase carried over from SY 2015-2016 6
- ☐ Other (*Specify*) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

- 3.5 Did your SFA use non-Federal revenue sources to offset potential price increases in paid meals during SY 2016-2017?

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 3.7

3.6 What non-Federal revenue sources did your SFA use?

Select one response per row

	YES	NO
a. Per-meal State reimbursement for <i>any</i> paid meals	1 ☐	2 ☐
b. Per-meal local reimbursement for <i>any</i> paid meals	1 ☐	2 ☐
c. Funds provided by organizations, such as school-related or community groups, for <i>any</i> paid meals	1 ☐	2 ☐
d. State revenue matching funds that exceed the minimum requirement for paid lunches	1 ☐	2 ☐
e. Share of direct payments made from school district funds to support meal services attributable to <i>any</i> paid meals (for example, pro rata share of general funds used to support meal service)	1 ☐	2 ☐
f. Other (<i>Specify</i>)	1 ☐	2 ☐
(STRING (NUM))		

3.7 What was the average weighted price of all paid NSLP lunches charged in your SFA in October 2016?

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

\$ DOLLARS

The average weighted price for paid lunches can be calculated using the USDA Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) Tool (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cn/SP09-2016a.xlsx>).

The 2016-2017 average weighted price can be found in the SY 2016-17 Non-Federal Calculator or Price Calculator tabs of the Tool.

To calculate an average weighted price of all paid NSLP lunches in October 2016, first determine how many paid lunches were served in October 2016. Multiply the number of paid lunches served by the price paid for each lunch, then divide by the total number of paid lunches.

For example, suppose 300 paid lunches were served in October 2016, with \$2.57 paid for 100 lunches and \$2.60 paid for 200 lunches. The average weighted price is calculated as: (100 meals * \$2.57) + (200 meals * \$2.60) / (100+200 meals) = \$2.59 per meal.

3.8 Have you increased a la carte prices between SY 2015-2016 and SY 2016-2017?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO NEXT SECTION

3.9 What was the average price increase for the following a la carte items? If your SFA did not increase prices for a particular item, please enter \$0.00.

	AVERAGE PRICE INCREASE
a. Beverages (water, juice, sports drinks, etc.)	\$
b. Milk	\$
c. Frozen desserts (ice cream, popsicles, etc.)	\$
d. Baked goods – dessert (cookies, cakes, pastries, etc.)	\$
e. Bread/grain products (bagels, pretzels, crackers, etc.)	\$
f. Snacks (chips, energy bars, jerky, etc.)	\$
g. Candy	\$
h. Prepared entrées (pizza, hamburgers, burritos, etc.)	\$
i. Prepared non-entrée food (French fries, onion rings, etc.)	\$
j. Reimbursable meal components	\$

4. SFA PROCUREMENT PRACTICES

In this section of the survey, we want to understand the ways that your SFA procures goods and services for your school meals. Examples of goods and services include food, equipment, and supplies purchased for use in the production of school meals, or personnel hired to serve school meals. By school meals, we mean the meals provided under the School Breakfast Program (SBP), the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the Child and Adult Care Feeding Program (CACFP) At-Risk Afterschool Meals Component, and summer meals provided in summer through the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) and/or the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

Unless otherwise noted, we are interested in learning about your practices and contracts during School Year (SY) 2016-17.

4.1 Did or will your State agency review your SFA's policies or procedures for procurement of goods and services for school meals during SY 2016-17?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2

4.2 Are there local policies that your SFA must follow in addition to Federal and State requirements?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2

4.2a. What is your local simplified acquisition threshold (small purchase threshold)?

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

\$ DOLLARS

4.2b. What is your local micro-purchase threshold?

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

\$ DOLLARS

4.3 Who evaluates price quotes and competitive proposals during the procurement process at your SFA?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ SFA foodservice director or manager..... 1
- ☐ SFA head cook or kitchen/cafeteria manager 2
- ☐ District business office or purchasing department official 3
- ☐ District superintendent..... 4
- ☐ District school board 5
- ☐ State agency Child Nutrition Director or staff 6
- ☐ Food Service Management Company (FSMC) liaison or agent..... 7
- ☐ Governing or advisory board 8
- ☐ Sales broker..... 9
- ☐ Group Buying Organization agent or third party provider..... 10
- ☐ Cooperative Purchasing Group (including, but not limited to, a Consortium) 11
- ☐ Other procurement agent 12
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

4.4 Who makes final procurement contract award decisions for school meals at your SFA?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ SFA foodservice director or manager 1
- ☐ SFA head cook or kitchen/cafeteria manager 2
- ☐ District business office or purchasing department official 3
- ☐ District superintendent 4
- ☐ District school board 5
- ☐ State agency Child Nutrition Director or staff 6
- ☐ Food Service Management Company (FSMC) liaison or agent 7
- ☐ Governing or advisory board 8
- ☐ Sales broker 9
- ☐ Group Buying Organization agent or third party provider 10
- ☐ Cooperative Purchasing Group (including, but not limited to, a Consortium) 11
- ☐ Other procurement agent 12
- ☐ Other (*Specify*) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

4.5 Does your SFA use an FSMC to manage the purchase of any goods and services used for school meals?

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2

Two competitive solicitation methods are used in the formal procurement process for goods and services for school meals. Competitive sealed bids using Invitation for Bids are advertised solicitations where a firm fixed-price contract is awarded to the bidder offering the lowest responsive and responsible price. Competitive proposals using a Request for Proposal may award either a fixed-price or cost-reimbursable contract..

4.6 Does your SFA use the following competitive solicitation methods to procure goods and services for school meals?

Select one response per row

	YES	NO
a. Competitive sealed bids using Invitation for Bids	1 ☐	2 ☐
b. Competitive proposals using a Request for Proposal	1 ☐	2 ☐

SFAs may use other contracting methods to procure goods and services for school meals. Methods may include small purchases or micro-purchases using Federal, State, or local thresholds. Noncompetitive proposals involve solicitations from only one source. Local produce auctions involve competitive bidding with local producers at a central meeting place.

4.7 Which of the following other contracting methods does your SFA use to procure goods and services for school meals?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Small Purchases..... 1
- ☐ Micro-purchases 2
- ☐ Noncompetitive Proposals..... 3
- ☐ Local Produce Auctions..... 4
- ☐ Other, excluding competitive methods and FSMCs (*Specify*)..... 99
- Specify (STRING (NUM))
- ☐ None 0

To increase purchasing power, SFAs can “band together” within a cooperative and purchase goods and services for school meals at a lower cost. SFAs can also use an agent or a “third-party provider” that purchases goods and services on their behalf.

4.8 Does your SFA belong to a cooperative purchasing group comprised only of SFAs?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2

4.8a Does your SFA belong to a cooperative purchasing group with a third party that is not an SFA (e.g. group purchasing/buying organization, local or State government, or other for-profit or non-profit organizations not participating in Federal Child Nutrition programs)?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2

4.9 Please estimate the percentage of your SFA's total purchases of goods and services for school meals that were procured during SY 2016-17 using the following methods.

	PERCENTAGE
a. Food Service Management Company (FSMC)	
b. Competitive sealed bids using Invitation for Bids	
c. Competitive proposals using a Request for Proposal	
d. Small Purchases	
e. Micro-purchases	
f. Noncompetitive proposals	
g. Local Produce Auctions	
h. Cooperative purchasing group comprised only of SFAs	
i. Cooperative purchasing group with a third party that is <u>not</u> a SFA	
j. Other, excluding competitive methods and FSMCs (<i>Specify</i>):	
(STRING (NUM))	

4.10 From which of the following sources does your SFA procure foods for school meals?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Manufacturers..... 1
- ☐ Food processors (including but not limited to processed end products using USDA Foods - for example, Tyson Foods Inc., Dean Foods Co.) 2
- ☐ Distributors (for example Sysco or US Foods) 3
- ☐ Wholesale Clubs (for example, Costco Wholesale, Sam's Club)..... 4
- ☐ Farmers and/or CSAs that supply at least some purchased foods 5
- ☐ Groups of farmers that sell products centrally, such as producer co-ops or food hubs 6
- ☐ School gardens..... 7
- ☐ Suppliers contracted by the FSMC, cooperative purchasing group, and/or group buying organization 8
- ☐ Other food source supplier 1 (*Specify*) 9
Specify (STRING (NUM))
- ☐ Other food source supplier 2 (*Specify*) 10
Specify (STRING (NUM))

4.11 Please estimate the percentage of your SFA's total food purchase value for school meals that was procured from each of the following suppliers or sources in SY 2016-17. For example, if you estimate that a third of the total value of your SFA's food purchases originates from one supplier or source, then enter the number 33 for that supplier or source.

If categories cannot be reported separately, then provide the percentage value once and list the letter(s) of the other categories included. If a category is not applicable, or you have included its value in a different row, please check the N/A box.

For example, if revenue from manufacturers and food processors cannot be separated, record the total value in row a, write "b" in the last column, and check N/A for row b.

	N/A	PERCENTAGE	LIST OTHER CATEGORIES INCLUDED
a. Manufacturers	☐ n		_____
b. Food processors	☐ n		_____
c. Distributors	☐ n		
d. Wholesale clubs	☐ n		_____
e. Farmers	☐ n		_____
f. Farmer cooperatives	☐ n		_____
g. School gardens	☐ n		_____
h. Suppliers contracted by the FSMC	☐ n		_____
i. Suppliers contracted by the purchasing cooperative	☐ n		_____
j. Suppliers contracted by the group buying organization	☐ n		_____
k. Other (Specify):	☐ n		_____
(STRING (NUM))			

5. ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION AND VERIFICATION

This section is about certification for free or reduced-price school meals, verification, verification for cause, and direct verification practices in your SFA during SY 2016-2017.

5.1 How many students enrolled in your SFA were directly certified as of October 31, 2016?

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

STUDENTS

5.2 How many additional students were directly certified after October 31, 2016 up until this point in time?

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

STUDENTS

5.3 Is your State or your SFA responsible for matching lists of enrolled students to lists of household participants in SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR to directly certify students?

- SNAP is the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly known as Food Stamps).
- TANF is Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.
- FDPIR is the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations.

Note: States may be considered responsible for matching even when SFAs verify information provided by the State, or when an SFA provides student enrollment information to the State. Conversely, SFAs may be considered responsible for matching even when the State provides the SFA with SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR program participation data.

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ State 1 SKIP TO 5.5
- ☐ SFA 2
- ☐ Other (not state or SFA) 3 SKIP TO 5.5
- ☐ SFA does not directly certify students 4 SKIP TO 5.5

5.4 What challenges does your SFA face in matching enrolled students to household participation in SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Lack of staff time and resources to perform data matching 1
- ☐ High level of burden (e.g. due to outdated or not user friendly computer systems) 2
- ☐ Difficulty reconciling state-generated direct certification lists with local point-of-sale systems 3
- ☐ Difficulty investigating or reconciling partially matched or unmatched children ... 4
- ☐ Need to use a manual matching process 5
- ☐ Data insecurity/concerns about personally identifiable information 6
- ☐ Lack familiarity with system functions designed for district use 7
- ☐ No challenges 8
- ☐ Other (*Specify*) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

5.5 Which of the following formats of parent-completed applications for free or reduced-price school meals for their children is used most often for SY 2016-2017?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Web-based or computer-based application..... 1
- ☐ Computer-read or scannable paper application 2 SKIP TO 5.7
- ☐ Manually-entered paper application 3 SKIP TO 5.7
- ☐ No parents in the SFA submit applications for school meals 4 SKIP TO 5.7

5.6 Is the web-based or computer-based application integrated with any of the following data systems?

Select one response per row

	YES	NO
a. Meal claiming system	1 ☐	2 ☐
b. Point-of-sale system	1 ☐	2 ☐
c. Student records	1 ☐	2 ☐
d. Direct certification	1 ☐	2 ☐
e. Other (<i>Specify</i>)	1 ☐	2 ☐
(STRING (NUM))		

5.7 What percentage of your free or reduced-price school meal applications are received through the electronic or web-based version? Please provide your best estimate based on applications you received through October 2016.

PERCENTAGE

5.8 For each basis for eligibility listed below, how is the determination of eligibility made when processing applications—manually by the determining official, or automatically (for example, by a computer algorithm, software program, or calculations performed with formulas in a spreadsheet)?

Select one response per row

	MANUAL DETERMINATION	AUTOMATED DETERMINATION
a. Household income	1 ☐	2 ☐
b. Assistance program case number (for example, SNAP, FDPIR, or TANF)*	1 ☐	2 ☐
c. Child enrolled in Head Start or Even Start	1 ☐	2 ☐
d. Foster child	1 ☐	2 ☐
e. Homeless, migrant, or runaway child	1 ☐	2 ☐

* SNAP is the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly known as Food Stamps). FDPIR is the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations. TANF is Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

5.9 How did you verify applications for SY 2016-2017?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ In a single batch at the beginning of the school year 1
- ☐ On a rolling basis as they were approved 2
- ☐ In multiple batches 3
- ☐ Other (*Specify*) 99
- Specify (STRING (NUM))
- ☐ Did not verify applications/exempt 4 SKIP TO 5.19

5.10 What method(s) does your SFA use to first contact households selected for verification?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Letter 1
- ☐ Telephone call 2
- ☐ Email 3
- ☐ Text 4
- ☐ Household's specified communication preference 5
- ☐ In person interviews 6
- ☐ Other (*Specify*) 99
- Specify (STRING (NUM))

5.11 Does your SFA translate verification notices into the primary language spoken by the recipient household?

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2

5.12 Does your SFA accept emailed submissions of verification documentation from parents?

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2

5.13 Does your SFA follow up with households about verification documentation if they didn't respond, or if they provided insufficient or unclear documentation??

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 5.18

5.14 For households that do not respond to verification requests, how many times does your SFA follow up?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ 1 1
- ☐ 2 2
- ☐ 3 or more 3
- ☐ NA – Our SFA does not follow up with nonresponding households n

5.15 What method(s) does your SFA use to follow up with households that do not respond to verification requests?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Mailed letter 1
- ☐ Telephone call 2
- ☐ Email 3
- ☐ Text 4
- ☐ Household's specified communication preference 5
- ☐ In person interviews 6
- ☐ Other (*Specify*) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

5.16 For households that provide insufficient or unclear documentation in response to verification requests, how many times does your SFA follow up?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ 1 1
- ☐ 2 2
- ☐ 3 or more 3
- ☐ NA – Our SFA does not follow up with nonresponding households n

5.17 What method(s) does your SFA use to follow up with households that provide insufficient or unclear documentation in response to verification requests?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Mailed letter 1
- ☐ Telephone call 2
- ☐ Email 3
- ☐ Text 4
- ☐ Household's specified communication preference 5
- ☐ In person interviews 6
- ☐ Other (*Specify*) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

5.18 Did your SFA perform verification for cause (that is, verify questionable applications in addition to verifying the sample selected at random) during SY 2016-2017?

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 5.21

5.19 How many questionable household applications were verified for cause?

APPLICATIONS

5.19.1 In responding to the next two questions, exclude counts of applications that were directly verified (certification verified without contacting parents). Please provide results by original benefit type and method of approval, as applicable.

How many questionable household applications verified for cause resulted in:

	NUMBER OF QUESTIONABLE HOUSEHOLD APPLICATIONS
	IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.
a. No change to eligibility?	
b. A change from free (categorically eligible) to reduced price eligibility?*	
c. A change from free (income-eligible) to reduced price eligibility?*	

* Categorical eligibility is based on SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR documentation (a case number). Income eligibility is based on household size and income information.

5.19.2 How many questionable household applications verified for cause resulted in changes to paid status? Then, for changes to paid status, indicate how many were a result of NOT responding to requests for verification documentation.

	NUMBER OF QUESTIONABLE HOUSEHOLD APPLICATIONS CHANGED TO PAID STATUS	NUMBER CHANGED FOR NOT RESPONDING TO REQUESTS FOR DOCUMENTATION
	IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.	
a. A change from free (categorically eligible) to paid status?		
b. A change from free (income-eligible) to paid status?		
c. A change from reduced-price to paid status?		

5.20 What criteria did your SFA use to identify questionable applications for verification for cause?

Select one response per row

YES	NO
-----	----

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| a. Non responders from previous school year(s) | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |
| b. Applications with zero income listed in current and previous year(s) | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |
| c. Error prone (close to income guidelines) applications | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |
| d. School district employee application | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |
| e. Multiple application submissions with different information in order to qualify for increased benefits | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |
| f. Other (Specify) | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ |
- (STRING (NUM))

5.21 Did your SFA perform direct verification (verified application without contacting parents) on approved household applications?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2

6. MEAL PATTERN REQUIREMENTS

This section asks about your SFA's implementation of the updated meal pattern requirements.

6.1 Since which school year (SY) has your SFA received the additional reimbursement of 6 cents per lunch?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ SY 2012-2013..... 1
- ☐ SY 2013-2014..... 2
- ☐ SY 2014-2015..... 3
- ☐ SY 2015-2016 4
- ☐ SY 2016-2017..... 5
- ☐ SFA is not certified..... 6

6.2 Has your SFA used the USDA Best Practices Sharing Center website to assist with menu changes (<http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/best-practices>)?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2
- ☐ Don't know d

6.3 Has your SFA used any of the following technical assistance resources or opportunities to assist with implementation of the updated meal pattern requirements?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Recipes for Healthy Kids cookbook..... 1
- ☐ Nutrition education and technical assistance mailbox..... 2
- ☐ Team Up webinars (not including SA webinars) 3
- ☐ Team Up training from the State agency (including SA webinars)..... 4

6.4 What other steps has your SFA taken to successfully implement the meal pattern requirements?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Participating in Farm to School..... 1
- ☐ Participating in DOD Fresh..... 2
- ☐ Participating in purchasing cooperatives..... 3
- ☐ Starting school gardens..... 4
- ☐ Updating kitchen equipment 5
- ☐ Using Smarter Lunchrooms strategies 6
- ☐ Hiring more staff 7
- ☐ Training staff..... 8
- ☐ Contracting with a food service management company 9
- ☐ Centralizing meal production..... 10
- ☐ Other (*Specify*): 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

Following is a list of potential administrative challenges you may continue to experience as you fully implement the meal pattern requirements. The next set of questions ask you to indicate how challenging it has been to implement the meal pattern requirements in your SFA.

6.5a How challenging is finding products that meet standards?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Not challenging 1
- ☐ A little challenging 2
- ☐ Moderately challenging 3
- ☐ Very challenging 4
- ☐ Extremely challenging 5
- ☐ Don't know d

6.5b How challenging is containing the budget?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Not challenging 1
- ☐ A little challenging 2
- ☐ Moderately challenging 3
- ☐ Very challenging 4
- ☐ Extremely challenging 5
- ☐ Don't know d

6.5c How challenging is containing food costs?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Not challenging 1
- ☐ A little challenging 2
- ☐ Moderately challenging 3
- ☐ Very challenging 4
- ☐ Extremely challenging 5
- ☐ Don't know d

6.5d How challenging is gaining student acceptance?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Not challenging 1
- ☐ A little challenging 2
- ☐ Moderately challenging 3
- ☐ Very challenging 4
- ☐ Extremely challenging 5
- ☐ Don't know d

6.5e How challenging is maintaining student participation?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Not challenging 1
- ☐ A little challenging 2
- ☐ Moderately challenging 3
- ☐ Very challenging 4
- ☐ Extremely challenging 5
- ☐ Don't know d

6.5f How challenging is gaining parent acceptance?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Not challenging 1
- ☐ A little challenging 2
- ☐ Moderately challenging 3
- ☐ Very challenging 4
- ☐ Extremely challenging 5
- ☐ Don't know d

6.5g How challenging is gaining community acceptance?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Not challenging 1
- ☐ A little challenging 2
- ☐ Moderately challenging 3
- ☐ Very challenging 4
- ☐ Extremely challenging 5
- ☐ Don't know d

6.5h How challenging is separating portions when age-grade groups overlap?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Not challenging 1
- ☐ A little challenging 2
- ☐ Moderately challenging 3
- ☐ Very challenging 4
- ☐ Extremely challenging 5
- ☐ Not applicable n
- ☐ Don't know d

The next set of questions ask you to indicate how much of a challenge it is for your SFA to meet the following meal pattern requirements.

6.6a How challenging is it to meet the fluid milk requirement?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Not challenging 1
- ☐ A little challenging 2
- ☐ Moderately challenging 3
- ☐ Very challenging 4
- ☐ Extremely challenging 5
- ☐ Don't know d

6.6b How challenging is it to meet the minimum average weekly calories requirement?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Not challenging 1
- ☐ A little challenging 2
- ☐ Moderately challenging 3
- ☐ Very challenging 4
- ☐ Extremely challenging 5
- ☐ Don't know d

6.6c How challenging is it to meet the *trans*-fat limit requirement?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Not challenging 1
- ☐ A little challenging 2
- ☐ Moderately challenging 3
- ☐ Very challenging 4
- ☐ Extremely challenging 5
- ☐ Don't know d

6.6d How challenging is it to meet the average weekly saturated fat limit requirement?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Not challenging 1
- ☐ A little challenging 2
- ☐ Moderately challenging 3
- ☐ Very challenging 4
- ☐ Extremely challenging 5
- ☐ Don't know d

The next set of questions asks how often your SFA uses different types of fruits and vegetables to meet the school meal pattern requirements. Recognizing seasonality differences, please consider use only within the last month.

6.7a How often does your SFA use fresh whole fruit?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Never 1
- ☐ Rarely 2
- ☐ Sometimes 3
- ☐ Often 4
- ☐ Always 5

6.7b How often does your SFA use fresh pre-cut fruit?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Never 1
- ☐ Rarely 2
- ☐ Sometimes 3
- ☐ Often 4
- ☐ Always 5

6.7c How often does your SFA use frozen whole fruit?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Never 1
- ☐ Rarely 2
- ☐ Sometimes 3
- ☐ Often 4
- ☐ Always 5

6.7d How often does your SFA use frozen pre-cut fruit?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Never 1
- ☐ Rarely 2
- ☐ Sometimes 3
- ☐ Often 4
- ☐ Always 5

6.7e How often does your SFA use fruit canned in water?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Never 1
- ☐ Rarely 2
- ☐ Sometimes 3
- ☐ Often 4
- ☐ Always 5

6.7f How often does your SFA use fruit canned in juice?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Never 1
- ☐ Rarely..... 2
- ☐ Sometimes 3
- ☐ Often 4
- ☐ Always..... 5

6.7g How often does your SFA use fruit canned in syrup?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Never 1
- ☐ Rarely..... 2
- ☐ Sometimes 3
- ☐ Often 4
- ☐ Always..... 5

6.7h How often does your SFA use fruit canned in heavy or regular syrup?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Never 1
- ☐ Rarely..... 2
- ☐ Sometimes 3
- ☐ Often 4
- ☐ Always..... 5

6.7i How often does your SFA use 100% fruit juice?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Never 1
- ☐ Rarely..... 2
- ☐ Sometimes 3
- ☐ Often 4
- ☐ Always..... 5

6.7j How often does your SFA use dried fruit?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Never 1
- ☐ Rarely..... 2
- ☐ Sometimes 3
- ☐ Often 4
- ☐ Always..... 5

6.8a How often does your SFA use fresh whole vegetables?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Never 1
- ☐ Rarely..... 2
- ☐ Sometimes 3
- ☐ Often 4
- ☐ Always..... 5

6.8b How often does your SFA use fresh pre cut vegetables?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Never 1
- ☐ Rarely..... 2
- ☐ Sometimes 3
- ☐ Often 4
- ☐ Always..... 5

6.8c How often does your SFA use frozen whole vegetables?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Never 1
- ☐ Rarely..... 2
- ☐ Sometimes 3
- ☐ Often 4
- ☐ Always..... 5

6.8d How often does your SFA use frozen pre-cut vegetables?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Never 1
- ☐ Rarely..... 2
- ☐ Sometimes 3
- ☐ Often 4
- ☐ Always..... 5

6.8e How often does your SFA use canned, no salt added vegetables?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Never 1
- ☐ Rarely..... 2
- ☐ Sometimes 3
- ☐ Often 4
- ☐ Always..... 5

6.8f How often does your SFA use canned reduced sodium vegetables?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Never 1
- ☐ Rarely..... 2
- ☐ Sometimes 3
- ☐ Often 4
- ☐ Always..... 5

6.8g How often does your SFA use canned regular sodium vegetables?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Never 1
- ☐ Rarely..... 2
- ☐ Sometimes 3
- ☐ Often 4
- ☐ Always..... 5

The next set of questions is about requirements for whole grains, calories, and sodium.

