

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



CN-OPS-II YEAR 1 REPORT: SY 2015-16



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United States Department of Agriculture

Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support

CN-OPS-II Year 1 Report: SY 2015–16

Authors:

Jim Murdoch
Angela Campbell
Charlotte Cabili
Eric Zeidman
Roderick Harrison
Allison Ottenbacher
Danielle Chelminsky
Moyo Kimathi
Nick Beyler

Submitted by:

2M Research
1521 N Cooper St, Ste 600
Arlington, TX 76011
P: 202-266-9901
F: 866-250-2447

Submitted to:

Office of Policy Support
USDA Food and Nutrition Service
3101 Park Center Drive
Alexandria, VA 22302-1500

Project Director:

Jim Murdoch, PhD

Project Officer:

Holly Figueroa

This study was conducted under Contract AG-3198-C-15-0008 with the Food and Nutrition Service.

This report is available on the Food and Nutrition Service website:

Suggested Citation: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support, *Child Nutrition Program Operations Study (CN-OPS-II): SY 2015-16* by Jim Murdoch and Charlotte Cabili. Project Officer: Holly Figueroa. Alexandria, VA: December 2019.

Acknowledgments

A number of individuals contributed to the successful completion of this report. Holly Figueroa of the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Office of Policy Support served as our Contracting Officer's Representative. Ms. Figueroa helped ensure that our work proceeded in a timely fashion, facilitated our communication with staff at FNS, and generally helped guide the development of this report. At FNS, Child Nutrition and Office of Policy Support staff provided timely feedback and guidance to help us understand relevant issues and refine our research. Within the 2M Research team, Dr. Jim Murdoch served as Project Director and Allison Ottenbacher was Project Manager. Our colleagues Eric Zeidman and Charlotte Cabili at Mathematica Policy Research made significant contributions to the research. 2M's research staff, including Angela Campbell, Roderick Harrison, Moyo Kimathi, Nick Beyler, Gail Clark, Cindy Romero, Joshua Townley, Erika Gordon, and Peyton McGee helped with the research and assisted in preparation of the final document.

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	II
AUTHORS AND CONTRIBUTORS	IX
ACRONYMS USED IN REPORT	X
1 OVERVIEW	1
1.1 STUDY OBJECTIVES.....	1
1.2 RECENT CHANGES IN CN POLICIES AND PROGRAM OPERATIONS.....	3
1.3 TOPICS COVERED IN CN-OPS-II IN SY 2015–2016.....	6
1.4 MAJOR THEMES FOR CN-OPS-II IN SY 2015–2016.....	9
1.4.1 <i>Child Nutrition Program Participation</i>	9
1.4.2 <i>School Meal Program Eligibility Determination and Verification</i>	9
1.4.3 <i>School Meal Prices and Counting</i>	9
1.4.4 <i>School Food Service Financial Management</i>	9
1.4.5 <i>Professional Standards and Training for School Nutrition Program Staff</i>	9
1.4.6 <i>Policies to Improve the School Nutrition Environment</i>	10
1.4.7 <i>School Food Service Equipment</i>	10
1.5 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES.....	10
1.6 SFA SAMPLE SELECTION, WEIGHTS, AND ADJUSTMENTS.....	10
1.6.1 <i>Sample Design</i>	10
1.6.2 <i>Sample and Weights</i>	12
1.7 PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND STATISTICAL TESTS.....	13
1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.....	16
2 SCHOOL AND STUDENT PARTICIPATION	18
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	18
2.2 BACKGROUND.....	18
2.3 RESULTS.....	20
2.3.1 <i>School Participation in NSLP and SBP</i>	21
2.3.2 <i>Student Participation in NSLP and SBP</i>	26
2.3.3 <i>Participation in the At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program and SFSP</i>	28
2.3.4 <i>Meals Served/Claimed</i>	36
3 SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION AND VERIFICATION	38
3.1 BACKGROUND.....	38
3.1.1 <i>School Meal Application Eligibility Determination</i>	38
3.1.2 <i>Direct Certification</i>	38
3.1.3 <i>Verification and Independent Application Reviews</i>	39
3.2 RESULTS.....	40
3.2.1 <i>School Meal Application Formats and Integration with Other Data Systems</i>	41
3.2.2 <i>Direct Certification: Timing and Matching Challenges</i>	42
3.2.3 <i>Basis for Eligibility Determinations</i>	44
3.2.4 <i>SFA Direct Verification</i>	45
3.2.5 <i>SFA Verification Practices: Acceptance of Emailed Documentation and Follow Up with Nonresponding Households</i>	47



3.2.6	<i>State Criteria for Second Application Reviews in At-Risk LEAs</i>	47
4	MEAL PRICES AND COUNTING	48
4.1	BACKGROUND	48
4.1.1	<i>Special Reimbursement Provisions</i>	49
4.2	RESULTS	50
4.2.1	<i>Full Prices</i>	51
4.2.2	<i>Adult Meal Prices</i>	53
4.2.3	<i>Reduced Meal Prices</i>	55
4.2.4	<i>Prices in SY 2014–15</i>	57
4.3	MEAL COUNTS	63
4.3.1	<i>Training and Monitoring of Cashiers</i>	63
5	SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	67
5.1	INTRODUCTION	67
5.2	BACKGROUND	67
5.3	NONPROGRAM REVENUE	67
5.4	UNPAID MEAL CHALLENGE	68
5.5	RESULTS	68
5.5.1	<i>SFA Revenues and Costs</i>	69
5.5.2	<i>Management of the Nonprofit Food Service Account</i>	76
5.5.3	<i>Addressing the Unpaid Meal Challenge</i>	79
6	PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND HIRING STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAM PERSONNEL	83
6.1	BACKGROUND	83
6.1.1	<i>Overview of the Professional Standards</i>	83
6.1.2	<i>Training Standards</i>	83
6.1.3	<i>Residential Child Care Institutions and Charter Schools</i>	84
6.1.4	<i>Team Up for School Nutrition Success Initiative</i>	84
6.1.5	<i>Hiring Standards</i>	85
6.2	TRAINING STANDARDS	85
6.2.1	<i>Results</i>	85
6.3	HIRING STANDARDS	104
6.3.1	<i>Results</i>	104
6.3.2	<i>State Requirements of SFAs to Meet the New Hiring Standards</i>	108
6.3.3	<i>Challenges Meeting the New Hiring Standards in States with and without Charter Schools</i>	110
6.3.4	<i>Hiring Standards for New State CN Directors</i>	111
7	POLICIES TO IMPROVE NUTRITION	113
7.1	INTRODUCTION	113
7.2	BACKGROUND	113
7.2.1	<i>Food and Beverage Marketing</i>	113
7.2.2	<i>Smarter Lunchrooms</i>	114
7.3	RESULTS	115
7.3.1	<i>Food and Beverage Marketing Policies</i>	115
7.3.2	<i>Smarter Lunchrooms Strategies</i>	119
8	SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE EQUIPMENT	122



8.1	BACKGROUND.....	122
8.1.1	<i>Capitalization Threshold</i>	123
8.2	RESULTS.....	124
9	CONCLUDING REMARKS	129
APPENDIX A.	STATE CHILD NUTRITION (CN) DIRECTOR SURVEY.....	A-1
APPENDIX B.	SCHOOL FOOD AUTHORITY (SFA) DIRECTOR SURVEY.....	B-1
APPENDIX C.	CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM OPERATIONS STUDY (CN-OPS-II) YEAR 1 SAMPLE DESIGN, DATA COLLECTION, AND STATISTICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	C-1
APPENDIX D.	SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES	D-1