6.9 What practices has your SFA implemented to meet the whole grain-rich school meals requirement?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Purchase whole grain-rich products 1
 - ☐ Discontinue or change some menu options 2
 - ☐ Add whole grain-rich items to the menu 3
 - ☐ Substitute whole grain-rich items for non-whole grain-rich items 4
 - ☐ Alter recipes..... 5
 - ☐ Order whole grain-rich products from USDA Foods more often 6
 - ☐ Increase portion sizes of some items 7
 - ☐ No changes—SFA met the 100 percent whole grain-rich requirements prior to the updated standards..... 8
 - ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99
- Specify (STRING (NUM))
- ☐ Don't know d

6.10 How challenging has it been to meet the 100 percent whole grain-rich school meals requirement?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Not challenging 1 SKIP TO 6.12
- ☐ A little challenging..... 2
- ☐ Moderately challenging..... 3
- ☐ Very challenging 4
- ☐ Extremely challenging 5
- ☐ Don't know d

6.11 What challenges to the 100 percent whole grain-rich school meals requirement is your SFA experiencing?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Lack of student acceptance..... 1
- ☐ Increased food costs 2
- ☐ Lack of available products that meet standards 3
- ☐ Training of staff..... 4
- ☐ Lack of understanding about the requirements 5
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

6.12 Is your SFA having challenges meeting the calorie ranges in the school meals requirements?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 6.13

6.12a For breakfast, what is the biggest challenge for schools with grades K-5 in meeting the calorie requirements?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Meeting the minimum calorie requirements 1
- ☐ Not exceeding the maximum calorie requirements 2
- ☐ Meeting the minimum calorie requirements and not exceeding the maximum calorie requirements 3
- ☐ No breakfast calorie challenges 4
- ☐ Not applicable n

6.12b For breakfast, what is the biggest challenge for schools with grades 6-8 in meeting the calorie requirements?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Meeting the minimum calorie requirements 1
- ☐ Not exceeding the maximum calorie requirements 2
- ☐ Meeting the minimum calorie requirements and not exceeding the maximum calorie requirements 3
- ☐ No breakfast calorie challenges 4
- ☐ Not applicable n

6.12c For breakfast, what is the biggest challenge for schools with grades 9-12 in meeting the calorie requirements?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Meeting the minimum calorie requirements 1
- ☐ Not exceeding the maximum calorie requirements 2
- ☐ Meeting the minimum calorie requirements and not exceeding the maximum calorie requirements 3
- ☐ No breakfast calorie challenges 4
- ☐ Not applicable n

6.12d For breakfast, what is the biggest challenge for schools with other grades (for example, K-8, K-12, or 6-12) in meeting the calorie requirements?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Meeting the minimum calorie requirements 1
- ☐ Not exceeding the maximum calorie requirements 2
- ☐ Meeting the minimum calorie requirements and not exceeding the maximum calorie requirements 3
- ☐ No breakfast calorie challenges 4
- ☐ Not applicable n

6.12e For lunch, what is the biggest challenge for schools with grades K-5 in meeting the calorie requirements?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Meeting the minimum calorie requirements 1
- ☐ Not exceeding the maximum calorie requirements 2
- ☐ Meeting the minimum calorie requirements and not exceeding the maximum calorie requirements 3
- ☐ No lunch calorie challenges..... 4
- ☐ Not applicable n

6.12f For lunch, what is the biggest challenge for schools with grades 6-8 in meeting the calorie requirements?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Meeting the minimum calorie requirements 1
- ☐ Not exceeding the maximum calorie requirements 2
- ☐ Meeting the minimum calorie requirements and not exceeding the maximum calorie requirements 3
- ☐ No lunch calorie challenges..... 4
- ☐ Not applicable n

6.12g For lunch, what is the biggest challenge for schools with grades 9-12 in meeting the calorie requirements?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Meeting the minimum calorie requirements 1
- ☐ Not exceeding the maximum calorie requirements 2
- ☐ Meeting the minimum calorie requirements and not exceeding the maximum calorie requirements 3
- ☐ No lunch calorie challenges..... 4
- ☐ Not applicable n

6.12h For lunch, what is the biggest challenge for schools with other grades (for example, K-8, K-12, or 6-12) in meeting the calorie requirements?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Meeting the minimum calorie requirements 1
- ☐ Not exceeding the maximum calorie requirements 2
- ☐ Meeting the minimum calorie requirements and not exceeding the maximum calorie requirements 3
- ☐ No lunch calorie challenges..... 4
- ☐ Not applicable n

6.13 Do you know, by grade level group, average daily sodium content of meals served based in a 5-day week?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 6.14

6.13a For breakfast, what is the current average daily sodium content of meals served at schools with grades K-5? Please provide your answer in milligrams (mg).

Sodium Content (mg)

- ☐ Not applicable n

6.13b For breakfast, what is the current average daily sodium content of meals served at schools with grades 6-8? Please provide your answer in milligrams (mg).

Sodium Content (mg)

- ☐ Not applicable n

6.13c For breakfast, what is the current average daily sodium content of meals served at schools with grades 9-12? Please provide your answer in milligrams (mg).

Sodium Content (mg)

☐ Not applicable

n

6.13d For breakfast, what is your current average daily sodium content of meals served at schools with other grades (for example, K-8, K-12, or 6-12)? Please provide your answer in milligrams (mg).

Sodium Content (mg)

☐ Not applicable

n

6.13e For lunch, what is the current average daily sodium content of meals served at schools with grades K-5? Please provide your answer in milligrams (mg).

Sodium Content (mg)

☐ Not applicable

n

6.13f For lunch, what is the current average daily sodium content of meals served at schools with grades 6-8? Please provide your answer in milligrams (mg).

Sodium Content (mg)

☐ Not applicable

n

6.13g For lunch, what is the current average daily sodium content of meals served at schools with grades 9-12? Please provide your answer in milligrams (mg).

Sodium Content (mg)

☐ Not applicable

n

6.13h For lunch, what is the current average daily sodium content of meals served at schools with other grades (for example, K-8, K-12, or 6-12)? Please provide your answer in milligrams (mg).

Sodium Content (mg)

☐ Not applicable

n

6.14 What practices does your SFA plan to implement to meet sodium targets during this school year?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY OR NONE

- ☐ Purchase lower sodium products 1
- ☐ Alter recipes (such as limiting salt use, using spices in place of salt) 2
- ☐ Discontinue or change some menu options 3
- ☐ Increase scratch cooking..... 4
- ☐ Order low sodium USDA Foods more often 5
- ☐ Decrease portion sizes 6
- ☐ Replacing canned vegetables with fresh or frozen..... 7
- ☐ None 8
- ☐ N/A (Current sodium levels already meet the 2nd Target) 9
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

- ☐ Don't know d

The next set of questions is about how your SFA addresses student demand for different types of foods, by grade level group.

6.15a Do any of the schools with grades K-5 in your SFA provide any of the following to meet student demand?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY OR NONE

- ☐ Increased fruits and vegetables..... 1
- ☐ A second milk 2
- ☐ A second meal..... 3
- ☐ New a la carte offerings..... 4
- ☐ Increased a la carte offerings 5
- ☐ None n
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

6.15b Do any of the schools with grades 6-8 in your SFA provide any of the following to meet student demand?

SNOPS-3

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY OR NONE

- ☐ Increased fruits and vegetables..... 1
- ☐ A second milk 2
- ☐ A second meal..... 3
- ☐ New a la carte offerings..... 4
- ☐ Increased a la carte offerings 5
- ☐ None n
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

6.15c Do any of the schools with grades 9-12 in your SFA provide any of the following to meet student demand?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY OR NONE

- ☐ Increased fruits and vegetables..... 1
- ☐ A second milk 2
- ☐ A second meal..... 3
- ☐ New a la carte offerings..... 4
- ☐ Increased a la carte offerings 5
- ☐ None n
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

6.15d Do any of the schools with other grades (for example, K-8, K-12, or 6-12) in your SFA provide any of the following to meet student demand?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY OR NONE

- ☐ Increased fruits and vegetables..... 1
- ☐ A second milk 2
- ☐ A second meal 3
- ☐ New a la carte offerings..... 4
- ☐ Increased a la carte offerings 5
- ☐ None n
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

6.16 Does your SFA have difficulty purchasing any of the following vegetable subgroups?

Select one response per row

	YES	NO
a. Dark green vegetables	1 ☐	2 ☐
b. Red/orange vegetables	1 ☐	2 ☐
c. Beans/peas (legumes)	1 ☐	2 ☐
d. Starchy vegetables	1 ☐	2 ☐
e. Other vegetables	1 ☐	2 ☐

6.16a Why does your SFA have difficulty purchasing these vegetables?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY OR N/A

- ☐ Items are not acceptable to students..... 1
- ☐ Items are too expensive 2
- ☐ Not enough variety on the market 3
- ☐ Limited availability of items 4
- ☐ Items require too much preparation..... 5
- ☐ Limited storage area/refrigeration..... 6
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

- ☐ N/A—No difficulty purchasing vegetables n

The next set of questions is about how often students waste foods at lunch time based on SFA and/or school staff observations.

6.17 At what school level is the largest proportion of students wasting food served for lunch?

SELECT ONLY ONE

- ☐ Elementary schools 1
- ☐ Middle schools 2
- ☐ High schools 3
- ☐ Other schools..... 4
- ☐ Don't know d SKIP TO 6.18

6.17.1 On average, do students in [FILL SCHOOL TYPE IN 6.17] often, sometimes or rarely consume all of their [FILL A-H] at lunch?

	Often Consume	Sometimes Consume	Rarely Consume	DON'T KNOW
a. Fluid milk	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	d ☐
b. Main dish/entrée	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	d ☐
c. Bread/grain items	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	d ☐
d. Salad/raw vegetables	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	d ☐
e. Cooked vegetables	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	d ☐
f. Fruit	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	d ☐
g. Desserts	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	d ☐
h. Other (<i>Specify</i>)	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	d ☐
(STRING (NUM))				

6.18 What are schools in your SFA doing to prevent or reduce food waste?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Allowing more time to eat 1
- ☐ Seeking student input for menu planning 2
- ☐ Using share tables in the cafeteria 3
- ☐ Implementing Offer versus Serve 4
- ☐ Improving serving lines 5
- ☐ Adding more serving lines 6
- ☐ Using Smarter Lunchroom strategies 7
- ☐ Other (*Specify*) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

- ☐ Schools are not doing anything to prevent or reduce food waste 8

7. SMART SNACKS IN SCHOOL STANDARDS

The Smart Snacks in School standards went into effect in SY 2014-2015. The standards apply to all foods and beverages other than reimbursable meals (that is, competitive foods) that are available for sale to students on the school campus during the school day.

7.1 To what extent have the Smart Snacks standards been implemented in your SFA?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Fully implemented..... 1
- ☐ Partially implemented 2
- ☐ Not at all implemented..... 3
- ☐ No competitive foods available in the SFA..... 4 SKIP TO NEXT SECTION
- ☐ Don't know d

7.2 Do any elementary schools in your SFA have nutrition standards for competitive foods that exceed the Smart Snacks standards?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2
- ☐ No competitive foods in elementary schools 3
- ☐ No elementary schools in SFA 4

7.3 Do any middle schools in your SFA have nutrition standards for competitive foods that exceed the Smart Snacks standards?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2
- ☐ No competitive foods in middle schools 3
- ☐ No middle schools in SFA 4

7.4 Do any high schools in your SFA have nutrition standards for competitive foods that exceed the Smart Snacks standards?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2
- ☐ No competitive foods in high schools 3
- ☐ No high schools in SFA 4

7.5 Do any other schools in your SFA have nutrition standards for competitive foods that exceed the Smart Snacks standards?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2
- ☐ No competitive foods in other schools..... 3
- ☐ No other schools in SFA..... 4

If you responded "yes" to questions 7.2, 7.3, 7.4 or 7.5 then please answer the question below.

7.6 For which nutrition components has your SFA exceeded the Smart Snacks standards?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Have one or more combination food items that contains more than a ¼ cup of fruit and/or vegetable 1
- ☐ Food item contains more than 10% of the Daily Value of either calcium, potassium, vitamin D, or dietary fiber 2
- ☐ Calorie limits on snack and entrée items..... 3
- ☐ Sodium limits on snack and entrée items 4
- ☐ Fat limits on snack and entrée items 5
- ☐ Sugar limits on snack and entrée items 6
- ☐ Size limits on allowable milks and fruit/vegetable juices 7
- ☐ Size limits on "no-calorie" or "low-calorie" beverage options for high schools 8
- ☐ Fundraiser exemptions 9
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

The next set of questions asks about the potential challenges of being able to fully implement the Smart Snacks standards. Please rate the degree to which each is a challenge in your SFA.

7.7a How challenging is understanding the Smart Snacks standards in your SFA?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Not challenging 1
- ☐ A little challenging 2
- ☐ Moderately challenging 3
- ☐ Very challenging 4
- ☐ Extremely challenging..... 5

7.7b How challenging is the availability of competitive foods that meet the Smart Snacks standards in your SFA?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Not challenging 1
- ☐ A little challenging 2
- ☐ Moderately challenging 3
- ☐ Very challenging 4
- ☐ Extremely challenging..... 5

7.7c How challenging is the cost of foods that meet the Smart Snacks standards in your SFA?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Not challenging 1
- ☐ A little challenging 2
- ☐ Moderately challenging 3
- ☐ Very challenging 4
- ☐ Extremely challenging 5

7.7d How challenging is student acceptance of foods that meet the Smart Snacks standards in your SFA?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Not challenging 1
- ☐ A little challenging 2
- ☐ Moderately challenging 3
- ☐ Very challenging 4
- ☐ Extremely challenging 5

7.7e How challenging is non food-service staff acceptance (“buy-in”) of the Smart Snacks standards in your SFA?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Not challenging 1
- ☐ A little challenging 2
- ☐ Moderately challenging 3
- ☐ Very challenging 4
- ☐ Extremely challenging 5

7.7f What other important challenge not yet mentioned, if any, has your SFA experienced in meeting the Smart Snacks standards?

Specify

- ☐ No other important challenges 1 SKIP TO SECTION 8

7.7g How challenging is that other important challenge to meeting the Smart Snacks standards in your SFA?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Not challenging 1
- ☐ A little challenging 2
- ☐ Moderately challenging 3
- ☐ Very challenging 4
- ☐ Extremely challenging 5

8. THE FREE AND REDUCED PRICE MEAL APPLICATION

The following questions are about the design of your SFA's free and reduced price (F/RP) meal application.

This section begins with questions about your hard copy application form, followed by questions about materials you use to accompany the hard copy form (i.e. instructions, letters, FAQs, and any other information), and then ends with questions about your electronic or web-based version of your F/RP meal application.

8.1 Does your SFA use a hard copy F/RP meal application as your primary application?

☐ Yes..... 1

☐ No 2

8.2 The USDA made available a hard copy F/RP meal application form designed to make it easier for families to complete and submit accurate information, called the [USDA Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals](#). Is your SFA's hard copy F/RP application form identical or closely modeled after the *USDA Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals*?

SELECT ONE ONLY

☐ Yes, identical to (exactly the same as) the USDA Prototype Application form 1

☐ Yes, closely modelled after the USDA Prototype Application form 2

☐ No, completely different from the USDA Prototype Application form 3 SKIP TO 8.6

☐ Don't know d SKIP TO 8.6

8.3 Compared to other application forms, how useful has the *USDA Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals* been?

SELECT ONE ONLY

☐ Not as useful as other forms..... 1

☐ Just as useful as other forms..... 2

☐ More useful than other forms..... 3

☐ Have not used any other forms 4

8.4 How challenging has it been to use the *USDA Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals*?

SELECT ONE ONLY

☐ Not challenging 1

☐ A little challenging..... 2

☐ Moderately challenging..... 3

☐ Very challenging 4

☐ Extremely challenging 5

☐ Don't know d

8.5 How would you rate the quality of information collected from households using the *USDA Prototype Household Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals*?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Low quality 1 SKIP TO 8.8
- ☐ Adequate 2 SKIP TO 8.8
- ☐ High quality 3 SKIP TO 8.8

8.6 Where did your SFA get your primary hard copy F/RP meal application form?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ We are required to use our State Child Nutrition Office's hard copy F/RP meal application form, no modifications allowed 1 SKIP TO 8.8
- ☐ We are required to use our State Child Nutrition Office's F/RP meal application form, modifications allowed 2 SKIP TO 8.8
- ☐ We choose to use our State Child Nutrition Office's F/RP meal application form 3 SKIP TO 8.8
- ☐ Our SFA has our own hard copy F/RP meal application form 4
- ☐ Other (*Specify*) 99 SKIP TO 8.8

Specify (STRING (NUM))

8.7 Did your SFA (or schools within your SFA) design your own F/RP application form, hire a contractor to design the F/RP application, or use some other approach to designing the F/RP application? Please note, we realize that some parents may choose to submit the USDA prototype application, this question is about your SFA's primary application.

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ SFA's or schools' design 1
- ☐ SFA contractor's design 2
- ☐ Other (*Specify*) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

- ☐ Don't know d

The next few questions are about the design of any additional materials that may accompany your SFA's F/RP meal application form. Examples include application instructions, letters, and FAQs, plus other information like charts about family size and income.

8.8 Does your SFA provide households with additional materials to accompany the hard copy F/RP meal application form?

- ☐ Yes 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 8.13

8.9 What additional materials does your SFA use to accompany the hard copy F/RP meal application form?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- ☐ Application instructions 1
- ☐ Letter or FAQ for households 2
- ☐ Other communications provided to households (*Specify*) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

8.10 [If 8.9=1 ASK] Whose materials contributed to the design and content of instructions that accompany your SFA's F/RP meal application form?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY OR NA

- ☐ USDA's prototype materials 1
 - ☐ State agency issued or endorsed materials 2
 - ☐ SFA or SFA contractor's materials 3
 - ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99
- Specify (STRING (NUM))
- ☐ Don't know d
 - ☐ NA – Current hard copy SFA FR/P meal application is not accompanied by instructions..... n

8.11 [If 8.9=2 ASK] Whose materials contributed to the design and content of the letter or FAQ that accompany your SFA's hard copy F/RP meal application form?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY OR NA

- ☐ USDA's prototype materials 1
 - ☐ State agency issued or endorsed materials 2
 - ☐ SFA or SFA contractor's materials 3
 - ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99
- Specify (STRING (NUM))
- ☐ Don't know d
 - ☐ NA – Current hard copy SFA FR/P meal application is not accompanied by letter or FAQ n

8.12 [If 8.9=99 ASK] Whose materials contributed to the design and content of other communications that accompany your SFA's F/RP meal application form?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY OR NA

- ☐ USDA's prototype materials 1
 - ☐ State agency issued or endorsed materials 2
 - ☐ SFA or SFA contractor's materials 3
 - ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99
- Specify (STRING (NUM))
- ☐ Don't know d
 - ☐ NA – Current hard copy SFA FR/P meal application is not accompanied by other communications..... n

The following questions are about your SFA's "electronic" or "web-based" F/RP meal application form and accompanying materials. "Electronic or web-based" refers to applications in which information is entered and submitted electronically. It does *not* refer to documents accessed electronically and printed out on hard copy for completion.

8.13 Does your SFA use an electronic or web-based F/RP meal application form as your primary application?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2

8.14 What benefits has your SFA experienced as a result of using the electronic or web-based F/RP meal application form?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY OR NO BENEFITS

- ☐ Decreased administrative burden..... 1
- ☐ Decreased costs associated with not using other application types 2
- ☐ Decreased application processing time..... 3
- ☐ Decreased household reporting error..... 4
- ☐ Increased school SBP participation..... 5
- ☐ Increased school NSLP participation 6
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

- ☐ No benefits..... n

8.15 What challenges has your SFA experienced as a result of using the electronic or web-based F/RP meal application form?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY OR NO CHALLENGES

- ☐ Application is not accessible using mobile devices 1
- ☐ Families have limited internet access..... 2
- ☐ Student data is less secure 3
- ☐ Difficulty providing technical assistance to parents 4
- ☐ Decreased school SBP participation 5
- ☐ Decreased school NSLP participation..... 6
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

- ☐ No challenges..... n

8.16 Who developed your electronic or web-based version of the F/RP meal application form?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ State agency 1
- ☐ SFA staff 2
- ☐ A contractor hired by SFA 3
- ☐ Software Vendor 4

Specify (STRING (NUM))

- ☐ Other (*Specify*) 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

- ☐ Don't know d

8.17 Which process does your SFA encourage households to use to complete the F/RP meal applications?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Electronic or web-based version 1
- ☐ Paper applications completed independently 2
- ☐ Paper applications completed with in person or phone assistance 3
- ☐ Some other method 4
- ☐ Not applicable (for example, SFA uses a single process or encourages processes equally) n

9. MEAL COUNTING

The following questions ask about meal counting activities in SY 2016-2017.

9.1 Do schools in your SFA keep track of the number of free, reduced price, and paid meals served to students in the cafeteria and non-cafeteria points of service using any of the following methods?

FOR EACH ROW,
SELECT ONE PER POINT OF SERVICE TYPE

	CAFETERIA		NON-CAFETERIA	
	YES	NO	YES	NO
a. Personal Identification Numbers (PINs)	1 ☐	2 ☐	1 ☐	2 ☐
b. Rosters or cashier lists	1 ☐	2 ☐	1 ☐	2 ☐
c. Coded ID cards	1 ☐	2 ☐	1 ☐	2 ☐
d. Biometric technology (for example, fingerprint scanners)	1 ☐	2 ☐	1 ☐	2 ☐
e. Coded tickets or tokens	1 ☐	2 ☐	1 ☐	2 ☐
f. Manual entry	1 ☐	2 ☐	1 ☐	2 ☐
g. Online ordering	1 ☐	2 ☐	1 ☐	2 ☐
h. Hand Held Clicker	1 ☐	2 ☐	1 ☐	2 ☐
i. Other (<i>Specify</i>)	1 ☐	2 ☐	1 ☐	2 ☐
(STRING (NUM))				

9.2 Does your SFA provide the following types of training to cashiers?

	TRAINING PROVIDED?	
	YES	NO
a. Monitoring student meal selections for reimbursable meals	1 ☐	2 ☐
b. Operating a Point of Service (POS) system	1 ☐	2 ☐
c. Offer versus serve	1 ☐	2 ☐
d. Method of counting meals	1 ☐	2 ☐
e. Acceptable types of payments	1 ☐	2 ☐
f. Managing cash for a la carte and adult meals	1 ☐	2 ☐
g. Meal and food pricing	1 ☐	2 ☐
h. Applications for free or reduced price meals	1 ☐	2 ☐
i. Customer Service	1 ☐	2 ☐
j. Civil rights	1 ☐	2 ☐
k. Maintaining confidential student information	1 ☐	2 ☐
l. Other (<i>Specify</i>)	1 ☐	2 ☐
(STRING (NUM))		

9.2.1 How often is each training type provided to cashiers? Please specify if it is when the cashier is hired, once each school year, or more than once each school year.

Select all that apply

	HOW OFTEN PROVIDED			
	WHEN CASHIER IS HIRED	ONCE EACH SCHOOL YEAR	MORE THAN ONCE EACH SCHOOL YEAR	NA-NO TRAINING PROVIDED
a. Monitoring student meal selections for reimbursable meals	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	n ☐
b. Operating a Point of Service (POS) system	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	n ☐
c. Offer versus serve	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	n ☐
d. Method of counting meals	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	n ☐
e. Acceptable types of payments	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	n ☐
f. Managing cash for a la carte and adult meals	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	n ☐
g. Meal and food pricing	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	n ☐
h. Applications for free or reduced price meals	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	n ☐
i. Customer service	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	n ☐
j. Civil rights	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	n ☐
k. Maintaining confidential student information	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	n ☐
l. Other (<i>Specify</i>)	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	n ☐

(STRING (NUM))

9.2.2 Would these types of cashier training that are not provided be *useful* to school cashiers given their responsibilities?

WOULD THIS TYPE OF TRAINING BE USEFUL TO SCHOOL CASHIERS?		
YES	NO	NA-TRAINING IS PROVIDED

a. Monitoring student meal selections for reimbursable meals	1 ☐	2 ☐	n ☐
b. Operating a Point of Service (POS) system	1 ☐	2 ☐	n ☐
c. Offer versus serve	1 ☐	2 ☐	n ☐
d. Method of counting meals	1 ☐	2 ☐	n ☐
e. Acceptable types of payments	1 ☐	2 ☐	n ☐
f. Managing cash for a la carte and adult meals	1 ☐	2 ☐	n ☐
g. Meal and food pricing	1 ☐	2 ☐	n ☐
h. Applications for free or reduced price meals	1 ☐	2 ☐	n ☐
i. Customer service	1 ☐	2 ☐	n ☐
j. Civil rights	1 ☐	2 ☐	n ☐
k. Maintaining confidential student information	1 ☐	2 ☐	n ☐
l. Other (<i>Specify</i>)	1 ☐	2 ☐	n ☐

(STRING (NUM))

9.3 Does your SFA conduct on-site monitoring of cashiers?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 9.5

9.4 How often is on-site monitoring conducted?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Less than once a year 1
- ☐ Once a year 2
- ☐ Twice a year 3
- ☐ Three or more times a year 4

9.5 **Aside from cafeterias, do any schools in your SFA use the following point of service methods for school breakfast?**

	<i>Select one per row</i>	
	YES	NO
a. Pre-packaged meal (for example, Grab 'n go, bagged meals)	1 ☐	2 ☐
b. Meal delivery to the classroom	1 ☐	2 ☐
c. Kiosk or cart	1 ☐	2 ☐
d. Vending machine dispensed meal	1 ☐	2 ☐
e. Food truck	1 ☐	2 ☐
f. Other (<i>Specify</i>)	1 ☐	2 ☐
(STRING (NUM))		

9.6 **Aside from cafeterias, do any schools in your SFA use the following point of service methods for school lunch?**

	<i>Select one per row</i>	
	YES	NO
a. Pre-packaged meal (for example, Grab 'n go, bagged meals)	1 ☐	2 ☐
b. Meal delivery to the classroom	1 ☐	2 ☐
c. Kiosk or cart	1 ☐	2 ☐
d. Vending machine dispensed meal	1 ☐	2 ☐
e. Food truck	1 ☐	2 ☐
f. Other (<i>Specify</i>)	1 ☐	2 ☐
(STRING (NUM))		

10. REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

This section asks about revenues and expenditures of your SFA in SY 2015-2016.

- 10.1 For the SY 2015-2016, please record all revenues that were received by your school district's foodservice program. Please include revenues from local, State, Federal, and any other sources.

Examples of Federal sources include reimbursements for free, reduced price, and paid meals, reimbursements for other Child Nutrition programs, or adjustments for an underclaim from a Federal or State audit.

Examples of State sources include reimbursements for free or reduced price meals.