List of Tables

TABLE 1-1—RECENT PROVISIONS FOR CN PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION AND PROGRAM INTEGRITY.....	4
TABLE 1-2—RECENT PROVISIONS FOR PROMOTING IMPROVED/HEALTHIER SCHOOL FOODS	5
TABLE 1-3—SFA DIRECTOR SURVEY MODULES FOR SN-OPS AND CN-OPS-II	7
TABLE 1-4—STATE CN DIRECTOR SURVEY MODULES FOR SN-OPS AND CN-OPS-II	9
TABLE 1-5—STRATIFICATION OF THE SAMPLING FRAME.....	12
TABLE 1-6—PERCENTAGE OF SFAS THAT STATED FOOD SERVICE EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENTS WERE NEEDED FOR SY 2015–16, BY SFA CHARACTERISTICS (EXAMPLE).....	15
TABLE 2-1—TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN NSLP AND SBP IN SY 2015–16 BY SCHOOL TYPE, AND THE PERCENTAGE CHANGE FROM SY 2014–15	22
TABLE 2-2—PERCENTAGE OF SFAS WITH ALL SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN NSLP AND SBP, BY SCHOOL TYPE IN SY 2014–15 AND SY 2015–16	22
TABLE 2-3—PERCENTAGE OF CHARTER SCHOOLS OPERATING ONLY NSLP, ONLY SBP, OR BOTH IN SY 2015–16	26
TABLE 2-4—PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WITHOUT ACCESS TO NSLP AND SBP IN SY 2014–15 AND SY 2015–16, BY SCHOOL TYPE	27
TABLE 2-5—PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS APPROVED FOR F/RP MEALS, BY SCHOOL TYPE IN SY 2014–15 AND SY 2015–16	28
TABLE 2-6—AMONG SFAS WITH SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN THE AT-RISK AFTERSCHOOL SUPPER PROGRAM IN SY 2015–16, THE PERCENTAGE WITH SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING AS SPONSORS AND SITES	29
TABLE 2-7—STRATEGIES USED TO BUILD AWARENESS OF THE AT-RISK AFTERSCHOOL SUPPER PROGRAM AMONG ELIGIBLE NONPARTICIPATING STUDENTS, SY 2015–16.....	30
TABLE 2-8—STRATEGIES USED TO BUILD AWARENESS OF THE AT-RISK AFTERSCHOOL SUPPER PROGRAM AMONG THE LOCAL COMMUNITY AT LARGE, SY 2015–16.....	31
TABLE 2-9—AMONG SFAS WITH SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN SFSP IN SUMMER 2015, THE PERCENTAGE WITH SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING AS SPONSORS AND SITES	32
TABLE 2-10—STRATEGIES USED TO BUILD AWARENESS OF SFSP AMONG ELIGIBLE NONPARTICIPATING STUDENTS, SUMMER 2015	33
TABLE 2-11—STRATEGIES USED TO BUILD AWARENESS OF SFSP AMONG THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE, SUMMER 2015	34
TABLE 2-12—PERCENTAGE OF SFAS PARTICIPATING IN THE CACFP AT-RISK AFTERSCHOOL SUPPER PROGRAM AND PERCENTAGE OF SFAS PARTICIPATING IN SFSP, BY SFA CHARACTERISTIC, SY 2015–16	35
TABLE 2-13—NUMBER AND PERCENT OF NSLP MEALS SERVED/CLAIMED IN OCTOBER 2015, AS REPORTED BY SFA DIRECTORS, BY PRICE CATEGORY AND SCHOOL TYPE	36
TABLE 2-14—NUMBER AND PERCENT OF SBP MEALS SERVED/CLAIMED IN OCTOBER 2015, BY PRICE CATEGORY AND SCHOOL TYPE	37
TABLE 3-1—PRIMARY FORMATS OF THE APPLICATIONS USED BY PARENTS AND GUARDIANS TO APPLY FOR SCHOOL MEALS, AS REPORTED BY SFAS, SY 2015–16.....	42
TABLE 3-2—AMONG SFAS THAT PRIMARILY USE WEB- OR COMPUTER-BASED APPLICATIONS FOR F/RP SCHOOL MEALS, THE PERCENTAGE THAT INTEGRATE THE SCHOOL MEAL APPLICATION WITH OTHER DATA SYSTEMS, SY 2015–16.....	42



TABLE 3-3—PERCENTAGE OF DIRECTLY CERTIFIED STUDENTS CERTIFIED BEFORE AND AFTER OCTOBER 31, RELATIVE TO ALL STUDENTS
 DIRECTLY CERTIFIED IN SY 2015–16, BY SFA CHARACTERISTIC43

TABLE 3-4—CHALLENGES REPORTED AMONG SFAS RESPONSIBLE FOR DIRECT CERTIFICATION OF STUDENTS, SY 2015–1644

TABLE 3-5—PERCENTAGE OF SFAS THAT CONDUCT DIRECT VERIFICATION OF SCHOOL MEAL APPLICATIONS, BY SFA CHARACTERISTIC, SY
 2015–1646

TABLE 4-1—REIMBURSEMENT RATES.....49

TABLE 4-2—AVERAGE PRICE CHARGED FOR A FULL PRICE BREAKFAST, BY SFA CHARACTERISTICS, SY 2015–16.....52

TABLE 4-3—AVERAGE PRICE CHARGED FOR AN ADULT BREAKFAST, BY SFA CHARACTERISTICS, SY 2015–1654

TABLE 4-4—AVERAGE PRICE CHARGED FOR A REDUCED PRICE BREAKFAST, BY SFA CHARACTERISTICS, SY 2015–1656

TABLE 4-5—AVERAGE PRICE CHARGED FOR A FULL PRICE BREAKFAST, BY SFA CHARACTERISTICS, SY 2014–1558

TABLE 4-6—AVERAGE PRICE CHARGED FOR AN ADULT PRICE BREAKFAST, BY SFA CHARACTERISTICS, SY 2014–1560

TABLE 4-7—AVERAGE PRICE CHARGED FOR REDUCED PRICE BREAKFASTS, BY SFA CHARACTERISTICS, SY 2014–1562

TABLE 4-8—TYPES OF TRAINING PROVIDED TO CASHIERS, SY 2015–1664

TABLE 4-9—FREQUENCY OF TRAINING PROVIDED TO CASHIERS, SY 2015–1665

TABLE 4-10—AMONG SFAS THAT CONDUCT ON-SITE MONITORING OF CASHIERS, SFAS’ REPORTED FREQUENCY OF ON-SITE MONITORING
 OF CASHIERS, SY 2015–1666

TABLE 5-1—REVENUE/EXPENDITURES RECEIVED/MADE BY SFAS DURING SY 2014–15, BY SFA CHARACTERISTICS71

TABLE 5-2—REVENUE/EXPENDITURES RECEIVED/MADE BY SFAS DURING SY 2013–14, BY SFA CHARACTERISTICS74

TABLE 5-3—AMONG SFAS THAT MONITOR COSTS PAID OUT OF NONPROFIT SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE ACCOUNTS, THE PRIMARY DECISION
 MAKER FOR NONPROFIT SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE ACCOUNTING IN SY 2015–1677

TABLE 5-4—AMONG SFAS THAT MONITOR COSTS PAID OUT OF NONPROFIT SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE ACCOUNTS, THE PERCENTAGE
 REPORTING DIFFICULTIES IN SY 2015–1678

TABLE 5-5—PERCENTAGE OF SFAS THAT TRACK THE ACCRUAL OF REVENUE FROM NONPROGRAM FOOD SALES IN SY 2015–1678

TABLE 5-6—AMONG SFAS THAT MONITOR COSTS PAID OUT OF NONPROFIT SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE ACCOUNTS, THE PERCENTAGE
 REPORTING KNOWLEDGE AND USE OF THE USDA NONPROGRAM FOODS REVENUE TOOL IN SY 2015–1679

TABLE 5-7—AMONG SFAS THAT TRACK THE AMOUNT OF MONEY OWED FROM UNPAID SCHOOL MEALS, THE MEDIAN AMOUNT OWED IN
 SY 2014–15, BY SFA CHARACTERISTICS80

TABLE 5-8—PERCENTAGE OF SFAS USING SPECIFIC METHODS TO COLLECT MONEY OWED FROM UNPAID-FOR SCHOOL MEALS IN SY 2015–
 1682

TABLE 5-9—PERCENTAGE OF SFAS USING ALTERNATIVE MEAL POLICIES FOR CHILDREN IN ARREARS IN SY 2015–16.....82

TABLE 6-1—AMONG SFAS TRACKING CE AND TRAINING, PERCENTAGE OF SFAS MEETING THE MINIMUM CE/TRAINING HOURS
 STANDARDS, BY TYPE OF SCHOOL NUTRITION PERSONNEL,¹ SY 2015–1687

TABLE 6-2—SA RATINGS OF THE PROPORTION OF POSITIVE FEEDBACK ABOUT THE NEW CE AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES STANDARDS, SY
 2015–1688



TABLE 6-3—SAS’ PERCEPTION OF THE ABILITY OF SFAS WITH RCCIS TO MEET TRAINING STANDARDS VERSUS TYPICAL SFAS, SY 2015–1689

TABLE 6-4—SAS’ PERCEPTION OF THE ABILITY OF SFAS WITH CHARTER SCHOOLS TO MEET TRAINING STANDARDS VERSUS TYPICAL SFAS, SY 2015–16.....90

TABLE 6-5—NUMBER OF SAs USING, OR PLANNING TO USE, VARIOUS METHODS TO DOCUMENT CE AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES COMPLETED BY SA STAFF, SY 2015–16.....94

TABLE 6-6—PERCENTAGE OF SFA DIRECTORS AND SCHOOL NUTRITION PERSONNEL WHO RECEIVED TRAINING ON VARIOUS TOPICS, SY 2015–1695

TABLE 6-7—ORGANIZATIONS THAT PROVIDED TRAINING AND TA ON VARIOUS TOPICS TO SFAS, SY 2015–16.....99

TABLE 6-8—AMONG SFAS THAT PARTICIPATED IN A TEAM UP TRAINING, SFA PERCEPTIONS OF TEAM UP MENTORS, SY 2015–16 ...103

TABLE 6-9—EDUCATION CREDENTIALS OF SFA DIRECTORS HIRED BEFORE AND AFTER JULY 1, 2015, BY SFA SIZE, SY 2015–16105

TABLE 6-10—YEARS OF EXPERIENCE OF SFA DIRECTORS HIRED BEFORE AND AFTER JULY 1, 2015, BY SFA SIZE, SY 2015–16107

TABLE 6-11—STATE STANDARDS AND ANTICIPATED FUTURE STANDARDS OF NEW SFA DIRECTORS TO MEET MINIMUM AND PREFERRED EDUCATION HIRING STANDARDS IN SMALL AND MEDIUM SFAS, AS REPORTED BY STATE CN DIRECTORS, SY 2015–16.....109

TABLE 6-12—SA REQUIREMENTS OF NEW SFA DIRECTORS TO MEET MINIMUM AND PREFERRED EDUCATION HIRING STANDARDS IN LARGE/VERY LARGE SFAS, AS REPORTED BY STATE CN DIRECTORS, SY 2015–16110

TABLE 6-13—CURRENT MINIMUM EDUCATION STANDARD FOR STATE CN DIRECTOR POSITION, SY 2015–16.....112

TABLE 7-1—PERCENTAGE OF SFAS WHERE MARKETING OF FOOD AND BEVERAGES WAS PROHIBITED OR ALLOWED, BY SFA CHARACTERISTICS IN SY 2015–16116

TABLE 7-2—AGENCY PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR SETTING FOOD AND BEVERAGE MARKETING POLICIES IN SCHOOLS IN SY 2015–16..117

TABLE 7-3—AMONG SFAS THAT DID NOT PROHIBIT OR RESTRICT FOOD AND BEVERAGE MARKETING,¹ TYPES OF FOODS, BEVERAGES, AND BRANDS MARKETED IN SCHOOLS IN SY 2015–16118

TABLE 7-4— SFAS IMPLEMENTING AT LEAST ONE SMARTER LUNCHROOM STRATEGY BY CATEGORY IN SY 2015–16.....120

TABLE 7-5—AMONG SFAS IMPLEMENTING SMARTER LUNCHROOM STRATEGIES, THE MEAN AND MEDIAN REPORTED PROPORTION OF SCHOOLS WITHIN THE SFA IMPLEMENTING AT LEAST ONE STRATEGY, BY CATEGORY IN SY 2015–16121

TABLE 8-1—PERCENTAGE OF SFAS THAT STATED FOOD SERVICE EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENTS WERE NEEDED FOR SY 2015–16, BY SFA CHARACTERISTICS126

TABLE 8-2—AMONG SFAS THAT NEED EQUIPMENT REPLACED, PERCENTAGE THAT NEED TO REPLACE SPECIFIC FOOD SERVICE EQUIPMENT IN SY 2015–16127

TABLE 8-3—AMONG SFAS THAT RECEIVED AN EQUIPMENT ASSISTANCE GRANT IN SY 2014–15, FOOD SERVICE EQUIPMENT THAT WAS OR WILL BE PURCHASED WITH THE GRANT128

TABLE 8-4—PERCENT OF SFAS REPORTING PER-UNIT CAPITALIZATION THRESHOLD LOWER THAN THE FEDERAL REQUIREMENT, AMONG SFAS THAT NEED EQUIPMENT REPLACED IN SY 2015–16128



Appendix Tables

TABLE C-1—SFAS IN THE 2014–15 FNS-742 UNIVERSE FILE (SAMPLING FRAME), BY ENROLLMENT SIZE AND PERCENT OF STUDENTS CERTIFIED FOR F/RP LUNCH C-3

TABLE C-2—STRATIFICATION AND SAMPLE ALLOCATION PLAN BASED ON OVERALL SAMPLE OF 1,750 COMPLETED SFAS PER YEAR (7,000 ACROSS THE 4 STUDY YEARS) C-5

TABLE C-3—POPULATION, UNWEIGHTED, AND WEIGHTED SAMPLE DISTRIBUTIONS C-8

TABLE C-4—COMPARISON OF PRECISION BETWEEN THE PLANNED SAMPLE AND THE ACTUAL SAMPLE C-10

TABLE C-5—COMPARISON OF MDD BETWEEN THE PLANNED SAMPLE AND THE ACTUAL SAMPLE C-11

TABLE D-1—AMONG SAs WITH CHARTER SCHOOLS, THE NUMBER OF CHARTER SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN THE NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM (NSLP) AND THE SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM (SBP), SCHOOL YEAR (SY) 2015–16..... D-3

TABLE D-2—AVERAGE PRICE CHARGED BY SFAS FOR A FULL PRICE BREAKFAST, SY 2011–12 TO SY 2015–16, BY SFA CHARACTERISTICS AND SCHOOL TYPE D-5

TABLE D-3—AVERAGE PRICE CHARGED BY SFAS FOR A FULL PRICE BREAKFAST IN “OTHER” SCHOOLS,¹ SY 2011–12 TO SY 2015–16, BY SFA CHARACTERISTICS D-6

TABLE D-4—PERCENTAGE OF SFAS USING VARIOUS METHODS TO TRACK AND COUNT MEALS SERVED TO STUDENTS IN THE CAFETERIA AND AT NON-CAFETERIA POS, SY 2015–16 D-8

TABLE D-5—ALTERNATIVE POS METHODS USED BY SFAS FOR BREAKFAST AND LUNCH SERVICE, SY 2015–16 D-8

TABLE D-6—DISTRIBUTION OF SFAS BY ANNUAL REVENUES AS A PERCENTAGE OF ANNUAL EXPENDITURES, SY 2013–14 AND SY 2014–15 D-9

TABLE D-7—PERCENTAGE OF SFAS THAT RECOVERED MONEY OWED FROM UNPAID SCHOOL MEALS, AMONG THOSE THAT TRACK THE AMOUNT OWED IN SY 2014–15 D-10

TABLE D-8—TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE THAT SAs PROVIDED TO SFAS, “OTHER” CATEGORY, SY 2015–16 D-11