Examples of local sources include student payments for reimbursable meals, adult meals, competitive foods sales, school district subsidy, community donations, or catering revenues.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

\$ DOLLARS

- 10.2 How much revenue did your SFA's foodservice program receive in SY 2015-2016 from each of the following local, State, Federal, and other revenue sources? If your SFA did not receive revenue from a category, please enter a 0 (zero) for that category.

	REVENUE
a. Revenue from <u>local sources</u>	\$
b. Revenue from <u>State sources</u>	\$
c. Revenue from <u>Federal sources</u>	\$

OTHER SOURCES OF REVENUE

d. (STRING (NUM))	\$
e. (STRING (NUM))	\$
f. (STRING (NUM))	\$

The next set of questions asks about whether your SFA or State provided a subsidy to schools for reimbursable breakfasts or lunches and how that subsidy was provided. NSLP or SBP reimbursements do not count as subsidies.

10.3 Did your SFA provide a breakfast subsidy to schools during SY 2015-2016?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 10.5
- ☐ N/A – no School Breakfast Program in SFA..... n SKIP TO 10.5

10.4 How was that SFA breakfast subsidy provided?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Per meal 1
- ☐ Annual lump sum 2
- ☐ Supplemental to cover specific costs 3
- ☐ Based on a percentage of low-income students 4
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

10.5 Did your SFA provide a lunch subsidy to schools during SY 2015-2016?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 10.7

10.6 How was that SFA lunch subsidy provided?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Per meal 1
- ☐ Annual lump sum 2
- ☐ Supplemental to cover specific costs 3
- ☐ Based on a percentage of low-income students 4
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

10.7 Did your State provide a breakfast subsidy during SY 2015-2016?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 10.9
- ☐ N/A – no School Breakfast Program in SFA..... n SKIP TO 10.9

10.8 How was that State breakfast subsidy provided?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Per meal 1
- ☐ Annual lump sum 2
- ☐ Supplemental to cover specific costs 3
- ☐ Based on a percentage of low-income students 4
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

10.9 Did your State provide a lunch subsidy during SY 2015-2016?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO 10.11

10.10 How was that State lunch subsidy provided?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Per meal 1
- ☐ Annual lump sum 2
- ☐ Supplemental to cover specific costs 3
- ☐ Based on a percentage of low-income students 4
- ☐ Other (*Specify*)..... 99

Specify (STRING (NUM))

10.11 For SY 2015-2016, please record all expenditures made by your school district's foodservice program.

Examples of expenditure categories include salaries, fringe benefits, total purchased foods (including foods for both reimbursable and non-reimbursable meals), capital expenditures, supplies, storage and transportation, maintenance and repairs, contracted services, payment for an overclaim as a result of a Federal or State audit, overhead or indirect costs, or any other sources.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

\$ DOLLARS

11. BACKGROUND

These next questions ask about the background of the current SFA director and other key staff working in the SFA. If you are responding on behalf of the SFA director or other key SFA staff, please obtain their information and enter it here.

11.1 When were you hired or promoted into your current position as SFA director?

Please enter the month and year of your start date below.

START DATE
MONTH YEAR

11.2 What is the highest level of education you completed?

SELECT ONE ONLY

- ☐ Less than high school 1 SKIP TO 11.4
- ☐ High school (or GED) 2 SKIP TO 11.4
- ☐ Some college, no degree..... 3 SKIP TO 11.4
- ☐ Associate's degree 4
- ☐ Bachelor's degree..... 5
- ☐ Master's degree 6
- ☐ Graduate credits beyond a Master's degree but no degree 7
- ☐ Doctorate 8

11.3 Is your degree in food and nutrition, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, foodservice management, dietetics, culinary arts, business or a related field?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2

11.4 Does the SFA director share leadership or other key responsibilities with other staff at the SFA, such as an assistant director?

- ☐ Yes..... 1
- ☐ No 2 SKIP TO NEXT SECTION

11.5 Please enter the job titles of up to two key SFA staff below. If your SFA has at least 10,000 students, enter titles for up to five key SFA staff.

SFA Staff 1

SFA Staff 2

SFA Staff 3 [Large SFAs only]

SFA Staff 4 [Large SFAs only]

SFA Staff 5 [Large SFAs only]

11.6 The following questions are about the key SFA staff you named in the previous question.

	SFA STAFF 1	SFA STAFF 2
a. When was the SFA staff person hired or promoted into his or her current position? <i>Please enter the month and year of start date.</i>	 MONTH YEAR	 MONTH YEAR
b. What is the highest level of education the SFA staff person completed?	1 ☐ Less than high school SKIP TO 12.1 2 ☐ High school (or GED) SKIP TO 12.1 3 ☐ Some college, no degree SKIP TO 12.1 4 ☐ Associate's degree 5 ☐ Bachelor's degree 6 ☐ Master's degree 7 ☐ Graduate credits beyond a Master's degree but no degree 8 ☐ Doctorate	1 ☐ Less than high school SKIP TO 12.1 2 ☐ High school (or GED) SKIP TO 12.1 3 ☐ Some college, no degree SKIP TO 12.1 4 ☐ Associate's degree 5 ☐ Bachelor's degree 6 ☐ Master's degree 7 ☐ Graduate credits beyond a Master's degree but no degree 8 ☐ Doctorate
c. Is the degree of the SFA staff person in food and nutrition, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, food service management, dietetics, culinary arts, business or a related field?	1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No	1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

- 11.6** The following questions are about the key SFA staff you named in the previous question. If you only named one key staff person then only fill in the answers for the first column.

	SFA STAFF 3	SFA STAFF 4
a. When was the SFA staff person hired or promoted into his or her current position? <i>Please enter the month and year of start date.</i>	 MONTH YEAR	 MONTH YEAR
b. What is the highest level of education the SFA staff person completed?	1 ☐ Less than high school SKIP TO 12.1 2 ☐ High school (or GED) SKIP TO 12.1 3 ☐ Some college, no degree SKIP TO 12.1 4 ☐ Associate's degree 5 ☐ Bachelor's degree 6 ☐ Master's degree 7 ☐ Graduate credits beyond a Master's degree but no degree 8 ☐ Doctorate	1 ☐ Less than high school SKIP TO 12.1 2 ☐ High school (or GED) SKIP TO 12.1 3 ☐ Some college, no degree SKIP TO 12.1 4 ☐ Associate's degree 5 ☐ Bachelor's degree 6 ☐ Master's degree 7 ☐ Graduate credits beyond a Master's degree but no degree 8 ☐ Doctorate
c. Is the degree of the SFA staff person in food and nutrition, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, food service management, dietetics, culinary arts, business or a related field?	1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No	1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

11.6 The following questions are about the key SFA staff you named in the previous question. If you only named one key staff person then only fill in the answers for the first column.

SFA STAFF 5	
a. When was the SFA staff person hired or promoted into his or her current position? <i>Please enter the month and year of start date.</i>	 MONTH YEAR
b. What is the highest level of education the SFA staff person completed?	1 ☐ Less than high school SKIP TO 12.1 2 ☐ High school (or GED) SKIP TO 12.1 3 ☐ Some college, no degree SKIP TO 12.1 4 ☐ Associate's degree 5 ☐ Bachelor's degree 6 ☐ Master's degree 7 ☐ Graduate credits beyond a Master's degree but no degree 8 ☐ Doctorate
c. Is the degree of the SFA staff person in food and nutrition, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, food service management, dietetics, culinary arts, business or a related field?	1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

12. FINAL REMARKS

- 12.1** Before you submit your survey, do you have any other comments that you would like to share with the Food and Nutrition Service of U.S. Department of Agriculture? These comments can be related to the survey topics or any other topic.

VERIFICATION SCREEN

You have just completed the CN-OPS II SFA Food Service Director survey. Are you ready to submit your responses? (If you are ready, select "**Yes**" and press the "**Save and Continue**" button below; you will be directed to the **SUBMIT** page. If you need to double check an answer, press the "**Back**" button below or use the "**Table of Contents**" to go back to a section).

- Yes

SURVEY SECTION VERIFICATION SCREEN

Are you ready to complete?

Please review the list below. A check next to the survey section indicates that you have viewed all of the questions in the section.

Before you click "Submit" please make sure you have completed all sections of the survey. You can click the section links below to navigate back into the survey. Once you click the "Submit" button you will not be able to edit your survey.

Submit (Button)

THANK YOU SCREEN

Thank you for completing this survey! If you have any questions about this survey, please email CNOPS2@2mresearch.com or call toll-free at 1.844.503.7045.

APPENDIX D. SCHOOL AND STUDENT PARTICIPATION

List of Tables by Research Question

Research Question	Corresponding Table
School and SFA Participation in NSLP and SBP	
How many schools participate in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and/or National School Lunch Program (NSLP)? How many SFAs?	Tables D.1 and D.2
How many elementary, middle, and high schools participate in SBP and/or NSLP?	Table D.1
How has the number of charter schools operating NSLP and SBP changed over time?	Table D.3
Student Participation and Meals Served	
How many students participate in SBP and/or NSLP? How many students in elementary, middle, and high schools participate in SBP and/or NSLP? How many SBP and NSLP meals were served?	Table D.4
How many SBP and NSLP meals were served in elementary, middle, and high schools? How has the number of meals served changed over time?	Tables D.4, D.6, and D.7
How have student participation rates changed over time?	Tables D.6 and D.7
School and SFA Participation in Other Child Nutrition Programs	
How many schools participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program? How many SFAs?	Tables D.8 and D.9
How does SFA participation in CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals vary with SFA characteristics?	Table D.10
What are schools doing to build awareness and promote CACFP?	Tables D.11 and D.12
How many schools participate in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)? How many SFAs?	Table D.13
How does SFA participation in SFSP vary with SFA characteristics?	Table D.14
How many schools participate in the Seamless Summer Option (SSO)? How many SFAs?	Table D.15
What are schools doing to build awareness and promote SFSP and SSO?	Tables D.16 and D.17

School and SFA Participation in NSLP and SBP

Table D.1—Public Schools Participating in NSLP and SBP, by Program and by School Type

School Type	Percentage of Schools Participating in Program(s) (CI)	Estimated Number of Schools Participating Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
Both NSLP and SBP		
Overall	91.1 (87.7–94.6)	82,426 (15,122)
Elementary schools	91.8 (91.7–91.9)	43,100 (8,398)
Middle schools	92.0 (91.9–92.0)	14,702 (2,542)
High schools	90.9 (90.8–91.1)	15,443 (2,778)
Other schools	87.5 (87.4–87.7)	9,180 (1,404)
Only NSLP		
Overall	8.1 (4.3–11.8)	7,296 (1,005)
Elementary schools	8.0 (7.9–8.1)	3,767 (544)
Middle schools	7.7 (7.6–7.7)	1,227 (160)
High schools	7.3 (7.2–7.4)	1,241 (172)
Other schools	10.1 (10.0–10.2)	1,061 (129)
Only SBP		
Overall	0.3 (0.2–0.3)	239 (38)
Elementary schools	0.1 (0.1–0.1)	60 (11)
Middle schools	0.2 (0.2–0.2)	33 (3)
High schools	0.7 (0.7–0.7)	122 (20)
Other schools	0.2 (0.2–0.2)	24 (4)
Neither NSLP nor SBP		
Overall	0.5 (0.3–0.8)	470 (143)
Elementary schools	0.1 (0.1–0.1)	45 (6)
Middle schools	0.1 (0.1–0.1)	24 (4)
High schools	1.0 (1.0–1.1)	177 (24)
Other schools	2.1 (2.1–2.2)	224 (109)
Weighted <i>n</i>		90,430
Unweighted <i>n</i>		16,308

CI = 95 percent confidence interval.

Notes: School participation in NSLP and SBP is estimated using data reported on the SFA Director Survey. These estimates may differ from administrative data because they come from a sample of SFA directors and are subject to sampling error. These estimates include public charter schools operating NSLP and/or SBP. “Other” schools are those that have a grade span that does not fall in the range for elementary, middle, or high schools, such as Pre-K–8 or 6–12. Schools that participated in neither NSLP nor SBP were part of SFAs in which “Other” schools may have participated. Some totals may vary due to rounding. Missing responses range from 5–34 percent across school type.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 1.1 and 1.2.1 (a–d)–1.2.4 (a–d).

Table D.2—Percentage of SFAs with All Schools Participating in Both NSLP and SBP or in NSLP Only, by School Type

Program(s)/School Type	Mean Percentage of SFAs Within School Type
SFAs with All Schools in Both NSLP and SBP	
Overall	87.9
Elementary schools	88.5
Middle schools	89.8
High schools	90.3
Other schools	86.2
SFAs with All Schools in NSLP Only	
Overall	12.1
Elementary schools	11.5
Middle schools	10.2
High schools	9.7
Other schools	13.8
Weighted <i>n</i>	13,515
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,503

Notes: No SFAs reported only offering SBP in *all* their schools. Approximately 7 percent of SFAs reported that some schools offered SBP only, but in all such cases, other schools in the SFA offered NSLP. SFAs with this type of variation among schools were omitted from this table to maintain comparability with earlier studies (Murdoch, J., et al. [2019]. *Child nutrition program operations study [CN-OPS-II]: Year one report: SY 2015–2016*; and Murdoch, J., et al. [2016]. *Special nutrition program operations study [SN-OPS]: SY 2013–14 report*. Retrieved from <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/ops/SNOPSyr3.pdf>). “Other” schools are those that have a grade span that does not fall in the range for elementary, middle, or high schools, such as Pre-K–8 or 6–12.

Source: SFA Director Survey, SY 2016–17, questions 1.1 and 1.2.1–1.2.4.

Table D.3—Charter Schools Operating Both NSLP and SBP from SY 2015–16 to SY 2016–17

Program	Number of Schools SY 2015–16	Number of Schools SY 2016–17	Percentage Change from SY 2015–16 to SY 2016–17	Number of States Reporting
Both NSLP and SBP	3,270	3,171	-3.0	36
NSLP Only	683	680	-0.4	36
SBP Only	3	5	66.7	36
Total	3,956	3,856	-2.5	36

Note: States included are those that provided valid counts of charter schools in NSLP and SBP in both the SY 2015–16 and SY 2016–17 surveys.

Sources: SA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 1.8–1.11 and SA Director Survey 2015–16, questions 1.6a–1.6c.

Student Participation and Meals Served

Table D.4—NSLP/SBP Average Daily Participation per SFA as Measured by Meals Served to Students in October 2016, by Meal and School Type

School Type	Average Daily Meals Served per SFA: All Meals (CI)	Average Daily Participation Rate per SFA (CI)	Average Daily Meals Served per SFA: F/RP Meals (CI)	Average Daily Participation Rate among Certified F/RP Students per SFA (CI)	SFA Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
Breakfast					
Overall	1,094 (737–1,450)	30.0 (28.7–31.2)	910 (570–1,249)	36.6 (35.3–37.9)	13,660 (1,554)
Elementary schools	768 (613–923)	34.0 (32.5–35.5)	630 (492–768)	41.0 (39.2–42.9)	10,629 (1,353)
Middle schools	244 (210–278)	24.6 (23.0–26.2)	199 (169–229)	31.2 (29.5–32.9)	8,153 (1,117)
High schools	255 (179–331)	19.6 (18.0–21.2)	210 (137–282)	26.7 (24.9–28.5)	9,364 (1,223)
Other schools	475 (0–979)	33.2 (30.6–35.8)	427 (0–924)	38.7 (35.9–41.4)	4,862 (533)
Lunch					
Overall	2,193 (1,635–2,752)	60.5 (59.1–61.9)	1,581 (1,068–2,093)	70.9 (69.6–72.2)	13,696 (1,558)
Elementary schools	1,352 (1,107–1,598)	63.3 (61.9–64.7)	974 (777–1,171)	73.4 (72.1–74.7)	10,651 (1,356)
Middle schools	624 (553–696)	60.9 (59.4–62.5)	424 (368–481)	72.7 (71.3–74.1)	8,092 (1,112)
High schools	661 (526–797)	50.8 (49.4–52.3)	454 (327–581)	62.0 (60.6–63.3)	9,389 (1,226)
Other schools	852 (111–1,594)	57.6 (55.1–60.1)	711 (0–1,434)	66.2 (63.0–69.4)	4,862 (533)

CI = 95 percent confidence interval.

Notes: Average daily meals served (or average daily participation) is calculated for each SFA by summing the total reimbursable meals served in October 2016 (for breakfast and lunch, for each school type) and dividing by the number of operating days for October 2016, then averaging across SFAs. To obtain the average daily participation rate, this estimate is then divided by enrollment for each school type and again averaged across SFAs. “Other” schools are those that have a grade span that does not fall in the range for elementary, middle, or high schools, such as Pre-K–8 or 6–12. Missing responses range from 7–8 percent across school types.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 2.3–2.5.

Table D.5—Percentage of NSLP Meals Claimed by Meal Price Category and School Type, in October 2015 and October 2016

Meal Price	School Type									
	October 2015					October 2016				
	Overall	Elementary schools	Middle schools	High schools	Other schools	Overall	Elementary schools	Middle schools	High schools	Other schools
Free	67.7	36.2	11.3	13.5	6.7	65.7	31.7	10.3	12.8	10.8
Reduced Price	5.8	2.7	1.1	1.4	0.6	6.5	3.1	1.2	1.5	0.7
Paid	26.5	12.8	4.9	5.9	2.8	27.8	13.5	5.5	6.6	2.2
Overall	100.0	51.7	17.3	20.8	10.1	100.0	48.3	17.1	21.0	13.7

Notes: This table shows the percentage of total meals claimed for each Meal Price/School Type combination. Percentages for School Type can be summed across rows separately for each Meal Price category. For each Meal Price/School Type combination, the percentages of meals claimed for October 2015 and October 2016 are statistically significantly different from each other ($p < 0.01$), as expected given the large number of meals underlying each comparison (weighted $n = 593,826,728$ lunches served for October 2015 and 572,530,646 lunches served for October 2016). “Other” schools are those that have a grade span that does not fall in the range for elementary, middle, or high schools, such as Pre-K–8 or 6–12. Some totals may vary due to rounding. Data were missing for 6 percent of SFAs.

Sources: Murdoch, J., et al. (2019). *Child nutrition program operations study (CN-OPS-II): Year one report: SY 2015–2016* (Table 2-13); SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 2.3 and 2.5.

Table D.6—Percentage of SBP Meals Claimed by Meal Price Category and School Type, in October 2015 and October 2016

Meal Price	School Type									
	October 2015					October 2016				
	Overall	Elementary schools	Middle schools	High schools	Other schools	Overall	Elementary schools	Middle schools	High schools	Other schools
Free	81.5	50.1	10.4	13.0	8.0	77.8	42.1	10.1	12.2	13.4
Reduced Price	4.6	2.4	0.7	1.0	0.5	5.6	3.0	0.9	1.1	0.5
Paid	13.9	7.6	1.9	2.6	1.9	16.7	9.8	2.5	2.8	1.5
Overall	100.0	60.1	13.0	16.6	10.4	100.0	54.9	13.5	16.2	15.4

Notes: This table shows the percentage of total meals claimed for each Meal Price/School Type combination. Percentages for School Type can be summed across rows separately for each Meal Price category. For each Meal Price/School Type combination, the percentages of meals claimed for October 2015 and October 2016 are statistically significantly different from each other ($p < 0.01$), as expected given the large number of meals underlying each comparison (weighted $n = 294,436,799$ breakfasts served for October 2015 and 285,032,231 breakfasts served for October 2016). “Other” schools are those that have a grade span that does not fall in the range for elementary, middle, or high schools, such as Pre-K–8 or 6–12. Some totals may vary due to rounding. Data were missing for 6 percent of SFAs.

Sources: Murdoch, J., et al. (2019). *Child nutrition program operations study (CN-OPS-II): Year one report: SY 2015–2016* (Table 2-14); SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 2.3 and 2.5.

School and SFA Participation in Other Child Nutrition Programs

Table D.7—SFA Participation in CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program, by SFA Characteristics

SFA Characteristic	Percentage of SFAs (CI)	Weighted (Unweighted) Number of SFAs
All SFAs	16.6 ¹ (14.5–18.6)	14,703 (1,670)
SFA Size		
a. Small (1–999 students)	10.0 ^{b,c,d} (8.1–12.0)	7,483 (515)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	17.9 ^{a,c,d} (14.3–21.5)	5,269 (802)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	35.9 ^{a,b} (29.7–42.1)	1,667 (299)
d. Very large (≥ 25,000 students)	50.0 ^{a,b} (36.2–63.8)	282 (54)
Urbanicity		
e. Urban/City	28.5 ^{f,h} (21.4–35.5)	1,630 (200)
f. Suburban	17.1 ^e (13.1–21.1)	3,139 (431)
g. Town	22.0 ^h (17.2–26.9)	2,391 (345)
h. Rural	12.4 ^{e,g} (9.2–15.7)	6,504 (659)
Percentage of Students Certified for F/RP Meals²		
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	18.2 (14.2–22.2)	5,503 (655)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	13.7 (10.8–16.6)	6,137 (707)
k. High (≥ 60 percent F/RP)	19.4 (14.7–24.1)	3,062 (308)

¹ This estimate reflects the percentage of SFAs that have any school participating in CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals. Percentage of all SFAs participating in the CACFP At-Risk Meals Program was 7.4 percent in SY 2015–16 (Murdoch, J., et al. [2019]. *Child nutrition program operations study [CN-OPS-II]: Year one report: SY 2015–2016* [Table 2.12]).

² The distribution of SFAs participating in the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program in terms of the percentage of students certified for F/RP meals is based on the F/RP percentage of the SFA, not the site's area eligibility.

Note: Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Sidak adjusted *p*-value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the letter. Subgroup estimates without superscripts reflect nonsignificant differences.

Sources: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 1.3. SFA characteristics were derived from the FNS Verification Summary Report (Form 742) and from the U.S. Department of Education Common Core of Data, District File.

Table D.8—Percentage of SFAs and Schools Participating in CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals, by School Type

School Type	SFAs	Percentage ¹ (CI)	Schools	Percentage (CI)
Elementary schools	1,789	78.0 (71.9–84.0)	11,220	55.9 (42.2–69.5)
Middle schools	928	40.5 (34.4–46.5)	3,059	15.2 (14.4–16.0)
High schools	812	35.4 (29.1–41.6)	2,627	13.1 (8.8–17.4)
Other schools	613	26.7 (21.0–32.4)	3,183	15.8 (7.2–24.5)
Weighted <i>n</i>	2,295		20,088	
Unweighted <i>n</i>	335		4,657	

CI = 95 percent confidence interval.

¹ Percentage column does not add to 100 because school types overlap within SFAs. SFA estimates were calculated based on the number of SFAs that reported how many schools participated as sites in CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals.

Notes: Twenty-two percent of schools participated as sites in CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals and were included in this table. Percentages are calculated as a proportion of schools of each type among SFAs and schools participating in CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals, as reported in question 1.6. “Other” schools are those that have a grade span that does not fall in the range for elementary, middle, or high schools, such as Pre-K–8 or 6–12. Data were missing for 6 percent of SFAs.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 1.3 and 1.6.

Table D.9—SFAs Participating in CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program, by CACFP Role

Role	Percentage of All SFAs
SFA is the only CACFP At-Risk sponsor in the SFA	86.8
SFA has schools that are CACFP At-Risk sponsors	8.9
Weighted <i>n</i>	2,434
Unweighted <i>n</i>	354

Notes: These data are among the 17 percent of SFAs that reported participating in CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals. Data were missing for 4 percent of SFAs.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 1.3–1.5.

Table D.10—Strategies Used to Build Awareness of the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program with Eligible Nonparticipating Students, Among SFAs Using Strategies

Strategy	Percentage of SFAs
Newsletters	44.0
Social media (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube)	37.8
Advertising at family-friendly events	34.8
USDA materials (flyers, bookmarks, and postcards)	32.9
Discussion at community meetings	28.8
Partnering with local agencies	20.7
Public service announcements	19.6
Mass mailings	18.6
Presentations to faith-based organizations	5.2
Texting campaign	3.4
Other*	18.5
Weighted <i>n</i>	1,912
Unweighted <i>n</i>	264

* “Other” responses include advertising on school and district websites, advertising on menus, and posting and distributing flyers.

Notes: These data are among the 13 percent of SFAs that reported using strategies to build awareness of the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program with eligible nonparticipating students. Multiple responses were allowed.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 1.9 and 1.10.

Table D.11—Strategies Used to Build Awareness of the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program with the Local Community at Large, Among SFAs Using Strategies

Strategy	Percentage of SFAs
Social media	47.5
Advertising at family-friendly events	41.4
USDA materials (flyers, bookmarks, and postcards)	41.4
Discussion at community meetings	37.9
Partnering with local agencies	29.1
Public service announcements	27.0
Presentations to faith-based organizations	12.0
Other*	9.2
Don't know	3.0
Weighted <i>n</i>	1,329
Unweighted <i>n</i>	187

* “Other” responses include advertising on school and district websites, posting menus and times, and distributing flyers.

Notes: These data are among the 9 percent of SFAs that reported using strategies to build awareness of the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program with the local community at large. Multiple responses were allowed.

Sources: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 1.11 and 1.12.

Table D.12—School and SFA Participation in SFSP in Summer 2016

	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)	Percentage (CI)
Schools	37,820 (7,238)	41.8 (24.5–59.2)
SFAs	4,087 (544)	27.9 (25.8–30.0)

Notes: This table includes SFAs that participated as sponsors and schools that participated as either sites or sponsors. In addition, 13,673 non-school sites (39 percent of all sites) participated in SFSP in summer 2016 as reported on the SFA Director Survey. Data were missing for 1 percent of SFAs.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 1.15–1.17.

Table D.13—Percentage of SFAs Participating in SFSP, by SFA Characteristics, Summer 2016

SFA Characteristic	Percentage of SFAs (CI)	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
All SFAs	27.9 (25.8–30.0)	14,646 (1,667)
SFA Size		
a. Small (1–999 students)	21.9 ^{c,d} (18.4–25.5)	7,427 (511)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	28.2 ^{c,d} (25.2–31.2)	5,267 (802)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	48.4 ^{a,b} (41.3–55.6)	1,667 (299)
d. Very large (≥ 25,000 students)	58.7 ^{a,b} (46.2–71.3)	285 (55)
Urbanicity		
e. Urban/City	33.5 (26.2–40.8)	1,614 (199)
f. Suburban	27.1 ^g (22.7–31.4)	3,132 (431)
g. Town	39.2 ^{f,h} (34.0–44.3)	2,397 (346)
h. Rural	26.1 ^g (21.6–30.5)	6,464 (656)
Percentage of Students Certified for F/RP Meals		
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	27.7 (24.5–30.9)	5,471 (654)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	30.7 (27.2–34.3)	6,121 (706)
k. High (≥ 60 percent F/RP)	22.5 (16.7–28.3)	3,054 (307)

Notes: This table includes SFAs that participate as sponsors and SFAs in which the school is the sponsor. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Sidak adjusted *p*-value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the letter. Subgroup estimates without superscripts reflect nonsignificant differences.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 1.15 and 1.17.

Table D.14—SFA and School Participation in Seamless SSO in Summer 2016

	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)	Percentage (CI)
Schools	8,004 (1,825)	8.9 (3.7–14.0)
SFAs	2,484 (350)	16.9 (14.6–19.2)

Notes: This table includes SFAs that participated as sponsors and schools that participated as sites. In addition, 4,655 non-school sites (37 percent of all sites) participated in SSO in summer 2016.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 1.13 and 1.14.

Table D.15—Strategies Used to Build Awareness of the Summer Feeding Programs with Eligible Nonparticipating Students, Among SFAs Using Strategies

Strategy	Percentage of SFAs
Newsletters	59.4
USDA materials (flyers, bookmarks, and postcards)	55.4
Social media (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube)	55.2
Public service announcements	38.6
Advertising at family-friendly events	32.4
Partnering with local agencies	27.9
Mass mailings	24.8
Community meetings	22.7
Presentations to faith-based organizations	12.1
Texting campaign	3.8
Other*	21.2
Weighted <i>n</i>	7,583
Unweighted <i>n</i>	958

* “Other” responses include advertising on school and district websites, advertising on menus and billboards, advertising in newsletters and newspapers, advertising through automated telephone calls, posting signs and flyers, and distributing flyers.

Notes: Summer feeding programs refer to both SFSP and SSO. Data are among the 52 percent of SFAs that reported using strategies to build awareness of summer feeding programs with eligible nonparticipating students. Multiple responses were allowed.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 1.20 and 1.21.

Table D.16—Strategies Used to Build Awareness of the Summer Feeding Programs with the Local Community at Large, Among SFAs Using Strategies

Strategy	Percentage of SFAs
USDA materials (flyers, bookmarks, and postcards)	54.0
Social media	53.9
Promoting the FNS Summer Meal Site Finder	45.6
Public service announcements	38.8
Advertising at family-friendly events	34.4
Partnering with local agencies	28.4
Community meetings	24.2
Promoting the FNS Mapping Tool	18.3
Promoting the National Hunger Hotline	17.3
Presentations to faith-based organizations	13.1
Other*	13.6
Weighted <i>n</i>	6,839
Unweighted <i>n</i>	892

* “Other” responses include advertising on school and district websites, advertising on menus and billboards, advertising in newsletters and newspapers, posting signs and flyers, and distributing flyers.

Notes: Summer feeding programs refer to both SFSP and SSO. Data are among the 47 percent of SFAs that reported using strategies to build awareness of summer feeding programs with the local community at large. Multiple responses were allowed.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 1.22 and 1.23.

APPENDIX E. ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION AND VERIFICATION

List of Tables by Research Question

Research Question	Corresponding Table
Free and Reduced Price Meals Applications and Accompanying Materials	
Do State agencies (SA) issue or endorse prototype applications for free and reduced price school meals?	Table E.1
Which formats do State agencies use to issue or endorse prototype applications for free and reduced price school meals?	Tables E.1 and E.2
What sources are used for prototype application design or layout?	Table E.2
Do State agencies have policies in place governing the development or use of application materials for free and reduced price school meals by SFAs?	Table E.3
What are State agency policies or procedures governing the development, approval, and/or use of applications by SFAs?	Table E.3
Are State agency-issued or State agency-endorsed application materials required for SFAs to use?	Table E.3
Are SFAs permitted to develop either the layout or content of their own application materials?	Table E.3
Do State agencies issue or endorse prototype versions of application instructions, letters of FAQs for households, communications with households, or any other related materials?	Tables E.3 and E.4
What sources are used for these materials?	Table E.4
Do SFAs issue or endorse prototype versions of application instructions, letters of FAQs for households, communications with households, or any other related materials?	Table E.5
How do SFAs typically obtain or develop their application materials?	Table E.5
What sources do SFAs use for the design, development, and format of their free and reduced price meal application prototype and supplemental application materials?	Tables E.5 and E.6
What are SFA perceptions of the USDA free and reduced price meal application prototype?	Table E.7
What technology is used for eligibility determination?	Table E.8
Electronic and Web-based Applications for Free and Reduced Price School Meals	
What technology is used for eligibility determination?	Tables E.9 and E.10
Do SFAs issue an electronic or web-based application for free and reduced price school meals?	Table E.9
What percentage of free and reduced price meals applications are electronic or web-based?	Table E.9
Who is responsible for the development of these applications?	Table E.11
To what extent do SFAs encourage households to submit electronic or web-based free and reduced price meal applications?	Tables E.12 and E.13
Has use of electronic or web-based applications for free and reduced price school meals resulted in any advantages or benefits for SFAs, such as reduced administrative burden or household reporting errors?	Table E.14
Direct Certification and Verification	
What is the relative number of children directly certified during the year compared to the number directly certified at the start of the school year?	Table E.15
What challenges do SFAs face in matching enrolled students to household participation in SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR?	Table E.16
Is direct verification used?	Table E.17
How many times do schools follow up with households that do not respond to verification requests?	Table E.18
What method do schools use to contact households selected for verification (letter, phone, email, text, other)?	Table E.19
Do SFAs follow up with households that did not respond to initial requests for verification documentation?	Table E.19

Research Question	Corresponding Table
Do schools translate verification notices into the primary language spoken by the recipient household?	Table E.20
Does the district accept emailed copies of verification documentation?	Table E.20
What are the reasons that prompt districts to verify for cause?	Table E.21
What is the distribution of outcomes from verification activities?	Table E.22
What are State agency criteria for Independent Review of Applications in SFAs with high rates of free and reduced price meal certification errors?	Table E.23

Free and Reduced Price Meal Applications and Accompanying Materials

Table E.1—F/RP School Meal Application Formats: Prototypes Available from SAs and Format Primarily Used by SFAs

Prototype Format Available and Used	
Format of Prototype Available	Number of State Agencies
Hard copy prototype F/RP meal application only	36
Electronic or web-based prototype F/RP meal application	13
Other*	6
Format Primarily Used	Percentage of SFAs
Manually entered paper application	71.8
Electronic or web-based application	9.9
Computer-read or scannable paper application	2.6
No applications for school meals were submitted	15.6
Weighted <i>n</i>	14,486
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,643

* While most responses to the “Other” category did not directly answer the question, one SA reported approving electronic or web-based F/RP applications but not providing electronic or web-based versions for use by SFAs.

Notes: Data were provided by 53 State CN directors. Two State CN directors reported multiple formats.

Sources: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 4.4. SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 5.5.

Table E.2—Content and Design/Layout Sources for SA Hard Copy F/RP School Meal Applications

Content and Design/Layout	Number of State Agencies
SA hard copy F/RP prototype is closely modeled after the USDA Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals	35
SA uses own design/layout	20
SA hard copy F/RP prototype is identical to the USDA Prototype Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals	12

Notes: Multiple responses were allowed. Data were provided by 53 State CN directors. No SA reported using contractors’ layouts.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 4.2, 4.2a, and 4.3.

Table E.3—State Agency Policies Governing F/RP School Meal Applications and Accompanying Materials

	Number of State Agencies		
	Hard Copy	Electronic or Web-Based Copy	Materials that Accompany Application
SA Policy in Place Governing Use of F/RP Applications or Accompanying Materials			
Yes	36	7	32
No	17	3	21
Policies Regarding SFA Use of F/RP Meal Application and Accompanying Materials			
SA requires all SFAs to use SA F/RP meal applications/some or all accompanying materials, with SA-approved modifications	23	1	17
SA endorses or encourages use of SA F/RP meal application/some or all materials that accompany the application	8	5	11
SA requires all SFAs to use SA F/RP meal application, no modifications allowed/some or all materials that accompany the application, no modifications allowed	5	1	4

Notes: All SAs reported having policies for either or both hard copy applications and electronic or web-based applications F/RP school meal applications. Fifty-three State CN directors responded to questions on SA policies regarding hard copy applications and for materials that accompany applications. Ten State CN directors responded to questions on SA policies regarding electronic or web-based applications.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 4.1a, 4.1b, 4.5a, 4.5b, 4.6a, and 4.6b.

Table E.4—Content and Design/Layout of Materials that Accompany SA F/RP School Meal Application

Source	Number of State Agencies			
	Application Instructions	Letter for Households	FAQ For Households	Other Communication with Households
Supporting Materials – Content				
SA materials are identical to the USDA Prototype	21	28	27	NA
SA materials are closely modeled after the USDA Prototype	25	21	14	NA
Supporting Materials – Design				
USDA Prototype	24	21	15	9
SA design/layout is used	14	15	6	5
SA contractor design/layout is used	1	0	0	0
Don't know	1	0	0	0
Other	1	1	2	0

Note: Fifty-two State CN directors responded.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 4.7, 4.8, 4.9a, 4.10, 4.11, 4.11a, 4.12, 4.13, 4.13a, 4.14, and 4.15.

Table E.5—Source of Materials that Accompany SFA's F/RP School Meal Application

Source of Materials that Accompany SFA's F/RP Application	Percentage of SFAs		
	Application Instructions	FAQ for Households	Other Communication with Households
SA issued or endorsed materials	59.7	58.3	44.0
USDA's prototype materials	59.7	60.3	34.3
SFA or SFA contractor's materials	9.6	10.1	35.8
Don't know	3.2	2.9	0.5
Other	0.0	0.0	0.4
N/A – Current hard copy F/RP application not accompanied by specified materials	0.2	0.1	9.4
Weighted <i>n</i>	9,798	8,698	1,114
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,160	1,035	138

Note: Table estimates are among the 74 percent of SFAs that provided materials that accompany the F/RP school meal application.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 8.8–8.12.

Table E.6—Use and Development of SFA's Hard Copy F/RP School Meal Application

Application Use	Percentage of SFAs
SFA Primarily Uses Hard Copy F/RP Application	
Yes	78.7
No	21.3
Weighted <i>n</i>	14,325
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,626
SFA's Hard Copy F/RP Application Modeled After USDA Prototype	
Yes – Identical to USDA Prototype	55.6
Yes – Closely modeled after USDA Prototype	22.6
No – Completely different from USDA Prototype	6.2
Don't know	15.5
Weighted <i>n</i>	14,056
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,598

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 8.1 and 8.2.

Table E.7—SFA Perceptions of the Paper-Based USDA Prototype F/RP School Meal Application

Perception	Percentage of SFAs
Usefulness	
More useful than other forms	14.8
Just as useful as other forms	44.1
Not as useful as other forms	2.3
Have not used any other forms	38.7
Weighted n	10,977
Unweighted n	1,289
Degree of Challenge	
Not challenging	61.1
A little challenging	21.1
Moderately challenging	7.0
Very challenging	1.2
Extremely challenging	0.5
Don't know	9.1
Weighted n	11,019
Unweighted n	1,298

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 8.2–8.4.

Table E.8—SFA Use of Manual and Automated F/RP School Meal Application Eligibility Determinations, by Basis for Eligibility

Basis for Eligibility	Percentage of SFAs		Weighted n (Unweighted n)
	Using Manual Determination	Using Automated Determination	
Household income	47.8	52.2	12,078 (1,396)
Assistance program case number (e.g., SNAP, FDPIR, or TANF)	42.2	57.8	12,022 (1,393)
Child enrolled in Head Start	65.9	34.1	9,627 (1,110)
Foster child	65.4	34.6	11,979 (1,389)
Homeless, migrant, or runaway child	73.7	26.3	12,002 (1,391)

Notes: Table estimates are among the 84 percent of SFAs that used F/RP school meal applications in SY 2016–17. Data were missing for 3–4 percent of SFAs for each basis for eligibility; however, data were missing for 23 percent of SFAs for Head Start, most likely because these programs primarily serve preschool students. SFAs were asked to select either manual (decision made by the determining official) or automated (decision made by a computer algorithm, software program, or calculations performed with formulas in a spreadsheet) determination for each basis for eligibility.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 5.5 and 5.8.

Electronic and Web-Based Applications for Free and Reduced Price School Meals

Table E.9—Use of Electronic or Web-Based F/RP School Meal Applications, by SFA Characteristic

SFA Characteristic	Percentage of SFAs Using Applications ¹	Percentage of SFAs Using Electronic or Web-Based Applications ²	Percentage of SFAs Using Electronic or Web-Based Applications Most Often	Percentage of Applications Received by an SFA Electronically or Via Web ³
All SFAs	84.4 (82.0-86.7)	33.0 (29.9-36.0)	11.7 (10.1-13.3)	39.7 (36.6-42.8)
SFA Size				
a. Small (1–999 students)	80.6 ^c (76.3,84.9)	17.6 ^{b,c,d} (13.6,21.7)	3.6 ^{b,c} (1.9,5.2)	31.4 ^{c,d} (23.7,39.0)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	87.1 (84.7,89.4)	40.0 ^{a,c,d} (35.9,44.0)	15.0 ^a (11.6,18.5)	38.5 ^d (34.7,42.3)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	91.2 ^a (86.9,95.5)	64.1 ^{a,b,d} (57.3,70.8)	27.1 ^a (21.3,32.9)	46.3 ^{a,d} (40.8,51.7)
d. Very large (≥ 25,000 students)	94.2 (87.8,100.0)	91.0 ^{a,b,c} (82.1,100.0)	52.5 (35,69.9)	61.2 ^{a,b,c} (53.6,68.8)
Urbanicity⁴				
e. Urban/City	57.0 ^{f,g,h} (48.3,65.7)	57.0 ^{g,h} (48.7,65.3)	24.5 (16.8,32.2)	45.4 ^h (36.6,54.3)
f. Suburban	90.1 ^e (86.9,93.4)	47.1 ^{g,h} (41.1,53.1)	22.3 ^{g,h} (18.0,26.6)	46.4 ^h (41.8,51.0)
g. Town	84.9 ^e (81.3,88.6)	31.2 ^{e,f} (26.1,36.4)	11.3 ^f (8.1,14.5)	39.1 (32.1,46.1)
h. Rural	88.6 ^e (85.5,91.7)	25.7 ^{e,f} (22.4,29.1)	5.6 ^f (3.7,7.5)	30.8 ^{e,f} (25.8,35.8)
Percentage of Students Certified for F/RP Meals				
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	60.9 ^{j,k} (56.6,65.3)	35.4 ^k (30.5,40.4)	17.2 ^{j,k} (13.2,21.2)	43.8 (38.7,48.9)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	99.8 ^{i,k} (99.5,100.0)	35.6 ^k (30.1,41.0)	10.8 ⁱ (8.7,12.8)	38.9 (34.6,43.2)
k. High (≥ 60 percent F/RP)	94.6 ^{i,j} (91.7,97.6)	24.8 ^{i,j} (18.8,30.8)	7.5 ⁱ (4.5,10.5)	35.6 (29.4,41.8)
Weighted <i>n</i>	14,486	11,853	12,220	3,908
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,643	1,370	1,414	566

¹ Data were missing for 2 percent of SFAs that did not note whether they used F/RP school meal applications.

² Data were missing for 3 percent of SFAs that did not note whether they used electronic or web-based F/RP school meal applications.

³ Data were missing for 3 percent of SFAs that used electronic or web-based F/RP school meal applications but did not note the percentage of electronic or web-based applications received.

⁴ SFAs with missing urbanicity codes were excluded from the analyses.

Notes: Table estimates are among the 84 percent of SFAs that used F/RP school meal applications in SY 2016–17. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Sidak adjusted *p*-value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the superscript letter. Subgroup estimates without superscripts reflect nonsignificant differences.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 5.5 and 5.7

Table E.10—Integration of F/RP School Meal Applications with Other Data Systems, Among SFAs that Used Electronic or Web-Based School Meal Applications Most Often

Type of Data System Integrated	Percentage of SFAs with Integrated Applications	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
Point-of-sale	94.5	1,395 (221)
Meal claiming	88.5	1,360 (215)
Direct certification	77.7	1,290 (204)
Student records	76.5	1,261 (201)

Notes: Table estimates are among the 12 percent of SFAs that used electronic or web-based applications most often for F/RP school meals in SY 2016–17. Data were missing for 2–12 percent of SFAs.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 5.2, 5.5, and 5.6.

Table E.11—Developer of Electronic or Web-Based F/RP School Meal Applications, Among SFAs that Used Electronic or Web-Based School Meal Applications as their Primary Application

Developer	Percentage of SFAs
Software vendor	69.0
State agency	14.6
Contractor hired by SFA	7.5
SFA staff	2.9
Don't know	6.0
Weighted <i>n</i>	2,398
Unweighted <i>n</i>	370

Notes: Table estimates are among the 17 percent of SFAs that used electronic or web-based applications as their primary application for F/RP school meals in SY 2016–17. Data are missing from 1 percent of SFAs.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 8.13 and 8.16.

Table E.12—F/RP School Meal Application Type Encouraged or Endorsed By SFA

Process	Percentage of SFAs	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
Paper applications completed independently	57.3	6,799 (725)
Electronic or web-based	21.6	2,566 (395)
Paper applications completed with in-person or phone assistance	7.8	930 (81)
Other method	0.4	52 (6)
Not applicable (for example, SFA uses a single process or encourages processes equally)	12.7	1,510 (172)
Weighted <i>n</i>		11,857
Unweighted <i>n</i>		1,379

Notes: Table estimates are among the 84 percent of SFAs that used F/RP school meal applications for SY 2016–17. Data were missing for 3 percent of SFAs. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 8.17.

Table E.13—SFA Encouragement of Electronic or Web-Based F/RP School Meal Applications, by SFA Characteristics

SFA Characteristic	Percentage of SFAs (CI)	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
All SFAs	21.6 (18.9–24.4)	11,857 (1,379)
SFA size		
a. Small (1–999 students)	7.4 ^{b,c,d} (3.9–10.9)	5,763 (404)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	26.5 ^{a,c,d} (22.7–30.3)	4,377 (663)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	51.3 ^{a,b,d} (44.7–57.9)	1,451 (261)
d. Very large (≥ 25,000 students)	89.2 ^{a,b,cf} (79.8–98.7)	266 (51)
Urbanicity¹		
e. Urban/City	44.1 ^{g,h} (36.8–51.5)	895 (135)
f. Suburban	35.0 ^{g,h} (30.4–39.7)	2,678 (379)
g. Town	19.5 ^{e,f} (15.0–24.0)	1,925 (282)
h. Rural	12.5 ^{e,f} (8.7–16.3)	5,593 (555)
Percentage of Students Approved for F/RP Meals		
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	23.1 (18.9–27.4)	3,178 (416)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	22.6 (18.9–26.4)	5,940 (682)
k. High (≥ 60 percent F/RP)	17.7 (12.2–23.3)	2,739 (281)

CI = 95 percent confidence interval.

¹ SFAs with missing urbanicity codes were excluded from the analyses.

Notes: Table estimates are among the 84 percent of SFAs that used F/RP school meal applications for SY 2016–17. Data were missing for 7 percent of SFAs. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Sidak adjusted *p*-value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the superscript letter. Subgroup estimates without superscripts reflect nonsignificant differences.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 8.17.

Table E.14—Benefits and Challenges of Using the Electronic or Web-Based F/RP School Meal Applications

Benefits and Challenges	Percentage of SFAs
Benefit	
Decreased application processing time	26.0
Decreased administrative burden	22.5
Decreased household reporting error	17.7
Decreased costs associated with not using other application types	10.2
Increased school NSLP participation	6.3
Increased school SBP participation	4.7
Other ¹	21.9
No benefits	47.5
Weighted <i>n</i>	12,221
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,410
Challenge	
Families have limited internet access	21.7
Difficulty providing technical assistance to parents	10.0
Application is not accessible using mobile devices	6.1
Student data are less secure	1.2
Decreased school NSLP participation	0.5
Decreased school SBP participation	0.2
Other ²	22.9
No challenges	51.3
Weighted <i>n</i>	11,973
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,382

¹ “Other” responses for benefits could not be meaningfully categorized (i.e., respondents referenced the convenience of electronic or web-based applications).

² “Other” responses for challenges included the availability of different languages, the inability to track when an application is submitted, and vendor-specific challenges such as an application “timing out” excessively during completion.

Notes: Data were missing for 17-19 percent of SFAs. Multiple responses were allowed, except for respondents selecting “no benefits” or “no challenges.”

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 8.14 and 8.15.

Direct Certification and Verification

Table E.15—Students Directly Certified as of October 31, 2016, by SFA Characteristics

SFA Characteristic	Percentage of Students Directly Certified by an SFA	
	Mean (CI)	Median (CI)
All SFAs	69.8 (68.0–71.5)	78.0 (75.3–80.6)
SFA Size		
a. Small (1–999 students)	68.3 (65.3–71.3)	74.7 (70.0–79.4)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	72.6 ^d (70.6–74.6)	81.2 (78.8–83.6)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	69.2 (65.6–72.8)	76.4 (71.0–81.7)
d. Very large (≥ 25,000 students)	60.9 ^b (52.5–69.4)	71.3 (60.6–82.0)
Urbanicity¹		
e. Urban/City	68.8 (63.1–74.4)	75.2 (70.0–80.4)
f. Suburban	71.4 (68.4–74.4)	80.0 (76.2–83.8)
g. Town	69.6 (65.8–73.4)	80.0 (75.3–84.3)
h. Rural	70.4 (68.0–72.9)	77.1 (72.7–81.5)
Percentage of Students Certified for F/RP Meals		
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	70.0 (67.2–72.9)	79.1 (74.8–83.4)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	70.6 (68.2–73.1)	78.8 (74.9–82.6)
k. High (≥ 60 percent F/RP)	67.5 (62.7–72.2)	75.1 (69.5–80.7)
Weighted <i>n</i>	12,434	
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,424	

CI = 95 percent confidence interval.

¹ SFAs with missing urbanicity codes were excluded from the analyses.

Notes: SFAs are required to report the number of students directly certified for free meals as of the last operating day in October on the FNS-742 Verification Collection Report. The SFA survey also referenced October 31 to align with this date and reduce SFA reporting burden. Data were missing for 10 percent of SFAs that did not respond to questions about the number of students directly certified before and after October 31, 2016. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Sidak adjusted *p*-value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the superscript letter. Subgroup estimates without superscripts reflect nonsignificant differences.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 5.1 and 5.2.

Table E.16—Challenges Reported Among SFAs Responsible for Direct Certification

Challenge	Percentage of SFAs
No reported challenges	42.7
Lack of staff time and resources to perform data matching	29.8
Difficulty investigating or reconciling partially matched or unmatched children	27.1
Difficulty reconciling SA-generated direct certification lists with local point-of-service systems	17.6
Need to use a manual matching process	14.6
High level of burden (for example, due to outdated or not user-friendly computer systems)	12.1
Data insecurity/concerns about personally identifiable information	4.5
Lack of familiarity with system functions designed for district use	3.8
Other*	8.1
Weighted <i>n</i>	5,494
Unweighted <i>n</i>	674

* “Other” responses included difficulties matching students without Social Security numbers and establishing extended eligibility for students in the households of directly certified students.

Notes: Table estimates are among the 38 percent of SFAs that reported being responsible for matching lists of enrolled students in the SFA to lists of household participants in SNAP, TANF, FDPIR, and Medicaid (in pilot States). Data are missing from 1 percent of SFAs that did not report challenges conducting direct certification. Multiple responses were allowed.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 5.3 and 5.4.

Table E.17—SFAs Performing Direct Verification, by SFA Characteristics

SFA Characteristic	Percentage of SFAs (CI)	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
Overall	36.4 (33.3–39.5)	12,031 (1,391)
SFA Size		
a. Small (1–999 students)	38.1 (32.6–43.5)	5,901 (412)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	33.3 (29.6–36.9)	4,412 (667)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	36.3 (30.4–42.3)	1,459 (262)
d. Very large (≥ 25,000 students)	50.4 (35.5–65.4)	259 (50)
Urbanicity¹		
e. Urban/City	43.5 (34.2–52.7)	900 (136)
f. Suburban	35.2 (30.1–40.3)	2,704 (380)
g. Town	31.3 (25.7–36.9)	1,977 (288)
h. Rural	38.0 (33.3–42.7)	5,617 (559)
Percentage of Students Approved for F/RP Meals		
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	35.3 (30.2–40.4)	3,195 (419)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	36.6 (32.2–40.9)	6,010 (688)
k. High (≥ 60 percent F/RP)	37.2 (29.7–44.7)	2,825 (284)

CI = 95 percent confidence interval.

¹ SFAs with missing urbanicity codes were excluded from the analyses.