List of Figures

FIGURE 1-1—KEY TO TABULAR PRESENTATION OF PAIR-WISE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CELL VALUES16

FIGURE 2-1—PERCENTAGE OF SFAS WITH ALL SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN NSLP, SY 2011–12 THROUGH SY 2015–16, BY SCHOOL TYPE23

FIGURE 2-2—PERCENTAGE OF SFAS WITH ALL SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN SBP, SY 2011–12 THROUGH SY 2015–16, BY SCHOOL TYPE24

FIGURE 2-3—PERCENTAGE OF SFAS WITH ALL SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN ONLY SBP, ONLY NSLP, AND BOTH NSLP AND SBP IN SY 2014-15 AND SY 2015-1625

FIGURE 3-1—PERCENTAGE OF SFAS USING MANUAL AND AUTOMATED SCHOOL MEAL APPLICATION ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATIONS, BY BASIS FOR ELIGIBILITY, SY 2015–1645



FIGURE 3-2—STATE AGENCIES’ USE OF VARIOUS CRITERIA FOR SECOND REVIEW OF SCHOOL MEAL APPLICATIONS IN AT-RISK LEAs, SY 2015–16¹47

FIGURE 4-1—PERCENTAGE OF SFAs USING VARIOUS METHODS TO TRACK AND COUNT F/RP MEALS SERVED TO STUDENTS IN THE CAFETERIA AND AT NON-CAFETERIA POS, SY 2015–1663

FIGURE 4-2—ALTERNATIVE POS METHODS¹ USED BY SFAs FOR BREAKFAST AND LUNCH SERVICE, SY 2015–16.....66

FIGURE 5-1—DISTRIBUTION OF SFAs BY ANNUAL REVENUES AS A PERCENTAGE OF ANNUAL EXPENDITURES, SY 2013–14 AND SY 2014–1576

FIGURE 5-2—PERCENTAGE OF SFAs THAT RECOVER MONEY OWED FROM UNPAID SCHOOL MEALS, AMONG THOSE THAT TRACK THE AMOUNT OWED IN SY 2014–1581

FIGURE 6-1—METHODS TO DOCUMENT CE AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES COMPLETED BY SCHOOL NUTRITION PERSONNEL, BY SFA USE (OR PLANNED USE), SY 2015–16.....91

FIGURE 6-2—SFAs’ PERCEPTION OF THE UTILITY OF THE FNS PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS TRAINING TRACKING TOOL, SY 2015–1692

FIGURE 6-3—PERCENTAGE OF SFAs THAT PERCEIVED CHALLENGES IN DOCUMENTING PERSONNEL COMPLETION OF CE AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES, SY 2015–1693

FIGURE 6-4—PERCENTAGE OF SFAs WHOSE SCHOOL NUTRITION PERSONNEL RECEIVED TRAINING AND TA IN SPECIFIC SUBTOPICS, SY 2015–1697

FIGURE 6-5—TRAINING AND TA THAT SAs PROVIDED TO SFAs, SY 2015–16100

FIGURE 6-6—PROVIDERS OF TRAINING AND TA TO SFA PERSONNEL, SY 2015–16.....101

FIGURE 6-7—AVERAGE FREQUENCY OF SFA COMMUNICATION WITH TEAM UP MENTORS, SY 2015–16102

FIGURE 6-8—SAs REQUIRING NEW SFA DIRECTORS TO MEET PROFESSIONAL HIRING STANDARDS, SY 2015–16.....108

FIGURE 6-9—STATE AGENCIES REPORTING SFA CHALLENGES IN MEETING THE NEW SFA DIRECTOR HIRING STANDARDS, BY STATE AGENCIES WITH AND WITHOUT CHARTER SCHOOLS, SY 2015–16111

FIGURE 6-10—AMONG STATE AGENCIES WITH EDUCATION STANDARDS, ACCEPTED COLLEGE MAJORS THAT MEET THE EDUCATION SPECIFIED IN THE HIRING STANDARDS FOR THE STATE CN DIRECTOR POSITIONS, SY 2015–16.....112

FIGURE 7-1—AMONG SFAs THAT ALLOW FOOD AND BEVERAGE MARKETING, SFAs’ PERCEPTIONS OF ANTICIPATED FINANCIAL PROFITS FROM FOOD AND BEVERAGE MARKETING, BY TYPE OF MARKETING POLICY IN SY 2015–16119

Appendix Figures

FIGURE D-1—STATES BY FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE (FNS) REGION AND THE REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM OPERATIONS (CN-OPS-II) YEAR 1’S SAMPLE OF SFAs D-2

FIGURE D-2—AVERAGE PRICE CHARGED BY SFAs FOR A FULL PRICE BREAKFAST, SY 2011–12 TO SY 2015–16, BY SCHOOL TYPE D-7

Authors and Contributors

Authors

Jim Murdoch	<i>2M Research</i>
Angela Campbell	<i>2M Research</i>
Charlotte Cabili	<i>Mathematica Policy Research</i>
Eric Zeidman	<i>Mathematica Policy Research</i>
Roderick Harrison	<i>2M Research</i>
Allison Ottenbacher	<i>2M Research</i>
Danielle Chelminsky	<i>Mathematica Policy Research</i>
Moyo Kimathi	<i>2M Research</i>
Nick Beyler	<i>2M Research</i>

Contributors

Gail Clark	<i>2M Research</i>
Cindy Romero	<i>2M Research</i>
Joshua Townley	<i>2M Research</i>
Anne Gordon	<i>Mathematica Policy Research</i>
Erika Gordon	<i>2M Research</i>
Peyton McGee	<i>2M Research</i>

Acronyms Used in Report

Acronym	Name
AR	Administrative Review
ARRA	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009
CACFP	Child and Adult Care Food Program
CCD	Common Core of Data
CEP	Community Eligibility Provision
CIP	Continuous Improvement Plan
CN	Child Nutrition
CN-OPS-II	Child Nutrition Program Operations Study II
CE	Continuing Education
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CPI	Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers
DC-M	Direct Certification with Medicaid
F/RP	Free or Reduced Price
FDD	Food Distribution Division
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
HHFKA	Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010
HUSSC	HealthierUS School Challenge
ICN	Institute of Child Nutrition
ISP	Identified Student Percentage
JKn	Jackknife
LEA	Local Education Agency
MDD	Minimum Detectable Difference

Acronym	Name
MOS	Measure of Size
NCES	National Center for Education Statistics
NSLP	National School Lunch Program
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OVS	Offer Versus Serve
PIN	Personal Identification Number
POS	Point-of-Sale
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
SY	School Year
TA	Technical Assistance
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
VCR	Verification Collection Report

1 Overview

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 largest of these programs provides school meals. The **National School Lunch Program (NSLP)** and **School Breakfast Program (SBP)** serve lunches and breakfasts to an average of 30 million and 15 million children, respectively, each school day.

Three additional programs and program components operate outside the regular school day to supplement the NSLP and SBP.¹

- The **NSLP Afterschool Snack Component** provides snacks that meet Federal requirements to children in eligible afterschool programs that provide regularly scheduled educational or enrichment activities in a supervised environment. Free or reduced price snacks are offered to eligible children.
- The **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program** provides free suppers and/or snacks that meet Federal requirements to children in low-income areas in At-Risk Afterschool care centers, such as schools, libraries, or community centers.
- The **Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)** provides free meals to children in low-income areas during the summer at authorized sites.

All children, regardless of income, are eligible to participate in NSLP and SBP, although these programs also provide a safety net for low-income school-age children. Thus, children in income-eligible households participating in NSLP and SBP may receive free or reduced price (F/RP) meals. Traditionally, eligibility is based on household income. Children from households earning at or below 130 percent of the Federal poverty level (FPL) qualify for free meals, while children from households with incomes between 130 and 185 percent of FPL pay a reduced price for meals.²

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA) of 2010 made numerous changes to the school-based CN programs, including options to reach more children in low-income areas and an increased emphasis on improving the nutrition of school meals. This legislation and other congressional mandates have shaped and strengthened USDA's goals to combat child hunger and obesity and improve diet and health among low-income populations.