Notes: Table estimates are among the 84 percent of SFAs that used F/RP school meal applications for SY 2016–17. Data were missing from 2 percent of SFAs that used F/RP school meal applications for SY 2016–17 but did not respond to verification questions. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Sidak adjusted *p*-value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the superscript letter. Subgroup estimates without superscripts reflect nonsignificant differences.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 5.5 and 5.21.

Table E.18—Number of Follow-Up Requests Made by SFAs to Obtain Documentation for Verification

Number of Follow-Up Attempts	Percentage of SFAs	
	No Initial Documentation Provided	Insufficient/Unclear Documentation Provided
1 follow-up attempt	11.1	16.0
2 follow-up attempts	39.1	38.0
3 or more follow-up attempts	49.8	46.0
Weighted <i>n</i>	11,737	11,738
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,364	1,365

Notes: Table estimates are among the 84 percent of SFAs that used F/RP school meal applications for SY 2016–17. Data were missing from less than 1 percent of SFAs.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 5.5, 5.14, and 5.16.

Table E.19—Methods Used to Contact Households Selected for Verification

Contact Method	Percentage of SFAs		
	First Contact	Additional Requests (No Initial Documentation Provided)	Additional Requests (Insufficient/Unclear Documentation Provided)
Letter	97.8	87.7	73.8
Telephone call	13.7	80.3	89.7
Email	9.6	34.6	34.7
Household's specified communication preference	2.1	8.5	9.2
In-person interviews	0.7	6.6	8.8
Text	0.6	4.5	4.6
Other	0.3	0.4	0.5
Weighted <i>n</i>	11,933	11,752	11,769
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,383	1,370	1,371

Notes: Table estimates are among the 84 percent of SFAs that used F/RP school meal applications for SY 2016–17. Data were missing from 2–3 percent of SFAs. Multiple responses were allowed.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 5.5, 5.10–5.13, 5.15, and 5.17.

Table E.20—Accommodations Provided to Households Selected for Verification

Accommodation ¹	Percentage of SFAs	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
Translate verification notices into primary language spoken by recipient household	77.0	11,934 (1,381)
Accept email submission of verification documentation	74.2	11,901 (1,380)

¹ The local education agency (LEA) must make at least one attempt to contact the household when the household does not adequately respond to the request for verification. The required follow-up attempt may be in writing (mail or email) or by telephone or text message. The LEA must document that contact was attempted. Additionally, the LEA must ensure that households with limited English proficiency are provided adequate language assistance and understand the need to respond to the verification request.

Notes: Table estimates are among the 84 percent of SFAs that used F/RP school meal applications for SY 2016–17. Data were missing for 15 percent of SFAs.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 5.5, 5.11, and 5.12.

Table E.21—Criteria Reported for Conducting Verification for Cause

Criterion	Percentage of SFAs	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
Error-prone (close to income guidelines) applications	74.3	2,461 (264)
Applications with zero income listed in current and previous year(s)	51.1	2,177 (237)
Multiple application submissions with different information	40.6	2,143 (239)
Non-responders from previous school year(s)	27.6	1,987 (222)
School district employee application	16.8	1,937 (215)
Other*	28.3	794 (85)

* The most common “Other” response, when specified, related to examples of applications with questionable, conflicting, or missing information.

Notes: Table estimates are among the 21 percent of SFAs that marked “yes” to the question, “Did your SFA perform verification for cause (that is, verify questionable applications in addition to verifying the sample selected at random) during SY 2016–2017?” Data were missing for 19–36 percent of SFAs.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 5.5, 5.18, and 5.20.

Table E.22—F/RP School Meal Applications with Changed Eligibility Determinations as a Result of Verification

Outcome of Eligibility Determination	Mean Percentage of Applications with Changed Eligibility as a Result of Verification	
	SFA Universe ¹	CN-OPS-II Sample ²
No change to eligibility	52.8	48.2
Change to Paid as a result of nonresponse	20.9	24.4
Free (Categorically Eligible) to Reduced Price eligibility	1.8	1.7
Free (Income Eligible) to Reduced Price eligibility	9.5	9.7
Free (Categorically Eligible) to Paid status	1.6	1.6
Free (Income Eligible) to Paid status	3.9	4.1
Reduced Price to Paid status	7.5	8.1
Reduced Price to Free status	2.4	2.7

¹ Data in this column are among SFAs in the FNS Verification Collection Report (VCR-742) for SY 2016–17 that reported at least one application selected for verification (unweighted $n = 12,267$).

² Data in this column are among SFAs in the FNS Verification Collection Report (VCR-742) for SY 2016–17 that reported at least one application selected for verification and were sampled as part of the CN-OPS-II Year 2 data collection (weighted $n = 9,949$).

Source: USDA, FNS SFA Verification Collection Report data for SY 2016–17, questions 5.5 and 5.8.

Table E.23 references Child Nutrition SA criteria used to identify local education agencies (LEAs)—public authorities with administrative control over primary and secondary schools—that may be at risk for certification errors as they certify F/RP school meals applications. LEAs and SFAs are often the same entities, with SFAs granted authority to oversee the school food program component of the LEA. The National School Lunch Act requires LEAs with high levels of, or with high risk for, certification error to have a second, independent review of initial eligibility determinations for F/RP school meals. SAs are to use two criteria to select LEAs for independent review, including (1) all LEAs with 10 percent or more of the certification/benefit issuances in error, based on administrative review; and (2) other LEAs not identified in Criterion 1 that are determined to be “at risk” based on SA discretion. Table E.23 presents data on SA use of the second “at-risk” criterion.

Table E.23—SA Criteria for Identifying At-Risk LEAs for Independent Review of F/RP School Meal Applications

Criterion	Number of SAs
LEAs with more than 5 percent but less than 10 percent certification/benefit issuance errors	30
LEAs that are newly participating in NSLP or SBP	16
LEAs that have recently hired new administrative staff	5
LEAs that recently implemented a new electronic system	1
Other	10
LEAs with other certification/benefit issuance errors	8
LEAs establishing a provision (Provision 2 or CEP)	2
No established criteria for at-risk LEAs	11

Notes: Fifty-two SAs provided information for this table. Multiple responses were allowed.

Source: CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 1.1.

APPENDIX F. MEAL PRICES AND COUNTING

List of Tables by Research Question

Research Question	Corresponding Table
Meal Prices and Counting	
What is the average price charged for full price and reduced price meals for the current school year?	Tables F.1–F.8
How have meal prices changed over time?	Table F.9
What alternatives to the traditional cashier model are used?	Table F.10
What technology is used to track meals served?	Table F.11
What method of counting is used in non-cafeteria points of service?	Table F.11
What training and oversight is provided to cashiers on meal counting?	Tables F.12 and F.13

Meal Prices and Counting

Table F.24—Average Prices Charged by SFAs for Full Price Breakfast (Elementary Schools), by SFA Characteristic

	Average Price (CI)	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
All SFAs that charged for a full price breakfast	\$1.42 (1.38–1.45)	6,231 (812)
SFA Size		
a. Small (1–999 students)	\$1.42 (1.32–1.51)	2,301 (180)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	\$1.43 (1.39–1.46)	2,786 (426)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	\$1.37 (1.32–1.43)	945 (170)
d. Very large (≥ 25,000 students)	\$1.38 (1.26–1.51)	199 (36)
Urbanicity¹		
e. Urban/City	\$1.37 (1.28–1.46)	436 (77)
f. Suburban	\$1.45 (1.39–1.51)	1,580 (236)
g. Town	\$1.43 (1.38–1.48)	1,320 (190)
h. Rural	\$1.37 (1.32–1.42)	2,728 (301)
Percentage of Students Approved for F/RP Meals		
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	\$1.51 ^j (1.47–1.55)	1,747 (249)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	\$1.37 ⁱ (1.34–1.41)	3,326 (425)
k. High (≥ 60 percent F/RP)	\$1.39 (1.25–1.53)	1,158 (138)

CI = 95 percent confidence interval.

¹ SFAs with missing urbanicity codes were excluded from the analyses.

Notes: Table estimates are among the 26 percent of SFAs that report the average (non \$0) price charged for full price breakfasts in elementary schools, excluding schools operating under a non-pricing provision (e.g., Provision 2, CEP). Data were missing for 26 percent of SFAs that did not report the price charged for full price breakfast in elementary schools. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Sidak adjusted *p*-value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the superscript letter. Subgroup estimates without superscripts reflect nonsignificant differences.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 1.1 and 3.1.

Table F.25—Average Prices Charged by SFAs for Full Price Breakfast (Middle Schools), by SFA Characteristic

	Average Price (CI)	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
All SFAs that charged for a full price breakfast	\$1.50 (1.46–1.54)	4,980 (696)
SFA Size		
a. Small (1–999 students)	\$1.52 (1.40–1.65)	1,343 (105)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	\$1.49 (1.46–1.53)	2,495 (385)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	\$1.49 (1.38–1.60)	933 (168)
d. Very large (≥ 25,000 students)	\$1.42 (1.29–1.55)	210 (38)
Urbanicity¹		
e. Urban/City	\$1.43 (1.33–1.52)	427 (76)
f. Suburban	\$1.53 (1.47–1.60)	1,481 (224)
g. Town	\$1.53 (1.45–1.60)	1,146 (173)
h. Rural	\$1.44 (1.38–1.50)	1,770 (216)
Percentage of Students Approved for F/RP Meals		
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	\$1.59 ^j (1.53–1.65)	1,523 (225)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	\$1.47 ⁱ (1.42–1.52)	2,544 (351)
k. High (≥ 60 percent F/RP)	\$1.43 (1.29–1.57)	913 (120)

CI = 95 percent confidence interval.

¹ SFAs with missing urbanicity codes were excluded from the analyses.

Notes: Table estimates are among the 25 percent of SFAs that report the average (non \$0) price charged for full price breakfasts in middle schools, excluding schools operating under a non-pricing provision (e.g., Provision 2, CEP). Data were missing for 25 percent of SFAs that did not report the price charged for full price breakfast in middle schools. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Sidak adjusted *p*-value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the superscript letter. Subgroup estimates without superscripts reflect nonsignificant differences.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 1.1 and 3.1.

Table F.26—Average Prices Charged by SFAs for Full Price Breakfast (High Schools), by SFA Characteristic

	Average Price (CI)	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
All SFAs that charged for a full price breakfast	\$1.52 (1.48–1.56)	5,807 (787)
SFA Size		
a. Small (1–999 students)	\$1.51 (1.42–1.60)	1,859 (150)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	\$1.54 (1.50–1.58)	2,811 (430)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	\$1.50 (1.43–1.57)	935 (170)
d. Very large (≥ 25,000 students)	\$1.40 (1.28–1.53)	203 (37)
Urbanicity¹		
e. Urban/City	\$1.49 (1.38–1.60)	438 (76)
f. Suburban	\$1.61 ^h (1.55–1.67)	1,602 (239)
g. Town	\$1.52 (1.47–1.56)	1,265 (189)
h. Rural	\$1.44 ^f (1.39–1.50)	2,358 (277)
Percentage of Students Approved for F/RP Meals		
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	\$1.64 ^{j,k} (1.59–1.69)	1,781 (255)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	\$1.48 ⁱ (1.44–1.52)	2,960 (401)
k. High (≥ 60 percent F/RP)	\$1.42 ⁱ (1.30–1.54)	1,066 (131)

CI = 95 percent confidence interval.

¹ SFAs with missing urbanicity codes were excluded from the analyses.

Notes: Table estimates are among the 23 percent of SFAs that report the average (non \$0) price charged for full price breakfasts in high schools, excluding schools operating under a non-pricing provision (e.g., Provision 2, CEP). Data were missing from 23 percent of SFAs that did not report the price charged for full price breakfast in high schools. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Sidak adjusted *p*-value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the superscript letter. Subgroup estimates without superscripts reflect nonsignificant differences.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 1.1 and 3.1.

Table F.27—Average Prices Charged by SFAs for Full Price Breakfast (Other Schools), by SFA Characteristic

	Average Price (CI)	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
All SFAs that charged for a full price breakfast	\$1.52 (1.44–1.60)	2,591 (284)
SFA Size		
a. Small (1–999 students)	\$1.57 (1.41–1.73)	1,349 (82)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	\$1.48 (1.41–1.55)	700 (104)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	\$1.46 (1.35–1.57)	383 (69)
d. Very large (≥ 25,000 students)	\$1.43 (1.28–1.57)	158 (29)
Urbanicity¹		
e. Urban/City	\$1.43 (1.30–1.56)	202 (38)
f. Suburban	\$1.52 (1.43–1.61)	578 (84)
g. Town	\$1.48 (1.39–1.56)	356 (48)
h. Rural	\$1.49 (1.36–1.61)	1,241 (107)
Percentage of Students Approved for F/RP Meals		
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	\$1.53 (1.43–1.62)	481 (71)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	\$1.52 (1.42–1.62)	1,545 (154)
k. High (≥ 60 percent F/RP)	\$1.51 (1.26–1.77)	566 (59)

CI = 95 percent confidence interval

¹ SFAs with missing urbanicity codes were excluded from the analyses.

Notes: Table estimates are among the 27 percent of SFAs that report the average (non \$0) price charged for full price breakfasts in other schools, excluding schools operating under a non-pricing provision (e.g., Provision 2, CEP).-“Other” schools are those that have a grade span that does not fall in the range for elementary, middle, or high schools, such as Pre-K–8 or 6–12. Twenty-seven percent of SFAs did not report the price charged for full price breakfast in “other” schools. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Sidak adjusted *p*-value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the superscript letter. Subgroup estimates without superscripts reflect nonsignificant differences.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 1.1 and 3.1.

Table F.28—Average Prices Charged by SFAs for a Full Price Lunch (Elementary Schools), by SFA Characteristic

	Average Price (CI)	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
All SFAs that charged for a full price lunch	\$2.43 (2.39–2.47)	7,776 (1,011)
SFA Size		
a. Small (1–999 students)	\$2.41 (2.31–2.51)	2,891 (227)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	\$2.43 (2.40–2.47)	3,503 (535)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	\$2.45 (2.39–2.50)	1,154 (207)
d. Very large (≥ 25,000 students)	\$2.36 (2.21–2.52)	229 (42)
Urbanicity¹		
e. Urban/City	\$2.41 (2.28–2.55)	586 (101)
f. Suburban	\$2.55 ^{g,h} (2.49–2.61)	2,034 (299)
g. Town	\$2.33 ^f (2.28–2.38)	1,578 (230)
h. Rural	\$2.33 ^f (2.28–2.38)	3,306 (368)
Percentage of Students Approved for F/RP Meals		
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	\$2.57 ^{j,k} (2.51–2.62)	2,232 (312)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	\$2.39 ⁱ (2.34–2.45)	3,932 (500)
k. High (≥ 60 percent F/RP)	\$2.31 ⁱ (2.16–2.45)	1,612 (199)

CI = 95 percent confidence interval.

¹ SFAs with missing urbanicity codes were excluded from the analyses.

Notes: Table estimates are among the 22 percent of SFAs that report the average (non \$0) price charged for full price lunch in elementary schools, excluding schools operating under a non-pricing provision (e.g., Provision 2, CEP). Data were missing for 22 percent of SFAs that did not report the price charged for full price lunch in elementary schools. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Sidak adjusted *p*-value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the superscript letter. Subgroup estimates without superscripts reflect nonsignificant differences.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 1.1 and 3.2.

Table F.29—Average Prices Charged by SFAs for a Full Price Lunch (Middle Schools), by SFA Characteristic

	Average Price (CI)	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
All SFAs that charged for a full price lunch	\$2.61 (2.57–2.66)	6,098 (854)
SFA Size		
a. Small (1–999 students)	\$2.59 (2.46–2.72)	1,649 (132)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	\$2.62 (2.58–2.65)	3,101 (479)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	\$2.67 (2.60–2.73)	1,109 (199)
d. Very large (≥ 25,000 students)	\$2.55 (2.41–2.68)	239 (44)
Urbanicity¹		
e. Urban/City	\$2.60 (2.47–2.74)	562 (97)
f. Suburban	\$2.76 ^{g,h} (2.71–2.82)	1,818 (273)
g. Town	\$2.52 ^f (2.46–2.57)	1,363 (208)
h. Rural	\$2.52 ^f (2.47–2.56)	2,188 (268)
Percentage of Students Approved for F/RP Meals		
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	\$2.75 ^{j,k} (2.71–2.80)	1,903 (278)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	\$2.56 ⁱ (2.51–2.62)	2,965 (410)
k. High (≥ 60 percent F/RP)	\$2.52 ⁱ (2.38–2.66)	1,230 (166)

CI = 95 percent confidence interval.

¹ SFAs with missing urbanicity codes were excluded from the analyses.

Notes: Table estimates are among the 23 percent of SFAs that report the average (non \$0) price charged for full price lunch in middle schools, excluding schools operating under a non-pricing provision (e.g., Provision 2, CEP). Data were missing from 23 percent of SFAs that did not report the price charged for full price lunch in middle schools. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Sidak adjusted *p*-value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the superscript letter. Subgroup estimates without superscripts reflect nonsignificant differences.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 1.1 and 3.2.

Table F.30—Average Prices Charged by SFAs for a Full Price Lunch (High Schools), by SFA Characteristic

	Average Price (CI)	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
All SFAs that charged for a full price lunch	\$2.65 (2.60–2.69)	7,017 (943)
SFA Size		
a. Small (1–999 students)	\$2.55 (2.45–2.65)	2,354 (189)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	\$2.68 (2.64–2.71)	3,317 (510)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	\$2.78 (2.64–2.92)	1,108 (200)
d. Very large (≥ 25,000 students)	\$2.59 (2.46–2.72)	239 (44)
Urbanicity¹		
e. Urban/City	\$2.77 (2.48–3.07)	539 (93)
f. Suburban	\$2.84 ^{g,h} (2.79–2.88)	1,888 (281)
g. Town	\$2.56 ^f (2.51–2.61)	1,453 (219)
h. Rural	\$2.52 ^f (2.46–2.58)	2,932 (342)
Percentage of Students Approved for F/RP Meals		
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	\$2.81 ^{j,k} (2.72–2.90)	2,081 (300)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	\$2.61 ⁱ (2.57–2.66)	3,526 (466)
k. High (≥ 60 percent F/RP)	\$2.49 ⁱ (2.36–2.62)	1,410 (177)

CI = 95 percent confidence interval.

¹ SFAs with missing urbanicity codes were excluded from the analyses.

Notes: Table estimates are among the 20 percent of SFAs that report the average (non \$0) price charged for full price lunch in high schools, excluding schools operating under a non-pricing provision (e.g., Provision 2, CEP). Data were missing from 20 percent of SFAs that did not report the price charged for full price lunch in high schools. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Sidak adjusted *p*-value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the superscript letter. Subgroup estimates without superscripts reflect nonsignificant differences.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 1.1 and 3.2.

Table F.31—Average Prices Charged by SFAs for a Full Price Lunch (Other Schools), by SFA Characteristic

	Average Price (CI)	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
All SFAs that charged for a full price lunch	\$2.62 (2.54–2.70)	3,263 (363)
SFA Size		
a. Small (1–999 students)	\$2.65 (2.51–2.80)	1,683 (104)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	\$2.58 (2.53–2.63)	885 (133)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	\$2.59 (2.48–2.70)	508 (92)
d. Very large (≥ 25,000 students)	\$2.51 (2.32–2.70)	187 (34)
Urbanicity¹		
e. Urban/City	\$2.55 (2.34–2.76)	299 (54)
f. Suburban	\$2.69 ^g (2.58–2.79)	717 (104)
g. Town	\$2.43 ^f (2.32–2.54)	433 (60)
h. Rural	\$2.56 (2.42–2.71)	1,533 (135)
Percentage of Students Approved for F/RP Meals		
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	\$2.72 (2.59–2.86)	695 (94)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	\$2.61 (2.51–2.71)	1,831 (188)
k. High (≥ 60 percent F/RP)	\$2.52 (2.31–2.73)	737 (81)

CI = 95 percent confidence interval.

¹ SFAs with missing urbanicity codes were excluded from the analyses.

Notes: Table estimates are among the 25 percent of SFAs that report the average (non \$0) price charged for full price lunch in other schools, excluding schools operating under a non-pricing provision (e.g., Provision 2, CEP). “Other” schools are those that have a grade span that does not fall in the range for elementary, middle, or high schools, such as Pre-K–8 or 6–12. Twenty-five percent of SFAs did not report the price charged for full price lunch in “other” schools. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Sidak adjusted *p*-value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the superscript letter. Subgroup estimates without superscripts reflect nonsignificant differences.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 1.1 and 3.2.

Table F.9—Average Prices Charged for Breakfast and Lunch, SY 2014–15 Through SY 2016–17

School Type	SY 2014–15	SY 2015–16	SY 2016–17
Full Price Breakfasts			
Elementary schools	\$1.31	\$1.37	\$1.42
Middle schools	\$1.40	\$1.45	\$1.50
High schools	\$1.40	\$1.46	\$1.52
Other schools	\$1.38	\$1.41	\$1.52
Reduced Price Breakfasts			
Elementary schools	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.30
Middle schools	\$0.29	\$0.30	\$0.30
High schools	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.30
Other schools	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.30
Full Price Lunch			
Elementary schools	NA	\$2.34	\$2.43
Middle schools	NA	\$2.53	\$2.61
High schools	NA	\$2.56	\$2.65
Other schools	NA	\$2.54	\$2.62
Reduced Price Lunch			
Elementary schools	NA	\$0.39	\$0.39
Middle schools	NA	\$0.39	\$0.39
High schools	NA	\$0.39	\$0.39
Other schools	NA	\$0.39	\$0.39

NA = not applicable. The *Child Nutrition Program Operations Study (CN-OPS-II): Year One Report* did not report lunch prices for SY 2014–15. The *School Nutrition and Meal Cost Study, Final Report Volume 1: School Meal Program Operations and School Nutrition Environments* reported an average charge for full price lunch of \$2.34 (elementary school), \$2.54 (middle school), and \$2.52 (high school); and an average charge for reduced price lunch of \$0.39 for elementary, middle, and high school for SY 2014–15. These estimates are weighted and among public, non-charter schools offering the NSLP.

Notes: SFAs reporting charging \$0.00 for a full price or reduced price breakfast were not included in average breakfast price estimates. SFAs that reported charging \$0.00 for a full price or reduced price lunch were not included in average lunch price estimates.

Sources: Murdoch, J., et al. (2019). *Child nutrition program operations study (CN-OPS-II): Year one report: SY 2015–2016* (Tables 5-5 and 5-7); Murdoch, J., et al. (2019). *Child nutrition program operations study (CN-OPS-II): Year one report: SY 2015–2016* (Tables 5-2 and 5-4); and SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 3.1–3.3.

Table F.10—Alternative Points of Service Used by SFAs for Breakfast and Lunch Service

Point of Service Method	Breakfast ¹		Lunch ²	
	Percentage	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)	Percentage	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
Pre-packaged meal (for example, grab 'n go, bagged meals)	32.5	12,184 (1,428)	22.7	13,183 (1,516)
Meal delivery to the classroom	23.2	12,031 (1,404)	10.4	12,909 (1,482)
Kiosk or cart	17.5	11,844 (1,388)	6.3	12,851 (1,479)
Vending machine dispensed meal	1.5	11,580 (1,343)	1.2	12,731 (1,457)
Food truck	0.4	11,547 (1,337)	0.6	12,733 (1,457)
Other*	5.1	3,286 (353)	4.5	4,187 (443)

¹ Data were missing from 5–10 percent of SFAs.

² Data were missing from 5–8 percent of SFAs.

* “Other” responses include second chance breakfasts and meals served in the gymnasium or library.

Note: Multiple responses were allowed.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 9.5 and 9.6.

Table F.11—Methods Used to Track the Number of Meals Served to Students at Point of Service by School Year

Tracking Method ¹	Percentage of SFAs			
	Cafeteria		Non-Cafeteria	
	SY 2015–16	SY 2016–17	SY 2015–16	SY 2016–17 ²
Personal identification numbers	78.7	79.6	43.2	43.6
Rosters or cashier lists	54.5	61.9	51.5	52.3
Manual entry	NA	59.2	NA	33.8
Coded identification cards	33.6	40.2	12.3	16.1
Handheld clicker	NA	10.5	NA	6.0
Biometric technology (e.g., fingerprint scanners)	5.5	6.8	3.0	1.8
Coded tickets or tokens	5.0	4.0	1.1	2.0
Online ordering	NA	4.0	NA	3.2
Other*	26.4	17.9	19.1	10.1
Weighted <i>n</i>	14,619	14,463	6,948	3,944
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,965	1,656	959	517

NA = not applicable. The SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16 did not ask about this tracking method.

¹ Multiple responses were allowed.

² Fifty-one percent of SFAs indicated that they had schools in their SFA that used the cafeteria as the only point of service for school meals.

* “Other” tracking methods in cafeterias include barcode scanning, photo identification, and using proprietary software of a vendor. “Other” tracking methods at non-cafeteria points of service include barcode scanning and using proprietary software of a vendor.

Sources: Results for SY 2015–16 obtained from Murdoch, J., et al. (2019). *Child nutrition program operations study (CN-OPS-II): Year one report: SY 2015–2016* (Table D-10); SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 9.1.

Table F.12—Frequency of Cashier Training by Training Type

Training Type	Percentage of SFAs				Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
	SFA Provided Training	Frequency of Training Provided			
		When Cashier is Hired	Once Per School Year	More than Once Each School Year	
Civil rights	98.1	12.5	73.4	14.0	13,879 (1,614)
Maintaining confidential student information	96.3	16.1	52.9	31.0	13,370 (1,567)
Monitoring student meal selections for reimbursable meals	94.8	17.6	45.6	36.7	13,446 (1,588)
Operating a POS system	92.2	32.0	41.2	26.9	13,085 (1,581)
Offer versus Serve	91.7	14.7	48.4	36.9	12,973 (1,566)
Customer service	91.0	15.1	45.4	39.6	12,509 (1,514)
Method of counting meals	86.7	21.1	49.5	29.4	11,601 (1,366)
Acceptable types of payments	80.7	29.9	46.5	23.6	10,770 (1,343)
Managing cash for à la carte and adult meals	78.1	27.5	46.5	26.1	10,480 (1,341)
Meal and food pricing	74.2	17.7	58.9	23.4	9,827 (1,206)
Applications for free or reduced price meals	47.6	18.9	57.4	23.6	6,028 (696)
Other*	27.5	12.4	65.8	21.8	334 (43)

* “Other” types of training include food safety, food allergies, mandatory reporting, and special dietary needs.

Note: Frequency of training is reported for SFAs providing training.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 9.2 and 9.2.1.

Table F.13—Frequency of Onsite Monitoring among SFAs that Conduct Onsite Monitoring of Cashiers

Frequency of Monitoring	Percentage of SFAs
Less than once a year	1.0
Once a year	38.5
Twice a year	26.1
Three or more times a year	34.5
Weighted <i>n</i>	12,110
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,498

Notes: Data are among SFAs that reported conducting onsite monitoring of cashiers (84 percent of all SFAs). Data are missing for 16 percent of SFAs that reporting doing onsite monitoring. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 9.3 and 9.4.

APPENDIX G. SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

List of Tables by Research Question

Research Question	Corresponding Table
Revenues and Expenditures	
What are SFA annual revenues and expenditures?	Tables G.1 and G.2
How have annual revenues and expenditures changed over time?	Table G.3
Financial Management	
Does the State provide financial resources for school meals to SFAs in the form of per-meal subsidies? What was the total amount given?	Tables G.4 and G.5
Does the State provide support for any other aspects of the school food service operation?	Table G.6
Have States been able to fully use Federal funds provided to administer the NSLP and the SBP? What challenges have impeded States' ability to fully use federal funds?	Tables G.7 and G.8
Did States request funding reallocation for SY 2016–17? If not, what was the primary reason for not requesting reallocation?	Table G.9
Are States aware of Team Nutrition Grants, Administrative Review and Training Grants, and Direct Certification Improvement Grants?	Table G.10
Are States using Team Nutrition Grants, Administrative Review and Training Grants, and Direct Certification Improvement Grants?	Table G.10
Are States promoting Team Nutrition Grants?	Table G.11

Revenues and Expenditures

Table G.1—SFA Annual Revenues and Expenditures, SY 2015–16, by SFA Characteristic

SFA Characteristic	Revenues		Expenditures	
	Median	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)	Median	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
All SFAs	\$462,102	10,561 (1,231)	\$474,964	10,825 (1,270)
SFA Size				
a. Small (1–999 students)	\$183,256 ^{b,c,d}	5,195 (358)	\$209,342 ^{b,c,d}	5,332 (377)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	\$910,746 ^{a,c,d}	3,793 (584)	\$926,353 ^{a,d}	3,891 (600)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	\$4,006,323 ^{a,b,d}	1,332 (240)	\$3,936,997 ^{a,d}	1,362 (244)
d. Very large (≥ 25,000 students)	\$17,458,600 ^{a,b,c}	240 (49)	\$17,562,390 ^{a,b,c}	241 (49)
Urbanicity¹				
e. Urban/City	\$1,207,062 ^{g,h}	1,082 (142)	\$986,989 ^{g,h}	1,110 (144)
f. Suburban	\$1,198,540 ^h	2,308 (330)	\$1,156,038	2,367 (335)
g. Town	\$754,677 ^{e,h}	1,823 (263)	\$769,881 ^e	1,902 (274)
h. Rural	\$266,265 ^{e,f,g}	4,676 (473)	\$287,777 ^e	4,893 (496)
Percentage of Students Approved for F/RP Meals				
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	\$544,173	3,870 (469)	\$ 554,566	3,960 (481)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	\$449,007	4,544 (537)	\$ 453,989	4,721 (561)
k. High (≥ 60 percent F/RP)	\$312,747	2,146 (225)	\$ 353,237	2,144 (228)

¹ SFAs with missing urbanicity codes were excluded from the analyses.

Notes: Total revenue was missing for 28 percent of SFAs, and total expenditures was missing for 27 percent of SFAs, including those that did not respond to the survey questions and those that reported \$0.00 for revenues and/or expenditures. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Sidak adjusted *p*-value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the superscript letter. Subgroup estimates without superscripts reflect nonsignificant differences.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 10.1 and 10.11.

Table G.2—Distribution of SFAs by the Ratio of Annual Revenues to Annual Expenditures, SY 2015–16, by SFA Characteristics

SFA Characteristic	Ratio of Revenues to Expenditures								Weighted n (Unweighted n)
	0%– 84.9%	85.0%– 89.9%	90.0%– 94.9%	95.0%– 99.9%	100.0%– 105.0%	105.1%– 109.9%	110.0%– 114.9%	≥ 115.0%	
All SFAs	16.2	3.9	8.9	20.6	25.1	10.3	5.9	9.0	9,874 (1,161)
SFA Size									
Small (1–999 students)	24.0	3.4	9.7	21.7	22.0	7.3	4.4	7.4	4,803 (335)
Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	9.7	4.5	9.1	21.5	25.2	13.2	8.0	8.9	3,554 (547)
Large (5,000–24,999 students)	7.2	4.8	6.6	13.7	33.7	12.6	5.4	16.0	1,283 (231)
Very large (≥ 25,000 students)	4.1	1.2	1.1	21.3	39.3	17.3	8.5	7.2	234 (48)
Urbanicity¹									
Urban/City	15.7	6.5	4.0	18.3	27.1	11.6	5.9	10.9	1,025 (134)
Suburban	10.2	3.4	5.6	23.0	28.8	11.7	5.4	11.9	2,202 (315)
Town	12.5	4.5	9.3	17.7	29.5	11.3	7.8	7.4	1,712 (247)
Rural	20.3	3.5	10.9	20.6	21.3	10.3	4.9	8.3	4,395 (445)
Percentage of Students Approved for F/RP Meals									
Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	14.4	4.1	8.4	21.7	24.1	10.2	4.8	12.3	3,643 (442)
Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	17.2	3.8	8.9	20.7	24.3	10.6	5.9	8.6	4,290 (512)
High (≥ 60 percent F/RP)	17.3	3.7	9.9	18.3	28.7	10.1	8.1	3.9	1,941 (207)

¹ SFAs with missing urbanicity codes were excluded from the analyses.

Notes: Data were missing for 33 percent of SFAs. Missing data occurred when an SFA did not respond to (i.e., left blank) one or both questions or entered \$0.00 for one or both questions. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 10.1 and 10.11.

Table G.3—Ratio of Median Annual Revenues and Expenditures by School Year

School Year	Ratio of Median Revenues and Median Expenditures	Difference Between Median Revenues and Median Expenditures
2013–14 ¹	94.8%	-\$25,432
2014–15 ²	96.6%	-\$16,829
2015–16 ³	97.8%	-\$10,410

¹ Murdoch, J., et al. (2019). *Child nutrition program operations study (CN-OPS-II): Year one report: SY 2015–2016* (Table 5-2).

² Murdoch, J., et al. (2019). *Child nutrition program operations study (CN-OPS-II): Year one report: SY 2015–2016* (Table 5-1).

³ SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 10.1 and 10.11. Data were missing for 33 percent of SFAs.

Financial Management

Table G.4—State-Provided Subsidies for Breakfast and Lunch

	Number of States			
	Subsidize Breakfast and Lunch	Subsidize Breakfast Only	Subsidize Lunch Only	Subsidize Neither Breakfast nor Lunch
State provides subsidies to SFAs	21	9	5	18
Type of subsidy ¹				
Per-meal reimbursement	15	8	6	24
Annual lump sum	3	2	2	46
Supplement to cover specific costs	3	0	1	49
Amount based on a percentage of low-income students	1	1	0	51
Other	0	0	1	52
State-provided subsidies given to all SFAs in a State in SY 2015–16, mean amount	\$50,653,624	\$2,808,146	\$10,140,468	-
State-provided subsidies given to all SFAs in a State in SY 2015–16, median amount	\$23,582,349	\$1,068,187	\$2,490,939	-

¹ Multiple responses were allowed.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 2.1–2.6.

Table G.5—State-Provided Subsidies to SFAs for Breakfast and Lunch, SY 2015–16

	Percentage of SFAs	
	Breakfast	Lunch
State provides subsidy	30.2	33.6
Weighted <i>n</i>	13,460	13,444
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,545	1,543
Type of Subsidy Provided Among SFAs Whose State Provides Subsidies		
Per-meal reimbursement	70.5	72.1
Amount based on a percentage of low-income students	14.0	14.1
Annual lump sum	11.0	10.6
Supplement to cover specific costs	3.3	2.0
Other	1.3	1.1
Weighted <i>n</i>	4,023	4,500
Unweighted <i>n</i>	473	508

Notes: State reporting of State-provided subsidies does not always match SFA reporting of State-provided subsidies. Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. Data were missing for 9 percent of SFAs that did not note whether the State provided a breakfast or lunch subsidy. Data were missing for 1 percent of SFAs that did not note how the State provided the breakfast subsidy and for .5 percent of SFAs that did not note how the State provided the lunch subsidy.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 10.7–10.10.

Table G.6—State Support Provided to SFAs for Food Service Operations

Support	Number of States		
	State Support Provided	State Support Not Provided	No Response
Equipment	16	32	5
Storage	14	33	6
Contracted services	12	34	7
Preparing claims	11	37	5
Preparation of reimbursable meals	11	38	4
Overhead/indirect costs	11	38	4
Preparation of non-reimbursable meals	7	41	5
Other*	2	23	28

* Ten unique “Other” responses were provided. Examples include the following: “State pays the cost of health inspections,” “State Revenue Match,” “technology,” and “State provides funding for 2 days of sick leave for food services workers and managers.”

Note: Multiple responses were allowed.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 2.7.

Table G.7—State-Reported Challenges to Fully Obligating FY 2016 SAE Funds

Challenges	Number of States
Among States that Fully Obligated Funds (N = 46)	
Hiring freezes	8
Governor's mandates	4
Travel restrictions	4
State policy	3
Work furloughs	3
State legislation	2
Union agreements	1
Work shutdowns	1
Other*	3
Among States that Did Not Fully Obligate Funds (N = 6)	
State policy	4
Hiring freezes	3
Governor's mandates	2
State legislation	1
Travel restrictions	1

* Other responses include inadequate SAE funding and staffing costs.

Note: Multiple responses were allowed.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 2.10 and 2.11.

Table G.8—Obligation of SAE Funds to Improve USDA Foods Program Operations

	Number of States
State Obligated Some SAE Funds to Improve USDA Foods Program Operations	
Yes	34
No	9
No response	10
Among States that Obligated Funds to Improve USDA Foods Program Operations, How Funds Were Used¹	
Salaries or fringe benefits for staff administering USDA Foods	29
Staff skills to administer USDA Foods	25
USDA Foods storage	14
USDA Foods distribution	13
Other*	4

¹ Multiple responses were allowed.

* Other responses include information technology system development, database/ordering system maintenance, outreach materials, and online system modifications.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 2.12 and 2.13.

Table G.9—Reasons States Did Not Request Funding Reallocation in FY 2016

State Requested Reallocation	Number of States
Yes	15
No	38
Primary Reason Funding Reallocation Was Not Requested¹	
Requesting reallocated funds would exceed the 20 percent carryover limitation	14
Would have been unable to spend reallocated funds in the specified time limit	8
Did not have eligible projects or activities to fund	3
Reallocation request process was too burdensome	3
Alternate funding sources were available	2
Other*	8

¹ Among States that did not request additional SAE funds.

* Examples of “Other” responses include “too busy trying to get all the other work done combined with short turn-around time for expenditures” and “timing of process did not allow for reallocation application at time of need.”

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 2.14 and 2.15.

Table G.10—Number of States Aware of, Receiving, and Operating Under USDA Grants

Grant Type	Number of States		
	Aware of USDA Grants	Ever Received a USDA Grant	Operated Under a USDA Grant in SY 2016–17
Team Nutrition Training Grants	52	47	24
Administrative Review and Training Grants	51	8 (Planning) 26 (Implementation)	2 (Planning) 12 (Implementation)
Direct Certification Improvement Grants	51	16 (Tier 1) 15 (Tier 2)	5 (Tier 1) 9 (Tier 2)

Notes: Some State CN directors did not know the date of their most recent USDA grant award; therefore, it cannot be determined whether they were currently operating under that award. States were considered to be operating under an award if the date of their most recent award was within the duration of the grant (e.g., if the most recent Team Nutrition Training grant was within 3 years of SY 2016–17).

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 5.1–5.3 and 5.6–5.15.

Table G.11—State Promotion of Team Nutrition Grants

	Number of States
State Promoted Team Nutrition Grants	
Yes	51
No	1
Communication Methods Used to Promote Team Nutrition Grants¹	
Webinars or trainings	40
Emails	35
Meetings with key school staff, such as nurses and physical education teachers	30
State's website	28
Newsletters	27
Social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube)	12
Mailings	6
Other*	8

¹ Among States that promoted Team Nutrition.

* Other responses include the following: “New Directors orientation,” “Statewide recognition program,” and “Team Nutrition wellness summit.”

Note: Multiple responses were allowed.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 5.4 and 5.5.

APPENDIX H. PROCUREMENT PRACTICES

List of Tables by Research Question

Research Question	Corresponding Table
SFA Procurement Practices	
To what extent are SFAs using other contracting vehicles (e.g., cooperative purchasing agreements, informal purchases/group purchasing organizations, micro-purchases) both formal and informal, for purchasing goods and services?	Tables H.1 and H.5
What competitive solicitation mechanisms do SFAs employ (e.g., invitation for bid versus request for proposal) to procure goods and services for school meals?	Table H.1
What proportion of SFAs are using an FSMC?	Table H.2
Among SFAs that use FSMCs, what proportion use FSMCs that are national, regional, and local? Has this pattern changed over time?	Table H.3
To what extent do multiple SFAs procure food together under cooperative purchasing agreements?	Table H.4
What individuals and/or groups of individuals are responsible for procurement (i.e., ultimately evaluate price quotes and competitive proposals to make final contract award decisions)? To what extent does this vary across SFA size?	Tables H.6–H.8
What types of suppliers or food sources do SFAs contract with when purchasing food (e.g. direct purchase from farmers, food hubs, school gardens, distributors, or FSMCs)?	Table H.9
State Monitoring	
Do States review FSMC contracts and cooperative purchasing agreements? If all such agreements are not reviewed, what circumstances trigger a review?	Tables H.10–H.12
To what extent are SFA procurement procedures for goods and services for school meals (e.g., processors of USDA Foods, use of FSMCs, micro-purchases, and local foods) monitored at the State level, if at all?	Tables H.13–H.17
Do States require use of prototype contracts or agreements?	Tables H.18 and H.19
Supplemental Tables	
Supplemental tables	Tables H.20–H.24

SFA Procurement Practices

Table H.1—SFA Use of Formal, Informal, and Noncompetitive Procurement Methods

Procurement Method Used	Percentage of SFAs
Formal Methods¹	
Both sealed bids and competitive proposals	42.1
Only competitive proposals using a request for proposal	22.5
Only sealed bids using invitation for bids	19.4
Neither sealed bids nor competitive proposals	16.0 ²
Weighted <i>n</i>	12,735
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,469
Informal and Noncompetitive Methods³	
Small purchases	62.0
Micro-purchases	39.0
Local produce auctions	2.3
Other, excluding competitive methods and FSMCs ⁴	2.3
Noncompetitive proposals ⁵	15.0
None of the above	29.5
Weighted <i>n</i>	13,586
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,563

¹ Data were missing for 13 percent of SFAs.

² The 16 percent of SFAs that used neither sealed bids nor competitive proposals varied in terms of SFA size (24, 10, 4, and 0 percent of small, medium, large, and very large SFAs, respectively); F/RP certification rates (13, 16, and 22 percent of SFAs with low, medium, and high F/RP certification rates, respectively); and urbanicity (8, 9, 11, and 25 percent of urban/city, suburban, town, and rural, respectively).

³ Multiple responses were allowed. Data were missing for 7 percent of SFAs.

⁴ Examples of other informal and noncompetitive methods included price quotes, piggybacking with another school district, State contracts, and regional bids.

⁵ SFAs may have misinterpreted the definition of noncompetitive proposals per the Code of Federal Regulations (2 CFR 200.320[f]), specifying that SFAs may use noncompetitive proposals when the item is only available from one source ("single source" procurements), competition is impossible because public exigency or emergency will not permit the delay that would result from competitive solicitation, USDA expressly authorizes it, or competition is deemed inadequate after solicitation of a number of sources.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 4.6 and 4.7.

Table H.2—SFA Use of FSMCs

	Percentage of SFAs
Use FSMCs	23.9
Do not use FSMCs	72.1
Missing	4.0
Weighted <i>n</i>	14,755
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,679

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 4.5.

Table H.3—SFAs Using National, Regional, and Local FSMCs

National, Regional, or Local FSMCs	SFAs Using FSMCs as Reported by State Agencies (Unweighted)							
	SY 2011–12		SY 2012–13		SY 2013–14		SY 2016–17 ¹	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Chartwells	470	34.4	496	29.5	598	20.1	534	15.4
Sodexo	391	28.7	405	24.1	415	14.0	405	11.6
Aramark	318	23.3	369	22.0	331	11.1	366	10.5
Preferred Meal Systems	91	6.7	163	9.7	192	6.5	171	4.9
Other national FSMC ²	95	7.0	246	14.7	247	8.3	377	10.8
Regional	713	26.4	864	29.3	841	28.3	976	28.1
Local	619	22.9	401	13.6	348	11.7	763	21.9

¹ SY 2016–17 data on the use of regional and local FSMCs were missing for three States. Multiple responses were allowed.

² In SY 2016–17, examples of other national FSMCs included Aladdin, CBM Managed Services, Compass, Lifetime Solutions, OPAA, Southwest Foodservice Excellence, Taher, and Trinity.

Note: SFAs may contract with one or more FSMCs.

Sources: Murdoch, J., et al. (2016). *Special nutrition program operations study [SN-OPS]: SY 2013–14 report* (Table 7.1). Retrieved from <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/ops/SNOPSyr3.pdf>; SA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 3.1–3.4.

Table H.4—SFA Membership in Cooperative Purchasing Groups

Membership Status	Percentage of SFAs
Belongs to cooperative purchasing group comprising only SFAs	34.4
Belongs to cooperative purchasing group with a third party that is not an SFA	8.4
Belongs to both types of cooperative purchasing groups	13.7
Does not belong to any cooperative purchasing group	43.6
Weighted <i>n</i>	14,003
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,614

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 4.8 and 4.8a.

Table H.5—SFA Purchases by Procurement Type

Procurement Type	Percentage of Total Purchases Among SFAs Using Procurement Type
FSMCs	94.4
Cooperative purchasing group (type not specified)	83.3
Cooperative purchasing groups with a third party that is not an SFA	60.4
Cooperative purchasing groups comprising only SFAs	71.6
Competitive sealed bids using invitations for bids	50.8
Competitive proposals using requests for proposals	36.2
Noncompetitive proposals ¹	35.1
Small purchases	22.0
Micro-purchases	21.4
Local produce auctions	14.1
Other, excluding competitive methods and FSMCs*	43.9
Weighted <i>n</i>	11,502
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,353

¹ SFAs may have misinterpreted the definition of noncompetitive proposals per the Code of Federal Regulations (2 CFR 200.320[f]), specifying that SFAs may use noncompetitive proposals when the item is only available from one source (“single source” procurements), competition is impossible because public exigency or emergency will not permit the delay that would result from competitive solicitation, USDA expressly authorizes it, or competition is deemed inadequate after solicitation of a number of sources.

* Examples of other types included price quotes, piggybacking with another school district, State contracts, regional bids, and cooperative purchase methods that were not further specified (for example, “co-op” and “cooperative”).

Notes: Multiple responses were allowed. Data were missing for 20 percent of SFAs that did not report the percentage of purchases for any type of procurement and from 2 percent of SFAs that reported having 0 percent of total purchases for a procurement type they used.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 4.9.

Table H.6—Individuals Responsible for Evaluating Procurement Price Quotes and Competitive Proposals, by SFA Size

Responsible Individual(s)	Percentage of Small SFAs (1–999 Students)	Percentage of Medium SFAs (1,000–4,999 Students)	Percentage of Large SFAs (5,000–24,999 Students)	Percentage of Very Large SFAs (≥ 25,000 Students)	Percentage of All SFAs
SFA food service director or manager	61.8	73.9	80.4	82.4	68.8
District business office or purchasing department official	38.0	51.2	62.8	80.0	46.5
District superintendent	43.4	23.8	12.6	6.3	31.9
District school board	27.4	22.0	23.2	20.7	24.8
Cooperative purchasing group (including consortiums)	16.3	27.7	29.0	22.9	22.1
SFA head cook or kitchen/cafeteria manager	18.1	4.5	2.4	0.0	11.0
FSMC liaison or agent	7.4	14.1	12.5	4.2	10.4
Group buying organization agent or third-party provider	3.1	5.1	5.5	2.0	4.1
State CN director or staff	3.9	3.6	5.9	0.5	4.0
Other procurement agent	0.7	1.8	5.6	7.7	1.8
Governing or advisory board	1.8	1.3	2.1	3.2	1.7
Sales broker	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.0	0.3
Other*	5.2	2.8	5.6	10.5	4.5
Weighted <i>n</i>	7,112	5,232	1,629	288	14,261
Unweighted <i>n</i>	496	797	292	56	1,641

* Examples of other responses include local auditors, internal evaluation teams, buyers, and buying groups.

Note: Multiple responses were allowed.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 4.3.

Table H.7—Individuals Responsible for Deciding Procurement Contract Awards, by SFA Size

Responsible Individual(s)	Percentage of Small SFAs (1–999 Students)	Percentage of Medium SFAs (1,000–4,999 Students)	Percentage of Large SFAs (5,000–24,999 Students)	Percentage of Very Large SFAs (≥ 25,000 Students)	Percentage of All SFAs
SFA food service director or manager	41.7	55.2	57.0	63.9	48.9
District school board	34.9	33.4	41.1	59.2	35.5
District business office or purchasing department official	25.0	33.9	45.7	67.6	31.5
District superintendent	38.6	23.2	16.5	17.8	30.0
Cooperative purchasing group (including but not limited to a consortium)	12.9	23.8	23.4	9.5	18.0
FSMC liaison or agent	5.4	11.2	8.1	2.2	7.8
SFA head cook or kitchen/cafeteria manager	8.3	1.6	0.7	0.0	4.8
Group buying organization agent or third-party provider	2.7	3.2	2.7	4.0	2.9
Governing or advisory board	2.7	1.4	3.1	4.5	2.3
State CN director or staff	1.2	1.6	1.9	0.0	1.4
Other procurement agent	0.2	1.2	2.9	8.9	1.0
Other*	3.7	1.6	2.7	5.1	2.9
Weighted <i>n</i>	7,101	5,210	1,624	288	14,211
Unweighted <i>n</i>	494	794	291	56	1,635

* Examples of other responses included an operations director, auditor, principal, and parent volunteer.

Note: Multiple responses were allowed. No respondent indicated that a sales broker was responsible for procurement contract award decisions.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 4.4.

Table H.8—SFAs with the Same Individuals Responsible for Price and Proposal Evaluations and Awards

Responsible Individual(s)	Percentage of Small SFAs (1–999 Students)	Percentage of Medium SFAs (1,000–4,999 Students)	Percentage of Large SFAs (5,000–24,999 Students)	Percentage of Very Large SFAs (≥ 25,000 Students)	Percentage of All SFAs
SFA food service director or manager	43.6	60.3	62.4	66.1	52.4
District business office or purchasing department official	25.0	34.4	46.6	71.3	31.9
District superintendent	36.7	17.3	9.9	6.9	25.8
District school board	24.2	19.7	21.5	20.5	22.2
Cooperative purchasing group (including but not limited to a consortium)	13.0	23.8	22.8	10.3	18.0
FSMC liaison or agent	5.2	11.0	8.8	2.4	7.7
SFA head cook or kitchen/cafeteria manager	8.8	1.5	0.8	0.0	5.0
Group buying organization agent or third-party provider	2.4	2.4	2.7	2.2	2.4
Governing or advisory board	1.8	0.8	2.3	1.0	1.5
Other procurement agent	0.2	1.1	3.3	7.3	1.0
State CN director or staff	0.6	1.1	1.3	0.0	0.9
Other	2.1	0.9	1.6	3.2	1.6
Weighted <i>n</i>	6,201	4,603	1,433	266	12,503
Unweighted <i>n</i>	435	703	257	51	1,446

Notes: Multiple responses were allowed. Estimates exclude 11 percent of SFAs with different individuals who were responsible for price and proposal evaluations and awards.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 4.3 and 4.4.

Table H.9—SFA Suppliers and Food Sources

Type of Supplier or Food Source	Percentage of SFAs
Distributors	81.3
Food processors ¹	47.6
Suppliers contracted by the FSMC, cooperative purchasing group, and/or group buying organization	28.6
Manufacturers	16.4
Farmers and/or community-supported agriculture	14.9
Wholesale clubs	11.0
School gardens	5.5
Groups of farmers that sell products centrally ²	4.6
Other*	14.6
Weighted <i>n</i>	14,021
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,620

¹ Including but not limited to processed end-products using USDA Foods.

² Including producer co-ops or food hubs.