1.1 Study Objectives

The multiyear study of Child Nutrition Program Operations (CN-OPS-II) examines several school-based CN programs (NSLP, SBP, NSLP Afterschool Snack Component, CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program, and SFSP).³ This report presents findings from CN-OPS-II Year 1, which collected data during

¹ Other CN programs not addressed in this study include the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), Food Distribution Programs, and the Special Milk Program.

² For SY 2015–16, the F/RP eligibility cutoffs (130 and 185 percent of FPL) were equal to household incomes for a household of four of \$31,525 and \$44,863, respectively.

³ The first Child Nutrition Program Operations Study (CN-OPS) was conducted over 4 school years, from SY 1988–89 to SY 1991–92.

school year (SY) 2015–16. CN-OPS-II Year 2 will collect data on SY 2016–17, followed by annual collections through SY 2018–19, for a total of 4 years.⁴

In all years of study, 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 (TA) for School Food Authorities (SFAs)⁵ and State Agencies (SAs) responsible for administering the CN programs.

The study is authorized by Sec. 28(a)(1) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act,⁶ which directs USDA to perform annual national performance assessments of SBP and NSLP.

To address all study objectives, CN-OPS-II includes annual surveys of SAs and SFAs. SAs are asked to respond to the CN-OPS-II survey each year. A nationally representative sample of SFAs was selected from the SY 2014–15 FNS-742 dataset and randomly divided into four groups, with different SFAs assigned to each survey year and only the largest—those with enrollments of 100,000 students or more—asked to respond more than once.⁷ The survey design is modular and includes core topics that are administered every year and special topics administered in one or more years. The modular survey design and allocation of the SFA sample to different survey years are intended to decrease the burden on respondents.

In the first year of CN-OPS-II data collection (SY 2015–16), respondents were asked to report on the current school year and, for select topics, on the prior school year. Retrospective data for SY 2014–15 fill a gap between CN-OPS-II and the prior School Nutrition Program Operations Study (SN-OPS).⁸ SN-OPS collected and analyzed data for 3 school years (2011–12, 2012–13, and 2013–14) and provided baseline estimates for many aspects of the CN programs that are undergoing changes with HHFKA implementation.

The data from CN-OPS-II allow for cross-sectional, longitudinal, and in some cases, retrospective analyses. Cross-sectional analyses provide a snapshot of program operations at a point in time; these

⁴ The contract includes a base period of 2 school years: SY 2015–16 and SY 2016–17, and 2 optional 1-year periods, SY 2017–18 and SY 2018–19.

⁵ SFAs, local educational agencies (LEAs), and 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. This report does not refer to LEAs, but readers should note that recent NSLP statutes and regulations refer to LEAs for some functions addressed in the report.

⁶ Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 79 P.L. 396, 60 Stat. 230 (1946).

⁷ Every 2 years, 24 SFAs will be asked to complete the study, and 7 SFAs will be asked to complete the study in each of the 4 years. The initial samples for Years 2 through 4 will be supplemented with randomly selected SFAs from the population of new SFAs in those years.

⁸ See U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support. (2016). *Special Nutrition Program operations study (SN-OPS): SY 2013–14 report*. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ops/SNOPSyr3.pdf>

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 and thus does not support cohort-type analyses, except for the very large SFAs that are asked to complete the survey each year. For this first report, retrospective data on participation and school breakfast prices were collected for SY 2014–15. Similarly, retrospective data on some financial variables were collected for SY 2013–14 and SY 2014–15. These retrospective collections facilitate year-over-year comparisons and cohort-type tests to detect differences over the years.

The remainder of this chapter includes background about recent changes in CN policies and program operations (Section 1.2); a review of survey topics covered in the first year of CN-OPS-II (Section 1.3); data collection procedures (Section 1.4); SFA sample selection, weights, and adjustments (Section 1.5); presentation of results and statistical tests (Section 1.6); and limitations of the study (Section 1.7).

1.2 Recent Changes in CN Policies and Program Operations

Recent USDA policies, program guidance, and grant funding have influenced school-based CN program characteristics, administration, and operations. Data collected from CN-OPS-II can be examined in relation to these changes. Table 1-1 and Table 1-2 list major updates in program policy in two categories: (1) program integrity, which includes changes in methods for determining eligibility and methods for reducing program errors; and (2) promotion of healthier school foods.

Efforts to promote program integrity (while maintaining participation) are listed in Table 1-1. USDA has taken steps to expand and improve direct certification of children for school meals. Students in households that receive benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) are categorically eligible for free meals and may be directly certified (i.e., approved without an application). Direct Certification with Medicaid (DC-M) expands the number of children who may be directly certified in States approved to participate in the DC-M Demonstration. Direct certification benchmarks provide a means to identify SAs that need improvement.⁹ The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) allows schools and school districts in low-income areas to eliminate the school meal application process, serve meals at no charge to all students, and receive reimbursement based on direct certification results. The Administrative Review (AR) process was designed to provide a more robust review of school meals program operations to reduce payment errors and improve school monitoring and oversight. This process includes a comprehensive off-site and on-site evaluation of all the SFAs participating in the school meals programs. The AR also requires SAs to improve targeting of resources to those school districts with the highest risk of non-compliance.

Efforts to improve the nutrition of foods consumed at school are listed in Table 1-2. These include an emphasis on the school lunchroom environment (HealthierUS School Challenge [HUSSC]); introducing school children to fresh fruits and vegetables, with nutrition education (FFVP and Farm to School Program); grants to help schools purchase equipment and to train staff to make preparing healthy meals easier and more efficient (NSLP Equipment Assistance Grants); revised professional standards for training, supported by TA to school nutrition professionals (Team Up for School Nutrition Success

⁹ States with direct certification results that fall below benchmarks are required to implement a continuous improvement plan (CIP) that outlines the specific measures to be taken, the timeline for implementation, and goals for improvement.

Initiative, hereafter referred to as “Team Up”) and tools for tracking compliance; and new nutrition standards for school meals and competitive foods.

Table 1-1—Recent provisions for CN program eligibility determination and program integrity

Category	Year	Description	Prevalence
Direct Certification with Medicaid (DC-M)	Demonstrations: SY 2012–13 (4 States) SY 2016–17 (7 States) SY 2017–18 (8 States)	HHFKA established a demonstration project to test and implement the use of Medicaid for direct certification.	Total: 19 States approved to implement
Direct Certification Benchmarks	July 2010 through December 2016	Direct Certification Improvement Grants were awarded quarterly to fund technology improvements, TA to LEAs, or new or revised State or LEA direct certification systems. State Agencies may also propose to use a portion of the \$22 million in grant funds for activities related to DC-M.	52 Direct Certification Grants were awarded from January 2011 to September 2016 totaling \$22,913,676.07. Note, as projects completed, funds were returned and made available for upcoming direct certification grant applicants.
Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)	SY 2011–12: First year of a 3-year pilot in 11 States SY 2014–15: Available nationwide	Authorized by HHFKA, CEP schools and school districts serve breakfasts and lunches at no cost to all students, for up to 4 consecutive school years. Schools, groups of schools, and school districts are eligible to elect CEP if at least 40% of students are identified as eligible for free meals by direct certification. The percentage of identified students is multiplied by 1.6 to determine the percentage of meals to be Federally reimbursed at the free meal rate, with the remainder reimbursed at the paid rate. Participating schools and districts cover any costs above the USDA reimbursement with non-Federal funds.	More than 20,500 schools and more than 3,400 school districts as of September 2016
Administrative Review (AR)	Implemented in SY 2013–14	As required by HHFKA, the process by which State Agencies review SFAs was revised to replace separate efforts (Coordinated Review Effort and the School Meals Initiative) with a unified comprehensive review process conducted on a 3-year cycle. This new process is designed to reduce program errors.	Nearly all SFAs received an AR by the end of the first 3-year cycle (SY 2015–16).

Table 1-2—Recent provisions for promoting improved/healthier school foods

Category	Year	Description	Prevalence
HealthierUS School Challenge (HUSSC)	Established in 2004. Beginning in 2014, grantees were required to incorporate the Smarter Lunchrooms program. ^a	HUSSC recognizes schools that are creating healthier school environments by promoting good nutrition and physical activity. Smarter Lunchrooms encourage healthy eating habits by making simple changes in how food is presented and placed on the serving line.	Grants awarded to 19 States in 2015 and 14 States in 2016.
Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)	Available nationwide in 2008.	FFVP operates in low-income schools participating in NSLP and provides fresh fruits and vegetables at no cost to elementary school students during the school day, outside of meal times.	Funding was \$150 million in SY 2011–12 and will continue at that level, adjusted for inflation. Slightly more than 25% of elementary schools participate.
Farm to School Program	Grants available to State Agencies and school districts beginning in 2013.	Authorized by HHFKA to assist State Agencies and LEAs in bringing locally or regionally produced foods into school cafeterias and teaching students where food comes from.	\$5 million awarded in grants annually.
NSLP Equipment Assistance Grants	Annual grants awarded since 2009.	Grants to help schools purchase needed equipment and provide staff training to make preparing and serving healthier meals easier and more efficient.	\$216 million awarded from 2009 through 2016 (average of \$36 million/year). ^b
Team Up for School Nutrition Success Initiative	Piloted in 2014; available nationwide in 2015.	Provides tailored TA to school nutrition professionals, using a peer mentor model, on topics such as menu planning, financial management, increasing program participation, and food safety.	Training conducted in 44 States and three U.S. Territories in 2016. ^c
Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Programs Personnel	Final rule published in March 2015. Training Tracking Tool released May 2015.	Staff required to complete training on an annual basis. To help State Agencies and SFAs track staff training, FNS developed the Training Tracking Tool (in partnership with ITCON), a user-friendly web-based tool for entering training information and generating reports.	Applied to all States and SFAs beginning with SY 2015–16.

Category	Year	Description	Prevalence
Nutrition Standards for School Meals	Final rule published in January 2012.	School meals must increase the availability of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk; reduce the levels of sodium, saturated fat, and <i>trans</i> fat in meals; and meet nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements. Requirements vary by student age.	All SFAs were required to implement the nutrition standards in SY 2012–2013, except for sodium requirements, for which the first target was required in SY 2014–2015.
Smart Snacks in School Standards	Interim final rule published in July 2015 and final rule published in July 2016.	All foods and beverages sold at school in competition with school meals must satisfy limits for calorie, sodium, fat, and total sugar content. Requirements vary by student age.	All SFAs were required to implement the Smart Snacks in School Standards in SY 2014–2015.

^a U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Communications. (2014, March 12). *USDA announces support for smarter lunchrooms* [Press release]. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pressrelease/2014/003714>

^b U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2016). *2016 NSLP equipment assistance grants*. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/2016-nslp-equipment-assistance-grants>

^c Institute of Child Nutrition. (2016). *USDA kicks off expansion of the Team Up for School Nutrition Success initiative*. Retrieved from <http://teamup.theicn.org/uncategorized/usda-kicks-off-expansion-of-the-team-up-for-school-nutrition-success-initiative/>

1.3 Topics Covered in CN-OPS-II in SY 2015–2016

The CN-OPS-II SA and SFA surveys include survey topics administered in past studies of CN program operations, plus additional topics designed to measure response to recent changes in program regulation and guidance. Table 1-3 and Table 1-4 show the survey topics covered in the CN-OPS-II surveys and those covered by the prior SN-OPS study, for those interested in constructing a time series of results spanning the two studies.

The CN-OPS-II SFA survey includes the core topics of participation, food service characteristics and operations, meal prices, revenues, and expenditures. These core topics were administered in each year of SN-OPS and will be included in each annual CN-OPS-II survey. Within these topics, CN-OPS-II added questions to collect data on the following:

- **Participation**
 - Participation of SFAs and schools in the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program
 - Participation of SFAs and schools in SFSP
 - SFAs' strategies to raise awareness of these programs
- **Food Service Operations**
 - Number of years that special provision options (Provisions 2 and 3 and CEP) have been used by schools
 - Whether and how schools grouped together to participate in CEP
 - Whether any schools are eligible for CEP but do not participate

Table 1-3—SFA Director Survey modules for SN-OPS and CN-OPS-II

Module	SN-OPS SY 2011–12	SN-OPS SY 2012–13	SN-OPS SY 2013–14	CN-OPS-II SY 2015–16
Topics Collected in All Years				
School participation	X	X	X	X
Student participation	X	X	X	X
Food service characteristics and operations	X	X	X	X
Meal prices	X	X	X	X
Revenues	X	X	X	X
Expenditures	X	X	X	X
Topics Collected in Some SN-OPS Years and CN-OPS-II First Year				
Food service equipment		X		X
Meal counting, claiming, and recouping of unpaid meals	X			X
Training and professional standards ^a		X		X
SFA director background ^b	X	X		X
Smarter Lunchrooms			X	X
New Topics in CN-OPS-II				
Eligibility determination and verification				X
Financial management				X
Food and beverage marketing				X
Topics Collected by SN-OPS but not in CN-OPS-II First Year				
Cooperative purchasing			X	
Involvement in other CN programs	X			
Communication issues	X			
Local wellness policies		X		
Updated meal pattern requirements		X	X	
Procurement issues and Farm to School activities	X	X	X	
Food safety program	X		X	

^a This topic was included as “Training and Technical Assistance” in SN-OPS. In CN-OPS-II, it includes training, TA, and professional standards.

^b This topic was called “SFA Foodservice Staff Background” in SN-OPS.

Five special topics included in the CN-OPS-II SFA survey were also administered in one or more years of SN-OPS. These are food service equipment; meal counting, claiming, and recouping of unpaid meals; training and professional standards; SFA director background; and implementation of Smarter Lunchrooms strategies. Two of these topics include new questions.

- **Training and Professional Standards.** New questions in this module ask about professional standards for State and local school nutrition programs personnel, which went into effect on July 1, 2015.

- **Food Service Equipment.** New questions in this module address the types of equipment that need replacement, and whether the SFA has a per-unit capitalization threshold for food service equipment that is lower than the Federal requirement.¹⁰

Three new survey topics were added to the CN-OPS-II SY 2015–16 SFA survey.

- **Eligibility determination and verification.** These questions inquire about directly certified students and challenges of direct certification, and procedures for and outcomes of application verification.
- **Financial management.** These questions ask about nonprogram food revenue, including whether schools track food sales and the challenges of monitoring costs paid out of food service accounts.
- **Food and beverage marketing.** These questions examine policies regarding food and beverage marketing in schools, where marketing typically includes logos; brand names; spokes-characters (e.g., cartoons); or product names featured to promote the sale of a food or beverage product.

The topic of eligibility determination and verification provides data for assessing progress toward direct certification benchmarks. Questions about financial management provide information about the health of SFAs' finances. Questions about food and beverage marketing provide insight into the school nutrition environment.

Four survey modules included in one or more years of SN-OPS were not included in the first year of the CN-OPS-II SFA survey. Two of these topics—cooperative purchasing and procurement issues—will be included in the second year of the CN-OPS-II SFA survey.

As shown in Table 1-4, the CN-OPS-II State CN Director Survey includes three topics: food service administration, professional standards, and State CN director's background. Although these topics differ from the SN-OPS surveys, each topic includes some questions that appeared under other topics in SN-OPS.

- **Food services administration** includes some questions from the policy section of SN-OPS, with new questions about the "at risk" criterion for LEA review and the number of residential child care institutions (RCCIs) in the State.
- **Professional standards** include some questions from the training and TA section of SN-OPS, with new questions about whether the State provides at least 18 hours of training to SFAs; whether the State CN director completes 15 or more hours of continuing education or training; challenges in meeting training requirements in SFAs with RCCIs or charter schools; methods of tracking training activities of SA staff; and credential requirements for small, midsize, and large LEAs.
- **State CN director background** includes some questions that appeared on SN-OPS (CN director's experience, education, and education requirements of the position), plus new questions about the CN director's role and tenure.