* The most common “Other” response was a local grocery store purchase. Additional examples included purchases from local produce markets and companies, caterers, vended meal companies, vendors (generic), and orders of USDA Foods through the USDA DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program.

Note: Multiple responses were allowed.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 4.10.

State Monitoring

Table H.10—State Review of SFA Contracts and Agreements

Contract or Agreement Type	Number of States				
	All Contracts Reviewed	Some Contracts Reviewed	No Contracts Reviewed	Not Applicable	No Response
FSMC contracts	49	0	0	3	1
Cooperative purchasing agreements (with SFAs only)	18	16	9	10	0
Group Purchasing Organizations (agreements with SFAs and a third-party provider)	9	17	9	18	0

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 3.7.

Table H.11—Frequency of State Review of FSMC Contracts

Review Frequency	Number of States
More than once a year	0
Once a year	46
Less than once a year	4
Never	0
Not applicable ¹	3

¹ Three States reported that they do not use FSMC contracts.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 3.1 and 3.9.

Table H.12—Circumstances Prompting State Review of Cooperative Purchasing Agreements and GPO Agreements, Among States that Review Some SFA Agreements

Circumstance	Cooperative Purchasing Agreements (with SFAs only) ¹	GPO Agreements (with SFAs and a Third-Party Provider) ²
New co-op or GPO	7	8
Dollar value of contract	4	5
SFA history	4	5
New vendor	3	3
Replacement, improvement, or investment in equipment	3	4
Length of contract term	2	3
Contract types (e.g., cost-reimbursable, fixed-price contracts)	2	3
Scope of services, including changes in programs operated	2	4
Reporting requirements in the contract	2	2
Other ³	6	5
Number of States	16	17

¹ Data were missing for two States.

² Data were missing for two States.

³ Examples of other circumstances included during an administrative review, during a procurement review, or when requested by an SFA.

Notes: All State CN directors reported that all FSMC contracts are reviewed. Multiple responses were allowed for each agreement type.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 3.8.

Table H.13—State Review of SFA Small Purchases

Extent of State Review	Number of States
All purchases are reviewed	2
Some purchases are reviewed	39
No purchases are reviewed	12
Small Purchase Elements Reviewed by State¹	
Dollar value paid to vendor	36
Name of vendor	33
Goods/services provided	33
Documentation to support why a lower priced bid was not chosen	32
If more than one bidder responded to solicitation	31
If contract cost-splitting occurred to avoid a formal contract	29
Number of purchases made from vendor during school year	27
Equitable distribution among qualified vendors	27
Involvement of a purchasing group in the small purchase	24
Other	8

¹ These include 39 States that reviewed some but not all small purchases. Data were missing for one State. Multiple responses were allowed.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 3.13, 3.15, and 3.16.

Table H.14—State Review of SFA Contracts with Commercial Food Processors

Extent of State Review	Number of States
All contracts are reviewed	8
Some contracts are reviewed	14
No contracts are reviewed	30
Contract Elements Reviewed by State¹	
Length of contract term	13
Dollar value of contract	12
Contract type	12
Scope of services	12
Reporting requirements in the contract	11
SFA history	8
New vendor	5

¹ These include 14 States that reviewed only certain elements of contracts with commercial food processors. Multiple responses were allowed.

Note: Data were missing for one State.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 3.22, 3.24, and 3.25.

Table H.15—State Review of SFA Contracts with Commercial Distributors

Extent of State Review	Number of States
All contracts are reviewed	11
Some contracts are reviewed	12
No contracts are reviewed	30
Contract Elements Reviewed by State¹	
Dollar value of contract	12
Scope of services	12
Length of contract term	12
Contract type	11
Reporting requirements in the contract	11
SFA history	8
New vendor	6

¹ These include 12 States that reviewed only certain elements of contracts with commercial food distributors. Multiple responses were allowed.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 3.26, 3.28, and 3.29.

Table H.16—Frequency of State Review of SFA Small Purchase Agreements and Commercial Food Processor and Distributor Purchases

Review Frequency	Number of States		
	Small Purchase Agreements	Commercial Food Processor Purchases	Commercial Food Distributor Purchases
More than once per year	3	0	1
Once per year	9	11	12
Less than once per year	29	11	10
Never	12	30	30
No response	0	1	0

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 3.13, 3.14, 3.22, 3.23, 3.26, and 3.27.

Table H.17—State Review of SFA Micro-Purchases After the Fact

Extent of State Review	Number of States
State reviews	17
State does not review	36
Micro-Purchase Elements Reviewed by State¹	
Goods/services provided	15
Dollar value paid to vendor	15
Name of vendor	14
Equitable distribution among qualified vendors	14
Documentation to support why a micro-purchase was used	14
If contract cost-splitting occurred to avoid a formal contract	14
Number of purchases from vendor	14
Involvement of a purchasing group in the small purchase	9
Other	2

¹ These include 17 States that reviewed SFA micro-purchases after the fact. Multiple responses were allowed.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 3.20 and 3.21.

Table H.18—State Requirements for Use of FSMC Prototype Procurement Document or Model Contracts

Requirement	Number of States
Required under all circumstances	35
Required under some circumstances ¹	1
Not required	9
Not applicable (no prototype)	8

¹ Prototype procurement document is used when contracting with a new vendor.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 3.10.

Table H.19—State Requirements for Use of Small Purchases Prototype Procurement Document or Model Solicitation

Requirement	Number of States
Required under all circumstances	0
Required under some circumstances ¹	2
Not required	15
Not applicable (no prototype)	22

¹ Contract elements that determined whether SFAs were required to use the prototype procurement document or model solicitation include name of vendor, good/services provided, dollar value paid to vendor, number of purchases made from vendor during school year, involvement of a purchasing group in the small purchase, more than one bidder responded to solicitation, equitable distribution among qualified vendors, documentation to support why a lower priced bid was not chosen, and whether contract cost-splitting occurred to avoid a formal contract.

Note: This table includes 39 States that review some but not all small purchases.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 3.17 and 3.18.

Supplemental Tables

Table H.20—SFA Procurement Training

Training Topic	Number of States in Which All SFAs in the State Received Training ¹
Small purchase procedures	50
Micro-purchases	48
Competitive proposals	47
Sealed bids	45
FSMC contracts	38
Cooperative purchasing agreements	30
GPO contracts	25

¹ Data were missing for one State.

Note: Multiple responses were allowed.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 3.5.

Table H.21—State Small and Micro-Purchase Threshold Amounts

Threshold	Minimum Threshold	Maximum Threshold	Mean Threshold	Median Threshold
Small purchase threshold ¹	\$2,500.00	\$150,000.00	\$62,673.74	\$27,500.00
Micro-purchase threshold ²	\$1,000.00	\$3,500.00	\$3,365.85	\$3,500.00

¹ Data were missing for two States. Ten States reported using the Federal small purchase threshold of \$150,000.

² Data were missing for one State. Micro-purchase threshold amounts exclude one State that reported a threshold exceeding \$3,500. State thresholds are required to be more restrictive (lower) than the Federal threshold of \$3,500. Thirty-seven States reported using the Federal micro-purchase threshold of \$3,500.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 3.12 and 3.19.

Table H.22—Small and Micro-Purchase Threshold Amounts Used by SFAs

Threshold	Minimum Threshold	Maximum Threshold	Mean Threshold	Median Threshold	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
Small purchase threshold ¹	\$5	\$150,000	\$30,600	\$6,435	5,738 (769)
Micro-purchase threshold ²	\$50	\$3,500	\$2,904	\$3,499	3,050 (426)

¹ Estimates exclude 2 SFAs that reported thresholds exceeding \$150,000 and 201 SFAs that reported no threshold. Small purchase thresholds used by SFAs may not exceed the Federal threshold. Ten percent of SFAs that reported a small purchase threshold amount used the \$150,000 Federal threshold.

² Estimates exclude 112 SFAs that reported thresholds exceeding \$3,500 and 377 SFAs that reported no threshold. SFA thresholds are required to be more restrictive (i.e., lower) than the Federal threshold. Sixty-one percent of SFAs that reported a micro-purchase threshold amount used the \$3,500 Federal threshold.

Notes: This table includes 42 percent of SFAs that use small or micro-purchase thresholds. In 2018, after the survey data collection period, the Federal small purchase threshold increased to \$250,000 and the Federal micro-purchase threshold increased to \$10,000.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 4.2a, 4.2b, and 4.7.

Table H.23—Presence of State and SFA Procurement Policies Beyond Federal Requirements

	Number of States
Presence of State-level procurement policies	35
	Percentage of SFAs
Presence of local procurement policies	54.5
Weighted <i>n</i>	14,274
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,638

Sources: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 4.2; and State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 3.6.

Table H.24—SA Monitoring of SFA Procurement Policies and Practices

	Number of States ¹
State Agency monitors SFA procurement policies or practices	48
	Percentage of SFAs
SFA procurement policies and/or practices are reviewed by State Agency	64.8
Weighted <i>n</i>	14,406
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,647

¹ Data were missing for one State.

Sources: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 4.1 and 4.2, and State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 3.6 and 3.6a.

APPENDIX I. SCHOOL NUTRITION STANDARDS

List of Tables by Research Question

Research Question	Corresponding Table
School Nutrition Standards: Fruits and Vegetables	
How have SFAs changed the types of fruits and vegetables offered in lunches since implementing the meal requirements?	Tables I.1 and I.2
What proportion of SFAs experienced difficulties purchasing vegetables in the five required subgroups? What were the reasons SFAs experienced difficulties with purchasing specific types of vegetables?	Table I.3
School Nutrition Standards: Whole Grains	
To what extent did SFAs face challenges in implementing the 100 percent whole grain-rich requirements? What challenges do SFAs face in implementing the 100 percent whole grain-rich requirement?	Table I.4
What practices did SFAs use to meet the 100 percent whole grain-rich requirement?	Table I.5
School Nutrition Standards: Sodium	
What proportion of SFAs know the sodium content of their meals? Among SFAs that know sodium contents, what is the average sodium content of breakfasts? Lunches?	Table I.6
What practices do SFAs anticipate using to meet the sodium target for SY 2017–18?	Table I.7
School Nutrition Standards: Smart Snacks	
Are SFAs in compliance with the Smart Snacks standards?	Tables I.8–I.10
What experiences and challenges do SFAs encounter with the Smart Snacks standards?	Table I.11
School Nutrition Standards: Miscellaneous	
How often do students waste particular foods?	Tables I.12 and I.13
What are schools doing to prevent or reduce food waste?	Table I.14
What proportion of SFAs face challenges in meeting the calorie standards for breakfast and lunch? Do the calorie minimums or maximums pose more of a challenge?	Table I.15
What proportion of SFAs made adjustments to meet students' needs/wants for additional foods? What types of adjustments have SFAs made?	Table I.16
To what extent did SFAs face challenges in implementing the meal pattern requirements in SY 2016–17?	Table I.17
When were SFAs certified for the additional 6 cents per lunch reimbursement?	Table I.18
What proportion of SFAs use the USDA sharing website to assist with menu changes?	Tables I.19–I.21

School Nutrition Standards: Fruits and Vegetables**Table I.1—Type and Form of Fruits Offered in Lunches to Meet Meal Pattern Requirements**

Type/Form of Fruits	Percentage of SFAs					Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	
Fresh precut	12.4	21.3	34.0	24.5	7.8	14,610 (1,662)
Fresh whole	0.0	0.8	10.4	39.7	49.0	14,601 (1,664)
Canned in water	16.2	18.4	29.6	26.8	8.9	14,617 (1,664)
Canned in juice	8.1	14.1	31.2	35.5	11.1	14,594 (1,662)
Canned in syrup	47.8	29.8	14.7	5.6	2.0	14,565 (1,659)
Canned in heavy or regular syrup	84.4	13.1	1.8	0.6	0.1	14,553 (1,658)
Frozen precut	18.0	31.8	37.3	11.1	1.8	14,611 (1,663)
Frozen whole	18.0	27.9	40.4	12.3	1.5	14,604 (1,663)
Dried	15.0	32.4	37.0	12.4	3.1	14,566 (1,660)
100 percent fruit juice	1.2	2.3	13.0	19.5	64.0	14,572 (1,662)

Notes: Due to seasonality differences, SFAs were asked to report on fruits offered at school lunches in the past month. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Data were missing for 1–2 percent of SFAs.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 6.7a–j and 6.8a–g.

Table I.2—Type and Form of Vegetables Offered in Lunches to Meet Meal Pattern Requirements

Type/Form of Fruits/Vegetables	Percentage of SFAs					Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	
Fresh precut	3.4	9.4	34.0	38.1	15.1	14,589 (1,661)
Fresh whole	1.6	5.9	22.3	41.0	29.1	14,600 (1,661)
Canned, reduced sodium	14.7	19.6	34.3	25.2	6.1	14,535 (1,659)
Canned, regular sodium	51.2	30.3	14.9	3.1	0.6	14,429 (1,655)
Canned, no salt added	12.9	18.5	31.8	28.5	8.2	14,536 (1,658)
Frozen precut	5.5	11.9	34.2	38.9	9.5	14,567 (1,657)
Frozen whole	11.0	17.7	35.4	29.0	6.8	14,600 (1,663)

Notes: Due to seasonality differences, SFAs were asked to report vegetables offered at school lunches in the past month. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Data were missing for 1–2 percent of SFAs.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 6.7a–j and 6.8a–g.

Table I.3—Vegetable Purchasing Difficulties Experienced by SFAs, Among SFAs Noting Barriers

Vegetable Subgroups ¹	Percentage of SFAs Experiencing Difficulties Purchasing	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
Dark green vegetables	10.8	14,277 (1,640)
Red/orange vegetables	9.7	14,252 (1,637)
Beans/peas (legumes)	7.6	14,208 (1,630)
Starchy vegetables	2.6	14,152 (1,622)
Other vegetables	5.2	13,969 (1,599)
Reasons for Difficulties Purchasing Vegetables ^{2,3}	Percentage of SFAs Among SFAs Reporting Any Difficulties	
Items are not acceptable to students	64.7	
Not enough variety on the market	57.7	
Limited availability of items	53.0	
Items are too expensive	43.8	
Items require too much preparation	16.1	
Limited storage area/refrigeration	14.4	
Other	6.5	
Weighted <i>n</i>	2,583	
Unweighted <i>n</i>	324	

¹ Data were missing for 3–4 percent of SFAs.

² Data were missing for 2 percent of SFAs.

³ Multiple responses were allowed.

Note: Table estimates are among the 18 percent of SFAs that reported barriers to purchasing the vegetable subgroups.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 6.16 and 6.16a.

School Nutrition Standards: Whole Grains**Table I.4—SFA Challenges Implementing the 100 Percent Whole Grain-Rich Requirement**

Extent of Challenge Meeting Requirement	Percentage of SFAs
Not challenging	13.2
A little challenging	26.4
Moderately challenging	29.5
Very challenging	15.5
Extremely challenging	11.4
Don't know	3.9
Weighted <i>n</i>	14,571
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,660
Types of Challenges Reported¹	
Lack of student acceptance	86.4
Increased food costs	64.9
Lack of available products that meet standards	44.9
Lack of understanding about the requirements	14.0
Training of staff	11.6
Other*	3.3
Weighted <i>n</i>	12,330
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,443

¹ Table estimates are among the 89 percent of SFAs that reported challenges meeting the whole grain-rich requirement. Multiple responses were allowed.

* Examples of other responses include poor taste, quality, and variety of whole grain-rich products.

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 6.10 and 6.11.

Table I.5—Practices SFAs Implemented to Meet the Whole Grain-Rich Requirement

Practice	Percentage of SFAs
Purchased whole grain-rich products	83.6
Added whole grain-rich items to the menu	65.6
Substituted whole grain-rich items for non-whole grain-rich items	50.5
Discontinued or changed some menu options	47.4
Altered recipes	43.7
Ordered whole grain-rich products from USDA Foods more often	32.4
Increased portion sizes of some items	7.2
Other	1.8
No changes—SFA met the 100 percent whole grain-rich requirements prior to the updated standards	11.1
Weighted <i>n</i>	14,508
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,651

Note: Multiple responses were allowed.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 6.9.

School Nutrition Standards: Sodium**Table I.6—Average Daily Sodium Content, by School Type**

Sodium Content	Average Daily Sodium Content			
	Elementary Schools	Middle Schools	High Schools	Schools with Multiple Age-Grade Groups
Breakfast				
Average sodium (mg) ¹	490.2	522.4	558.1	503.6
Federal sodium Target 1 (mg) ²	540	600	640	Not Applicable
Federal sodium Target 2 (mg) ³	485	535	570	Not Applicable
Weighted <i>n</i>	4,230	4,047	3,761	2,108
Unweighted <i>n</i>	584	568	536	292
Lunch				
Average sodium (mg) ¹	938.7	1,024.6	1,114.9	1,007.2
Federal sodium Target 1 (mg) ²	1,230	1,360	1,420	Not Applicable
Federal sodium Target 2 (mg) ³	935	1,035	1,080	Not Applicable
Weighted <i>n</i>	4,434	4,249	4,045	1,906
Unweighted <i>n</i>	615	597	574	265

¹ Table estimates are among the 44 percent of SFAs that reported knowing the average daily sodium content of school meals in SY 2016–17.

² Effective July 1, 2014.

³ At the time of the study, Target 2 had an effective date of July 1, 2017, but flexibilities provided by FNS allowed for SFAs working toward compliance not to incur fiscal action in SY 2017–18 and to be considered compliant with sodium standards as long as they met Target 1.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 6.13a–h.

Table I.7—Practices SFAs Planned to Use to Meet the Sodium Requirement for SY 2017–18

Practice	Percentage of SFAs
Purchase lower sodium products	70.4
Alter recipes (such as limiting salt use or using spices in place of salt)	59.1
Discontinue or change some menu options	43.1
Order low-sodium USDA Foods more often	42.2
Replace canned vegetables with fresh or frozen	38.3
Increase scratch cooking	27.9
Decrease portion sizes	4.1
Other	3.2
Don't know	3.0
None	2.0
Not applicable (current sodium levels already meet Target 2)	14.5
Weighted <i>n</i>	14,453
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,644

Note: Multiple responses were allowed.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 6.14.

School Nutrition Standards: Smart Snacks In Schools

Table I.8—SFA Compliance with Smart Snacks in School Standards

Standards Implementation	Percentage of SFAs
Standards fully implemented	64.6
Standards partially implemented	10.7
Standards not implemented	7.6
Don't know	4.9
No competitive foods available in the SFA	12.3
Weighted <i>n</i>	14,571
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,661

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 7.1.

Table I.9—SFAs with Schools that Exceed the Smart Snacks in School Standards, by School Type

	Percentage of SFAs with Competitive Foods in . . .			
	Elementary Schools	Middle Schools	High Schools	Other Schools
Schools exceed Smart Snacks in School standards	16.1	18.4	19.5	11.0
Weighted <i>n</i>	6,350	7,914	8,596	5,971
Unweighted <i>n</i>	818	1,060	1,149	765

Notes: Table estimates are among the 88 percent of SFAs that offer competitive foods. Respondents were asked, “Do any elementary/middle/high/other schools in your SFA have nutrition standards for competitive foods that exceed the Smart Snacks standards?” Respondents may not have understood the question as intended, in which “exceed” meant surpassing the standards. The numbers of SFAs with elementary, middle, high, and other schools exclude SFAs without a school type and SFAs that had no competitive foods available in the school type.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 7.1–7.5.

Table I.10—Nutrition Components that Were Exceeded, Among SFAs that Exceeded Smart Snacks in School Standards

Nutritional Component Exceeded	Percentage of SFAs
Sugar limits on snack and entrée items	56.7
Calorie limits on snack and entrée items	53.8
Sodium limits on snack and entrée items	53.8
Fat limits on snack and entrée items	51.0
One or more combination food items that contains more than 1/4 cup of fruit and/or vegetable	42.4
Size limits on allowable milks and fruit/vegetable juices	31.9
Limits to fundraiser exemptions ¹	31.2
Size limits on “no-calorie” or “low-calorie” beverage options for high schools	25.8
Food items contain more than 10% of the Daily Value of calcium, potassium, vitamin D, or dietary fiber	23.8
Other	9.2
Weighted <i>n</i>	2,202
Unweighted <i>n</i>	277

¹ This response item was intended to ask about limits on fundraiser exemptions.

Notes: Table estimates are among the 15 percent of SFAs that reported exceeding the Smart Snacks in School Standards. Multiple responses were allowed. Respondents were asked, “For which nutrition components has your SFA exceeded the Smart Snacks standards?” Respondents may not have understood the question as intended, in which “exceed” meant surpassing the standards. This survey did not ask if SFAs exceeded nutrition standards related to whole grain-rich grain products; foods with the first ingredients being a fruit, vegetable, dairy product, or protein; allowable beverages; caffeine content; accompaniment limits; or limits to other exemptions. Data were missing for 7 percent of SFAs that reported having competitive foods and exceeding at least one Smart Snacks in School standard.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 7.2–7.6.

Table I.11—Challenges Faced by SFAs that Implemented the Smart Snacks in School Standards for Competitive Foods (Mean Rating)

Challenge	Mean Rating (Not Challenging = 1; Extremely Challenging = 5)	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
Understanding the standards	2.2	12,325 (1,505)
Availability of foods that met the standards	2.3	12,266 (1,500)
Cost of foods that met the standards	2.5	12,270 (1,501)
Acceptance (“buy in”) among other (non-food service) staff	2.7	12,185 (1,491)
Student acceptance	2.8	12,275 (1,500)
Other challenges*	2.8	3,434 (454)

* Examples of other responses included challenges enforcing and implementing the standards, particularly during fundraisers and school events and in school stores; parental understanding and acceptance of standards for competitive foods; decreased revenue from competitive foods sales; and a lack of variety of snacks that meet Smart Snacks standards.

Notes: Table estimates are among the 88 percent of SFAs that offer competitive foods. SFA directors were asked to provide feedback on the challenges they faced in implementing the Smart Snacks in School standards by rating five potential challenges on a scale from *not challenging* (assigned a rating of 1) to *extremely challenging* (assigned a rating of 5). Data were missing for 5–6 percent of SFAs.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 7.7a–g.

School Nutrition Standards: Miscellaneous

Table I.12—Largest Proportion of Students Not Consuming All Food Served at Lunch by School Type, Based on SFA Director Observations

School Type	Percentage of SFAs
Elementary schools	57.9
High schools	13.5
Middle schools	9.0
Other schools ¹	5.2
Don’t know	14.3
Weighted <i>n</i>	14,537
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,656

¹ Note that 68.0 percent of SFAs have other schools, versus 93, 85, and 89 percent of SFAs that have elementary, middle, and high schools, respectively. “Other” schools are those that have a grade span that does not fall in the range for elementary, middle, or high schools, such as Pre-K–8 or 6–12. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 6.17.

Table I.13—Frequency and Type of Foods Students Consumed at Lunch, Based on SFA Director Perceptions

Food Type	Percentage of SFAs				Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
	Often Consumed	Sometimes Consumed	Rarely Consumed	Don't Know	
Main dish/entrée	63.1	35.1	1.4	0.5	12,315 (1,423)
Fluid milk	62.1	32.1	5.0	0.7	12,352 (1,428)
Desserts	52.1	17.1	9.3	21.5	10,843 (1,271)
Bread/grain items	42.3	46.6	10.5	0.6	12,315 (1,421)
Fruit	42.0	50.0	7.5	0.5	12,358 (1,431)
Salad/raw vegetables	17.6	54.4	27.5	0.5	12,353 (1,428)
Cooked vegetables	8.3	44.7	45.7	1.4	12,395 (1,432)

Note: The estimates for frequency and types of foods consumed are among school types with most perceived waste. Reported ratings of frequency of food waste are based on SFA director observations. SFAs that did not offer a food may have marked “Don’t know” or may not have marked any response because “Food not offered” was not a survey response option. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Data were missing for 2–14 percent of SFAs.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 6.17.1.

Table I.14—SFAs Implementing Strategies to Prevent or Reduce Food Waste

Strategy	Percentage of SFAs
Implementing Offer versus Serve	76.8
Seeking student input for menu planning	53.7
Using share tables in the cafeteria	43.6
Using Smarter Lunchroom strategies	31.9
Improving serving lines	27.4
Allowing more time to eat	16.2
Adding more serving lines	6.7
Schools are not doing anything to prevent or reduce plate waste	2.4
Other	2.3
Weighted <i>n</i>	14,508
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,653

Note: Multiple responses were allowed.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 6.18.

Table I.15—Percentage of SFAs Facing Challenges Meeting Calorie Requirements, by Meal and School Type

Challenges ¹	Percentage of SFAs			
	a. Elementary Schools	b. Middle Schools	c. High Schools	d. Other Schools
Breakfast				
Meeting the minimum calorie requirements and not exceeding the maximum calorie requirements	37.5 ^{b,c,d}	41.9 ^{a,c,d}	39.8 ^{a,b,d}	42.8 ^{a,b,c}
Not exceeding the maximum calorie requirements	32.2 ^{b,c,d}	28.2 ^{a,c,d}	26.6 ^{a,b,d}	22.9 ^{a,b,c}
No breakfast calorie challenges	16.0 ^{b,c,d}	16.5 ^{a,c,d}	15.5 ^{a,b,d}	16.0 ^{a,b,c}
Meeting the minimum calorie requirements	7.7 ^{b,c,d}	7.7 ^{a,c,d}	12.4 ^{a,b,d}	9.3 ^{a,b,c}
Not applicable	6.6	5.6	5.7	9.0
Weighted <i>n</i>	4,508	3,611	4,001	2,197
Unweighted <i>n</i>	592	499	540	253
Lunch				
Not exceeding the maximum calorie requirements	40.7 ^{b,c,d}	37.7 ^{a,c,d}	31.9 ^{a,b,d}	30.6 ^{a,b,c}
Meeting the minimum calorie requirements and not exceeding the maximum calorie requirements	40.7 ^{b,c,d}	45.4 ^{a,c,d}	43.3 ^{a,b,d}	46.8 ^{a,b,c}
No lunch calorie challenges	11.7 ^{b,c,d}	9.9 ^{a,c,d}	8.6 ^{a,b,d}	7.5 ^{a,b,c}
Meeting the minimum calorie requirements	5.0 ^{b,c}	6.1 ^{a,c}	14.2 ^{a,b,d}	7.0 ^c
Not applicable	2.0	0.9	2.0	8.1
Weighted <i>n</i>	4,494	3,633	4,005	2,191
Unweighted <i>n</i>	590	503	541	252

¹ Table estimates are among the 39 percent of all SFAs that reported challenges meeting calorie ranges for school meals for breakfast and/or lunch.

Note: School types are based on calorie requirement grade groups as follows: elementary (K–5), middle (6–8), high (9–12), and other schools (multiple age-grade groups). The estimates for the types of challenges are among SFAs reporting challenges meeting the calorie requirements for school meals. Respondents may have interpreted the “not applicable” response option as either the SFA does not include the school type or, in the case of breakfast, no schools on that level serve breakfast. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the letter. Significant differences are based on a modified Rao-Scott chi-square test of association ($p < 0.05$). Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 6.12 and 6.12a–h.

Table I.16—SFA Adjustments to Meet Student Demand for Different Types of Foods, by School Type

Adjustment	Percentage of SFAs			
	Elementary Schools	Middle Schools	High Schools	Other Schools
Increased fruits and vegetables	64.8	68.0	72.1	57.5
A second milk	28.0	31.9	34.7	24.4
New à la carte offerings	24.4	45.5	52.4	26.7
Increased à la carte offerings	18.6	36.2	45.8	24.3
A second meal	17.3	27.4	34.3	22.0
Other	2.9	3.5	3.4	2.5
None	20.7	13.1	9.7	30.5
Weighted <i>n</i>	11,284	8,987	10,043	5,193
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,428	1,216	1,306	588

Notes: Respondents reported current adjustments, which may reflect practices during SY 2016–17 and/or SY 2017–18 when survey data were collected. Multiple responses were allowed. “Other” schools have a grade span that does not fall in the range for elementary, middle, or high schools, such as Pre-K–8 or 6–12. Data were missing for 3–8 percent of SFAs.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 6.15a–d.

Table I.17—SFA Challenges Implementing Meal Pattern Requirements

Challenge	Percentage of SFAs						Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
	Not Challenging	A Little Challenging	Moderately Challenging	Very Challenging	Extremely Challenging	Don't Know	
Gaining student acceptance	4.2	18.0	31.2	27.2	17.5	1.9	14,586 (1,661)
Containing food costs	6.4	20.0	31.0	27.0	9.7	5.9	14,575 (1,659)
Maintaining student participation	7.2	20.7	33.4	23.3	14.0	1.4	14,584 (1,660)
Containing the budget	9.3	20.9	26.6	24.9	13.0	5.3	14,577 (1,659)
Gaining parent acceptance	12.9	29.4	29.3	15.4	7.6	5.4	14,566 (1,658)
Finding products that meet the nutrition standards	14.6	32.4	32.2	10.1	3.1	7.5	14,526 (1,654)
Separating portions when age-grade groups overlap ¹	16.2	21.2	19.4	11.9	8.3	3.5	14,617 (1,664)
Gaining community acceptance	17.1	24.3	26.8	13.1	5.9	12.8	14,558 (1,659)
Meeting the minimum average weekly calories requirement	30.4	29.0	23.6	8.5	3.2	5.3	14,536 (1,661)
Meeting the average weekly saturated fat limit requirement	30.8	36.8	19.1	5.7	2.1	5.5	14,585 (1,661)
Meeting the trans fat limit requirement	50.1	25.8	13.8	3.8	1.5	5.0	14,587 (1,661)
Meeting the fluid milk requirement	82.2	9.4	4.2	1.0	0.5	2.8	14,597 (1,663)

¹ Nineteen percent of SFAs reported “not applicable” because the SFA did not include schools with overlapping age-grade groups.

Notes: Data were missing for 1–2 percent of SFAs. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 6.5a–h and 6.6a–d.

Table I.18—School Year SFAs Began Receiving Additional 6 Cents Reimbursement per Lunch

School Year	Percentage of SFAs
SY 2012–13	59.4
SY 2013–14	16.6
SY 2014–15	11.3
SY 2015–16	6.3
SY 2016–17	3.7
SFA is not certified	2.6
Weighted <i>n</i>	13,371
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,547

Notes: Data were missing for 9 percent of SFAs. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Source: SFA Director Survey, SY 2016–17, question 6.1.

Table I.19—Resources and Practices SFAs Used to Assist with Implementation of Updated Meal Pattern Requirements, by SFA Size

	Percentage of SFAs				All SFAs
	a. Small (1–999 Students)	b. Medium (1,000– 4,999 Students)	c. Large (5,000– 24,999 Students)	d. Very Large (≥ 25,000 Students)	
Resources					
Team Up training from Stage Agency (including State Agency webinars) ¹	63.4	67.7	73.5	73.5	66.4
Recipes for Healthy Kids cookbook ¹	55.7 ^d	53.9	52.7	33.4 ^a	54.2
Team Up webinars (not including State Agency webinars) ¹	32.2 ^c	38.4	44.6 ^a	38.9	36.1
USDA Best Practices Sharing Center website ²	26.7	30.3	28.1	29.5	28.2
Nutrition education and technical assistance mailbox ¹	30.1	25.7	19.3	6.7	26.8
Weighted <i>n</i>	5,194	4,041	1,216	215	10,666
Unweighted <i>n</i>	377	621	220	44	1,262
Practices					
Training staff	75.0 ^{b,c}	85.3 ^a	89.7 ^a	91.9	80.9
Updating kitchen equipment	45.4 ^{b,c,d}	55.2 ^{a,c,d}	75.9 ^{a,b}	84.2 ^{a,b}	53.3
Participating in DoD Fresh ³	30.8 ^{b,c,d}	59.1 ^{a,c}	73.5 ^{a,b}	62.1 ^a	46.8
Participating in purchasing cooperatives	37.0 ^{b,c}	52.7 ^a	55.8 ^a	39.3	45.0
Using Smarter Lunchroom strategies	32.8 ^{b,c,d}	45.3 ^{a,c}	60.1 ^{a,b}	58.3 ^a	41.0
Participating in Farm to School	16.2 ^{b,c,d}	29.8 ^{a,d}	34.3 ^{a,d}	61.0 ^{a,b,c}	24.2
Contracting with an FSMC	20.6	23.6	18.9	7.0	21.2
Hiring more staff	15.0 ^{c,d}	18.8 ^c	35.2 ^{a,b}	36.1 ^a	19.2
Starting school gardens	17.6	15.2	18.4	19.7	16.9
Centralizing meal production	8.2	9.7	13.6	11.0	9.4
Other	5.3	3.2	3.1	4.0	4.3
Weighted <i>n</i>	7,077	5,242	1,644	281	14,245
Unweighted <i>n</i>	493	799	295	55	1,642

¹ Data were missing for 27 percent of SFAs, which may be attributed to the survey item lacking options for SFAs to indicate that no resources were used, or the respondent did not know the answer.

² Data were missing for 3 percent of SFAs. Twenty-six percent of SFAs reported they did not know if the USDA Best Practices Sharing Center website was used.

³ USDA DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program.

Notes: Multiple responses were allowed. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Sidak *p*-value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the letter.

Sources: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 6.2–6.4 and FNS Verification Collection Report, SY 2016–17.

Table I.20—Resources and Practices SFAs Used to Assist with Implementation of Updated Meal Pattern Requirements, by Urbanicity

	Percentage of SFAs				
	a. Urban/City ¹	b. Suburban	c. Town	d. Rural	All SFAs
Resources					
Team Up training from State Agency (including State Agency webinars) ²	69.7	70.1	66.1	66.5	67.5
Recipes for Healthy Kids cookbook ²	39.0 ^d	52.2 ^d	57.3	57.5 ^a	54.5
Team Up webinars (not including SA webinars) ²	28.6	40.1	39.8	35.3	36.5
USDA Best Practices Sharing Center website ³	21.7 ^c	30.9	28.3 ^a	29.2	28.6
Nutrition education and technical assistance mailbox ²	21.7	22.8	27.1	27.1	25.6
Weighted <i>n</i>	996	2,249	1,870	4,975	10,090
Unweighted <i>n</i>	140	321	267	515	1,243
Practices					
Training staff	78.0	84.0	86.7	81.1	82.4
Updating kitchen equipment	46.4 ^c	58.1	59.7 ^{a,d}	50.5 ^c	53.4
Participating in DoD Fresh ⁴	41.3 ^b	62.8 ^{a,d}	53.2 ^d	42.3 ^{b,c}	48.8
Participating in purchasing cooperatives	31.7 ^{b,c,d}	45.8 ^a	55.1 ^a	47.7 ^a	46.7
Using Smarter Lunchroom strategies	36.8 ^{b,c}	46.3 ^a	48.8 ^{a,d}	38.7 ^c	42.0
Participating in Farm to School	19.4 ^b	29.8 ^a	27.7	24.0	25.5
Contracting with an FSMC	37.2 ^{c,d}	27.6 ^d	19.7 ^{a,d}	12.7 ^{a,b,c}	20.3
Hiring more staff	24.1	23.7 ^d	16.5	15.1 ^b	18.4
Starting school gardens	15.6	14.6	15.9	16.5	15.9
Centralizing meal production	8.5	10.4	10.8	7.6	8.9
Other	9.9 ^{c,d}	6.5 ^{c,d}	1.7 ^{a,b}	2.6 ^{a,b}	4.2
Weighted <i>n</i>	1,595	3,073	2,347	6,279	13,293
Unweighted <i>n</i>	198	424	341	645	1,608

¹ SFAs with missing urbanicity codes were excluded from the analyses.

² Data were missing for 27 percent of SFAs, which may be attributed to the survey item lacking options for SFAs to indicate that no resources were used, or the respondent did not know the answer.

³ Data were missing for 3 percent of SFAs. Twenty-four percent of SFAs reported they did not know if the USDA Best Practices Sharing Center website was used.

⁴ USDA DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program.

Notes: Multiple responses were allowed. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Sidak *p*-value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the letter. Subgroup estimates without superscripts reflect nonsignificant differences.

Sources: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 6.2–6.4 and FNS Verification Collection Report, SY 2016–17.

Table I.21—Resources and Practices SFAs Used to Assist with Implementation of Updated Meal Pattern Requirements, by F/RP Certification Percentage

	Percentage of SFAs			All SFAs
	a. Low (0–29 percent certified)	b. Medium (30–59 percent certified)	c. High (≥ 60 percent certified)	
Resources				
Team Up training from State Agency (including State Agency webinars) ¹	71.4 ^b	65.8 ^a	57.5	66.4
Recipes for Healthy Kids cookbook ¹	49.7	56.7	57.6	54.2
Team Up webinars (not including SA webinars) ¹	38.2	36.0	32.0	36.1
USDA Best Practices Sharing Center website ²	27.9	30.0	25.3	28.2
Nutrition education and technical assistance mailbox ¹	25.7	26.3	30.1	26.8
Weighted <i>n</i>	4,051	4,633	1,982	10,666
Unweighted <i>n</i>	500	546	216	1,262
Practices				
Training staff	81.1	81.9	78.4	80.9
Updating kitchen equipment	50.9	54.3	55.6	53.3
Participating in DoD Fresh ³	51.7	44.7	41.8	46.8
Participating in purchasing cooperatives	47.8 ^b	47.6 ^a	34.3	45.0
Using Smarter Lunchroom strategies	41.1 ^c	45.0	32.8 ^a	41.0
Participating in Farm to School	27.8 ^{b,c}	24.6 ^a	16.5 ^a	24.2
Contracting with an FSMC	24.0	16.5 ^c	25.8 ^b	21.2
Hiring more staff	22.5	15.6 ^c	20.1 ^b	19.2
Starting school gardens	19.5	14.5	16.9	16.9
Centralizing meal production	8.5	9.3	11.4	9.4
Other	5.1	3.9	3.5	4.3
Weighted <i>n</i>	5,372	5,989	2,884	14,245
Unweighted <i>n</i>	643	697	302	1,642

¹ Data were missing for 27 percent of SFAs, which may be attributed to the survey item lacking options for SFAs to indicate that no resources were used, or the respondent did not know the answer.

² Data were missing for 3 percent of SFAs. Twenty-six percent of SFAs reported they did not know if the USDA Best Practices Sharing Center website was used.

³ USDA DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program.

Notes: Multiple responses were allowed. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Sidak *p*-value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the letter. Subgroup estimates without superscripts reflect nonsignificant differences.

Sources: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 6.2–6.4 and FNS Verification Collection Report, SY 2016–17.

APPENDIX J. SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAM PERSONNEL

List of Tables by Research Question

Research Question	Corresponding Table
Education Requirements and Backgrounds	
Which hiring standards are being used?	Tables J.1–J.7
Education Background of Other Key SFA Personnel	
What is the background of other key SFA personnel?	Tables J.8 and J.9
Staffing and Training	
Do States have adequate staffing resources for monitoring?	Tables J.10 and J.11
Additional SFA Comments	
What other suggestions do SFAs have for FNS?	Table J.12

Education Requirements and Backgrounds

Table J.1—Current Minimum Education Requirements for State CN Director Position

Degree	Number of State Agencies
Graduate degree	12
Bachelor's degree	38
Associate degree	0
Some college, no degree	0
High school diploma (or GED)	3

Note: As of July 1, 2015, USDA Professional Standards require new State directors of School Nutrition Programs to have at least a bachelor's degree.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 6.6.

Table J.2—Accepted College Majors for the State CN Director Position

College Major	Number of State Agencies	
	CN Director Position Requires Bachelor's Degree	CN Director Position Requires Graduate Degree
Food and nutrition	36	10
Food service administration/management	36	10
Dietetics	33	9
Business	33	9
Nutrition education	29	8
Family and consumer sciences	29	8
Culinary arts	22	6
Law, public administration, accounting, public health, sociology, education, and public policy ¹	6	3
Major not specified ¹	3	1
Any major ¹	2	0
Unknown ²	0	1
State Agency does not require bachelor's degree or higher	3	3
Total	38	12

¹ Categories are coded from open-ended responses to “other (specify)” options.

² One respondent did not select a major and wrote “unknown.”

Notes: Multiple responses were allowed. As of July 1, 2015, USDA Professional Standards require new State directors of School Nutrition Programs to have a degree in a related field. Fifty State Agencies had a minimum education requirement of an associate, bachelor's, or graduate degree, and three State Agencies had a minimum education requirement of a high school diploma or GED. The hiring standards include academic majors in areas including food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related field.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 6.6 and 6.7.

Table J.3—List of State CN Directors' College Majors

College Major	Number of State Agencies	
	Highest Degree is Bachelor's	Highest Degree is Master's or Higher
Dietetics	5	12
Family and consumer sciences/culinary arts ¹	5	2
Business	5	1
Food service administration/management	2	0
Food and nutrition	0	8
Other majors*	2	10
Total	19	33

¹ Response categories were combined to protect the privacy of individual respondents.

* Other majors included communications, home economics, management and accounting, public administration/social policy, organizational leadership/health and human services, and other education.

Notes: As of July 1, 2015, USDA Professional Standards require new State directors of School Nutrition Programs to have a degree in a related field. Survey response categories for college majors aligned with the hiring standards and included food and nutrition, food service administration/management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, or business. No State CN directors listed nutrition education as their college major. Five State CN directors listed more than one major. Fifty-two State CN directors provided responses for this table. One State CN director did not have a bachelor's degree or higher, so they are not included in this table.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 6.1, 6.4, and 6.5.

Table J.4—Education Credentials and Prior Experience of State CN Directors

Education Credentials	Number of State CN Directors		
	Fewer than 5 Years of Prior Relevant Experience	5 or More Years of Prior Relevant Experience	Total
Doctorate	1	5	6
Graduate credits beyond a master's degree but no degree	0	3	3
Master's degree	1	23	24
Bachelor's degree	1	18	19
Total	3	49	52

Notes: As of July 1, 2015, USDA Professional Standards require new State directors of School Nutrition Programs to have a bachelor's degree. One director had less than a bachelor's degree and was hired before the requirement went into effect.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 6.3 and 6.4.

Table J.5—SFA Directors' Education Credentials, by Date of Hire Among Small SFAs

Education Credentials	Percentage of Small SFAs (1–999 Students)	
	Highest Level of Education	Proportion with Degree in a Related Field ¹
Directors Hired Before July 1, 2015		
Doctorate	1.6	0.0
Graduate credits beyond a master's degree but no degree	4.4	26.9
Master's degree	12.9	36.7
Bachelor's degree	13.4	43.6
Associate degree	15.7	53.2
Some college, no degree	22.4	--
High school or GED	29.1	--
Less than high school	0.5	--
Weighted <i>n</i>	4,786	
Unweighted <i>n</i>	338	
Directors Hired on or After July 1, 2015		
Doctorate	2.7	0.0
Graduate credits beyond a master's degree but no degree	4.4	40.4
Master's degree	16.0	29.3
Bachelor's degree	23.5	39.2
Associate degree	11.1	64.5
Some college, no degree	21.4	--
High school or GED	20.6	--
Less than high school	0.3	--
Weighted <i>n</i>	2,362	
Unweighted <i>n</i>	155	

¹ The proportion of SFA directors with a degree in a related field is among those with each level of schooling and includes those who provided an affirmative response to the question, "Is your degree in food and nutrition, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, foodservice management, dietetics, culinary arts, business, or a related field?"

Notes: As of July 1, 2015, USDA Professional Standards require new SFA directors of School Nutrition Programs to meet minimum education standards based on level of education, a degree, and years of experience. SFA director's highest level of schooling completed and date of hire were missing for 2.1 percent and 4.1 percent of small SFAs, respectively. The estimates in this table represent 7,148 SFAs with fewer than 1,000 students based on 2016–17 SFA size data in the FNS SFA Verification Collection Report SY 2016–17. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Sources: SFA CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 11.1–11.3, and USDA FNS SFA Verification Collection Report SY 2016–17.

Table J.6—SFA Directors' Education Credentials, by Date of Hire Among Mid-Size SFAs

Education Credentials	Percentage of Mid-Size SFAs (1,000–4,999 Students)	
	Highest Level of Education	Proportion with Degree in a Related Field ¹
Directors Hired Before July 1, 2015		
Doctorate	1.1	60.7
Graduate credits beyond a master's degree but no degree	3.9	68.5
Master's degree	10.6	72.6
Bachelor's degree	29.7	83.6
Associate degree	13.6	71.2
Some college, no degree	25.8	--
High school or GED	15.1	--
Less than high school	0.2	--
Weighted n	3,724	
Unweighted n	569	
Directors Hired on or After July 1, 2015		
Doctorate	0.9	51.0
Graduate credits beyond a master's degree but no degree	5.1	55.0
Master's degree	14.3	82.9
Bachelor's degree	32.8	74.7
Associate degree	19.9	77.8
Some college, no degree	15.8	--
High school or GED	11.2	--
Less than high school	0.0	--
Weighted n	1,324	
Unweighted n	203	

¹ The proportion of SFA directors with a degree in a related field is among those with each level of schooling and includes those who provided an affirmative response to the question, "Is your degree in food and nutrition, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, foodservice management, dietetics, culinary arts, business, or a related field?"

Notes: As of July 1, 2015, USDA Professional Standards require new SFA directors of School Nutrition Programs to meet minimum education standards based on level of education, a degree, and years of experience. SFA director's highest level of schooling completed and date of hire were missing for 3.4 percent and 4.5 percent of mid-sized SFAs, respectively. The estimates in this table represent 5,048 SFAs with between 1,000–4,999 students based on 2016–17 SFA size data in the FNS SFA Verification Collection Report SY 2016–17.

Sources: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 11.1–11.3, and USDA FNS SFA Verification Collection Report SY 2016–17.

Table J.7—SFA Directors' Education Credentials, by Date of Hire Among Large SFAs

Education Credentials	Percentage of Large SFAs (≥ 5,000 Students)	
	Highest Level of Education	Proportion with Degree in a Related Field ¹
Directors Hired Before July 1, 2015		
Doctorate	1.1	100.0
Graduate credits beyond a master's degree but no degree	5.0	86.0
Master's degree	25.3	91.2
Bachelor's degree	42.9	87.2
Associate degree	10.5	79.5
Some college, no degree	10.6	--
High school or GED	4.3	--
Less than high school	0.3	--
Weighted <i>n</i>	1,436	
Unweighted <i>n</i>	259	
Directors Hired on or After July 1, 2015		
Doctorate	2.0	67.5
Graduate credits beyond a master's degree but no degree	3.8	61.2
Master's degree	31.4	72.2
Bachelor's degree	51.0	93.4
Associate degree	6.0	46.8
Some college, no degree	5.8	--
High school or GED	0.0	--
Less than high school	0.0	--
Weighted <i>n</i>	429	
Unweighted <i>n</i>	79	

¹ The proportion of SFA directors with a degree in a related field is among those with each level of schooling and includes those who provided an affirmative response to the question, "Is your degree in food and nutrition, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, foodservice management, dietetics, culinary arts, business, or a related field?"

Notes: As of July 1, 2015, USDA Professional Standards require new SFA directors of School Nutrition Programs to meet minimum education standards based on level of education, a degree, and years of experience. SFA director's highest level of schooling completed and date of hire were missing for 3.4 percent and 4.6 percent of large SFAs, respectively. The estimates in this table represent 1,865 SFAs with 5,000 or more students based on 2016–17 SFA size data in the FNS SFA Verification Collection Report SY 2016–17. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Sources: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 11.1–11.3, and USDA FNS SFA Verification Collection Report SY 2016–17.

Educational Background of Other Key SFA Personnel

Table J.8—Percentage of SFAs with Directors who Share Leadership and Other Key Responsibilities with Other SFA Personnel

Shares Leadership or Other Key Responsibilities with . . .	Percentage of SFAs
No other key personnel	60.7
One other key personnel	13.0
Two other key personnel	26.3
Three or more other key personnel (asked of large SFAs only)	0.0
Weighted <i>n</i>	14,133
Unweighted <i>n</i>	1,615

Notes: An example of “other key personnel at SFA” is an assistant director. Small and mid-sized SFAs were asked to list up to two other key personnel, and large SFAs were asked to list up to five other key personnel.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 11.4 and 11.5.

Table J.9—Education Credentials of Other Key SFA Personnel, by SFA Size

Education Credentials	Percentage of SFAs		
	Small SFAs (1–999 Students)	Mid-Sized SFAs (1,000–4,999 Students)	Large SFAs (≥ 5,000 Students)
Doctorate	1.1	1.0	0.6
Graduate credits beyond a master's degree but no degree	6.2	3.5	1.4
Master's degree	14.4	8.7	25.8
Bachelor's degree	22.0	22.4	55.2
Associate degree	17.4	20.8	18.2
Some college, no degree	33.2	27.4	28.1
High school or GED	42.1	46.8	23.5
Less than high school	1.7	2.0	0.0
Degree in a related field ¹	37.4	63.9	85.9
Weighted <i>n</i>	2,789	1,392	1,132
Unweighted <i>n</i>	179	211	206

¹ The proportion of directors with a degree in a related field is among those key SFA personnel with an associate degree or higher and includes those who provided an affirmative response to the question, “Is your degree in food and nutrition, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, foodservice management, dietetics, culinary arts, business, or a related field?”

Notes: The 5,698 SFAs represented in this table are among SFA directors who share leadership and other key responsibilities with other personnel. Data were missing for 10 percent of small SFAs, 13 percent of mid-sized SFAs, and 10 percent of large SFAs. Multiple responses were allowed.

Sources: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 11.4–11.6, and USDA FNS SFA Verification Collection Report SY 2016–17.

Staffing and Training

Table J.10—State Agency Personnel Engaged in Monitoring School Meal Operations

	Average Number of Personnel
State Agencies Reporting Adequate Staffing¹	
SA personnel engaged in any monitoring activities for school meal operations	23
SA personnel who spend more than half of their time monitoring	20
State Agencies Reporting Inadequate Staffing²	
SA personnel engaged in any monitoring activities for school meal operations	16
SA personnel who spend more than half of their time monitoring	11

¹Twenty-two State Agencies provided valid responses.

²Thirty-one State Agencies provided valid responses.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, questions 2.8 and 2.9.

Table J.11—State Agency Use of Contracted Personnel for Program Operations, by Function

Function	Number of State Agencies		
	Yes, Used Contracted Personnel	No, Did Not Use Contracted Personnel	No Response
Training/technical assistance	31	21	1
Monitoring	22	25	6
Nutrient education	16	34	3
Nutrient analysis	14	35	4
6-cent certification	7	38	8
Claims processing	0	46	7
Other	8	16	29

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 2.17.

Additional SFA Comments

Table J.12—SFA Policy and Program Comments

Policy and Program Comments	Unweighted Number of SFAs
Policy challenges and suggestions	135
Administrative and budget challenges	51
Staffing challenges	17
Other	16

Notes: Response categories were coded based on answers to an open-ended question, “Before you submit your survey, do you have any other comments that you would like to share with the Food and Nutrition Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture? These comments can be related to the survey topics or any other topic.”

Respondents with comments on multiple topics were included in more than one category. Policy challenges were mostly around the impacts of the meal pattern requirements (e.g., increased cost, decreased participation, food waste, procurement challenges). These responses also reflected a general sense of being overburdened with rules and guidelines.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2016–17, question 12.1.