¹⁰ The Federal per-unit capitalization threshold (currently \$5,000) sets a minimum cost of equipment eligible for Federal grant funding. Districts may allow a lower threshold.

Table 1-4—State CN Director Survey modules for SN-OPS and CN-OPS-II

Module	SN-OPS SY 2011–12	SN-OPS SY 2012–13	SN-OPS SY 2013–14	CN-OPS-II SY 2015–16
Resources and finances	X	X	X	
Operational procedures	X	X	X	
Policy	X	X		
Training and TA	X	X		
Updated AR process			X	
State data systems			X	
Food service administration				X
Professional standards				X
State CN director background	X			X

1.4 Major Themes for CN-OPS-II in SY 2015–2016

The remainder of this report is organized in chapters that present the major themes and findings of the study.

1.4.1 Child Nutrition Program Participation

Data collected from the State CN Director Survey and the SFA Director Survey provide estimates of the percentages of schools and students participating in NSLP and/or SBP by grade level and charter school status, number of meals served, and school participation in the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program and SFSP.

1.4.2 School Meal Program Eligibility Determination and Verification

CN-OPS-II provides measures of the prevalence of direct certification, information regarding the technology used for direct certification, and the numbers of students who are directly certified. It also examines the methods used by SFAs for application verification.

1.4.3 School Meal Prices and Counting

Data from CN-OPS-II provide estimates of average prices for full price, reduced price, and adult meals; the distribution of technologies used to track meals served; methods of counting meals at non-cafeteria points-of-service; and training and oversight provided to cashiers.

1.4.4 School Food Service Financial Management

The SFA director survey provides information about annual SFA revenues and expenditures, how schools manage unpaid meal charges (including debt collection efforts), and nonprogram food revenue. These data allow for examination of the health of SFA finances and changes in revenues and expenditures over time.

1.4.5 Professional Standards and Training for School Nutrition Program Staff

State and local nutrition personnel are required to complete job-specific training annually on topics such as menu planning, food production, purchasing/procurement, communications, marketing, administrative practices, nutrition, food safety standards, and the efficient and effective use of USDA-purchased food. CN-OPS-II collected data to assess training practices under the updated Professional Standards requirements. Findings include the types of training and TA needed most by SFAs; the sources

of training and TA used (including Team Up training); whether staff is meeting requirements; and how SFAs track compliance with training and continuing education requirements.

1.4.6 Policies to Improve the School Nutrition Environment

Several new policies focus on the school cafeteria; they include policies related to the marketing of food and beverages, and implementation of Smarter Lunchrooms activities to encourage healthy eating. Data from CN-OPS-II provide information about who is responsible for allowing or restricting food and beverage marketing, the types of foods and beverages that are marketed in schools, the role of marketing in SFA finances, and methods for implementing Smarter Lunchrooms.

1.4.7 School Food Service Equipment

A potential limitation SFAs face in planning nutritious meals is available kitchen equipment. CN-OPS-II provides estimates of the number and proportion of SFAs with equipment that needs replacement by type of equipment, how SFAs use or intend to use NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant funding, and SFA-level per-unit capitalization thresholds for food service equipment.

1.5 Data Collection Procedures¹¹

Both the SY 2015–16 State CN Director Survey and the SY 2015–16 SFA Director Survey were administered as web surveys using Qualtrics, a commercial survey platform that provides a range of services for monitoring data collection and contacting participants. The State CN Director Survey can be found in Appendix A, and the SFA Director Survey is provided in Appendix B.

The Year 1 data collection period for both surveys started in the second week of May 2016 and continued until October 21, 2016. The response rates for the State CN Director and SFA Director surveys were 100 percent and 81.1 percent, respectively (Appendix C).

1.6 SFA Sample Selection, Weights, and Adjustments

1.6.1 Sample Design

Two samples were selected for Year 1 data collection. For the CN Director Survey, a census of all 55 SAs was selected. The 55 SAs include all 50 U.S. States, 4 U.S. Territories, and the District of Columbia. For the SFA Director Survey, a stratified probability proportional-to-size (PPS) sample of SFAs was selected, using the number of students in the SFA as the measure of size. The target universe (also called the population) was all SFAs operating in public school districts in the United States and outlying Territories that were required to submit the FNS-742 SFA Verification Collection Report Summary Data form to FNS for SY 2014–15.¹² In general, all SFAs that participated in NSLP or SBP are included in the target universe, with the following exceptions: SFAs that operate only in RCCIs that do not have daytime students, SFAs that do not have students who are approved for F/RP meals, SFAs in some outlying Territories that are not required to complete form FNS-742, and private schools that participate in NSLP.

The SY 2014–15 FNS-742 database was augmented with data from the U.S. Department of Education's Common Core of Data (CCD) Local Education Agency Universe Survey File maintained by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) to create the final sampling frame. The sampling unit was the SFA,

¹¹ See Appendix C for a detailed description of data collection procedures.

¹² OMB# 0584-0026 7 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 245, Determining Eligibility for Free & Reduced Price Meals, expiration date 4/30/2016.

which usually (but not always) coincides with an LEA, as defined by NCES.¹³ Exceptions include SFAs that operate school food programs for multiple school districts and those operating 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 CCD universe file. Those that did not match remained in the sampling frame with an indicator denoting that they do not have associated CCD data. See Appendix C for the distributions of the sampling frame over different characteristics.

To select a nationally representative sample, the sampling frame of 14,854 SFAs was stratified into 10 explicit strata based on combinations of the size of the SFA in terms of number of students and the percentage of students approved for F/RP meals (Table 1-5). The largest number of SFAs was in stratum 2 (7,810), while the largest number of students was in stratum 8 (14,508,774). Moreover, more than 50 percent of the students in the SFAs in the sampling frame were in strata 7, 8, 9, and 10. Therefore, a sampling design based solely on the count of SFAs within strata would not represent the students (i.e., it would contain mainly small SFAs), and a sample design based solely on the count of students would also not represent the SFAs (i.e., it would contain mainly large SFAs). To balance representing students and SFAs, some SFAs were selected with certainty and some with PPS procedures where the measure of size was based on the square root of the number of students in each SFA (Appendix C).¹⁴ Before sampling, the sampling units were sorted by their location in one of the seven FNS regions (see Table 1-6) and by their location in one of the four urban/rural categories defined by NCES. Such sorting adds implicit stratification to the sampling frame to ensure balance on these additional factors.

¹³ An SFA is defined by Title 7 (Agriculture), Subtitle B, Chapter II, Subchapter B, Part 250.3 (Definitions) of the CFR as “the governing body which is responsible for the administration of one or more schools and which has the legal authority to operate a nonprofit school food service therein or otherwise approved by FNS to operate the NSLP.” Most—but not all—SFAs operate within a single LEA, but the two entities are technically separate administrative units. For further information on SFAs, see 7 CFR § 250.3.

An LEA is defined by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, signed into law in 1965, as “a public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools.” (34 CFR § 300.28)

¹⁴ See Chapter 3, Section 3.5.2., Domain estimates, in Valliant, R., Dever, J. A., & Kreuter, F. (2013). *Practical tools for designing and weighting survey samples*. New York: Springer-Verlag New York.

Table 1-5—Stratification of the sampling frame

Stratum	SFA Size (Students)	Percent Students Approved for F/RP Meals ^a	Universe	
			SFAs	Students
1	0–2,499	High	3,186	2,062,994
2		Low	7,810	6,587,739
3	2,500–4,999	High	421	1,457,686
4		Low	1,472	5,214,147
5	5,000–9,999	High	260	1,818,285
6		Low	793	5,514,825
7	10,000–99,999	High	256	5,940,334
8		Low	625	14,508,774
9	100,000–299,999	All	24	3,534,678
10	≥300,000	All	7	4,330,908
Total			14,854	50,970,370

^a SFAs with ≥60 percent of students approved for F/RP lunch were categorized as “high,” while those with <60 percent were categorized as “low.”

1.6.2 Sample and Weights

To conduct the desired statistical analyses, the researchers determined that at least 1,750 SFAs would need to respond to the survey. A sample of 2,496 SFAs was drawn for Year 1 and divided into a primary sample ($n = 2,188$) and a reserve sample ($n = 308$). Assuming a response rate of 80 percent, the primary sample would be sufficient to achieve the needed responses. However, if the response rate in the primary sample was lower than 80 percent, units from the reserve would be needed to ensure 1,750 responses. Because data collection during Year 1 spanned the summer months, the initial response rate in the primary sample was less than 80 percent and the reserve sample was released for the study, making the sample size for Year 1 equal to the entire set of 2,496 SFAs.

Sample weights are required to calculate estimates that represent the universe of SFAs. The theoretical weight for each sampled SFA is the inverse of that SFA’s probability of selection into the sample. Estimates using the theoretical weights will accurately represent the population if every unit responds to the survey. As noted above, however, the final response rate was 81.1 percent (82.4 percent in the primary sample and 70.9 percent in the reserve sample). The researchers performed an analysis of nonresponse to determine if sample estimates (factoring in nonresponse) would still accurately represent the population using the theoretical weights. They found that slight adjustments to the theoretical weights were necessary to ensure that sample estimates would accurately represent the population (Appendix C).

For statistical tests, the variance of the adjusted sample estimates must be computed. Several options exist for making these calculations; the research team selected a jackknife procedure with replicate

weights. Jackknife variance estimation is preferable to other methods; the replicate weights become a permanent addition to the data to allow others to utilize the data.¹⁵

1.7 Presentation of Results and Statistical Tests

CN-OPS-II was designed to collect data from SAs and SFAs that, when summarized, describe participation in and operations of the school meal programs. Most of the summary measures are either percentages (also called proportions or prevalence) or means (also called averages). Because the State CN Director Survey data includes all States (the entire population), statistical tests are not needed for summary measures from the CN Director Survey data (i.e., the summary measures should be treated as *the* population measure). In contrast, summary measures from the SFA Director Survey data should be treated as *estimates* of a population measure. CN-OPS-II was designed to provide estimates of key measures with greater precision for the Nation (± 0.05 at the 95 percent level of confidence) than for and among specific subgroups of SFAs ($\pm 0.07 - \pm 0.10$ at the 95 percent level of confidence).¹⁶

The main categories of SFAs are based on their size in terms of number of students; their location in either urban, suburban, town, or rural areas; the percentage of their students approved for F/RP meals; and their location in one of seven FNS-defined regions of the United States.¹⁷

To understand how to read most of the tables in this report, consider Table 1-6. Observe the following:

- The number of SFAs that completed the survey is $N = 1,984$. However, not all SFAs answered every item on the survey.
- The title identifies the unit of analysis (SFA), the SY that the data pertain to, the summary measure in the table (percent), and the subgroups (SFA Characteristics).
- The first column indicates the group/subgroup over which the summary measures are tabulated. In this example, there are five—the main group, “All” SFAs, and four sets of subgroups of SFAs defined by size, urbanicity, percentage of students approved for F/RP meals, and FNS region. Each category is marked with a row letter (e.g., “a.” is associated with the “Small [1–999 students]” subgroup of SFAs).
- The second column shows the estimates. As noted above, the study was designed to achieve specific precision on these estimates— ± 5 percentage points for the main group (All) and no more than ± 10 percentage points for the subgroups, within the 95 percent confidence interval.
- The last column displays the number of SFAs that the estimated percentage applies to, over the number of SFAs that answered the survey question in parentheses. Note that 1,973 SFAs responded to the question (the unweighted n), which, after applying the survey weights, represents a total of 14,750 SFAs (the weighted n). Therefore, 11 SFAs (i.e., $1,984 - 1,973 = 11$) in the sample did not provide a response to question 9.1. Multiplying the estimated percent by the weighted n (e.g., $0.594 \times 14,750 = 11,732$) gives the national estimate of the number of SFAs that responded “yes” to the question of need for food service equipment replacements in SY

¹⁵ Chowdhury, S. R. (2013). *A comparison of Taylor linearization and balanced repeated replication methods for variance estimation in medical expenditure panel survey*. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Working Paper No. 13004. Retrieved from https://meps.ahrq.gov/data_files/publications/workingpapers/wp_13004.pdf

¹⁶ For a population percentage with a true value of 50 percent, the 95 percent confidence interval is 45 to 55 percent. For a subgroup, it is 40 to 60 percent.

¹⁷ Location in urban, suburban, town, or rural area is determined by NCES (see https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/rural_locales.asp). Regions are defined by FNS. Table 1-6 shows the distribution of States and sampled SFAs by region.

2015–16 (value not shown in Table 1-6). There were 597 small SFAs that responded to the question, representing an estimated 7,403 small SFAs in the Nation. Usually, adding the weighted n s from the subgroups (e.g., small, medium, large, and very large SFAs) sums to the weighted n for all SFAs; however, there will be cases where this is not true due to rounding. Additionally, because not all SFAs were matched to the CCD, there is a group of respondents whose urbanicity is unknown. The estimates by urbanicity are not presented for this group, meaning that sum of the n s over the urbanicity categories will be less than the n s for all SFAs. In Table 1-6, summing over urbanicity yields 14,151 (weighted n) and 1,929 (unweighted n). Therefore, there were $(1,973 - 1,929 =)$ 44 sample SFAs without an urbanicity code, representing an estimated $(14,450 - 14,151 =)$ 299 SFAs in the Nation.

- Statistical tests are denoted as superscripts in two ways. First, numerical superscripts at the end of the subgroup description (SFA size, urbanicity, percent of students approved for F/RP meals, and region) indicate an overall significant difference ($p < 0.05$) in the mean estimates among the categories of that subgroup. These results are based on an overall (omnibus) test of association and are also called tests of the main effects. For example, Table 1-6 indicates that the percentage of SFAs that stated food service equipment replacements were needed for SY 2015–16 were significantly different ($p < .05$) among the SFA size categories, the urbanicity categories, and the region categories. Second, alphabetical superscripts before an estimate denote that the subgroup and the corresponding letter superscript subgroup are significantly different ($p < .05$, see Figure 1-1). These results are based on pair-wise tests among the subgroup categories and were performed whenever the omnibus test indicated a significant difference among subgroup categories. Bonferroni adjustments were applied to p -values in all pair-wise testing.

Other statistical tests are used to discern differences in measures over years or between subgroups. For differences between 2 years, the tests are based on paired differences, meaning that only the cases with data for both years are used to construct the tests. For example, the paired difference test is used in Chapter 2 to determine changes in the number of schools participating in NSLP from SY 2014–15 to SY 2015–16. Differences between subgroups within the same year use difference in means tests. For example, the difference in means test is used in Chapter 5 to determine differences in the average price of full price breakfasts between elementary and middle schools. As noted above, when multiple comparisons are made, the Bonferroni adjustments are used to adjust the p -values for each test.

Table 1-6—Percentage of SFAs that stated food service equipment replacements were needed for SY 2015–16, by SFA characteristics (example)

	Percent of SFAs	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
All SFAs	59.4	14,750 (1,973)
SFA Size¹		
a. Small (1–999 students)	45.4	7,403 (597)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	^a 69.1	5,402 (971)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	^{a,b} 84.4	1,638 (332)
d. Very Large (25,000+ students)	^{a,b,c} 91.6	308 (73)
Urbanicity¹		
e. City	^f 51.0	1,740 (223)
f. Suburban	66.2	3,260 (545)
g. Town	65.5	2,509 (435)
h. Rural	57.4	6,647 (726)
Percent of Students Approved for F/RP Meals		
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	57.4	4,270 (600)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	60.5	4,289 (586)
k. High (60 percent or more F/RP)	59.9	6,191 (787)
Region¹		
l. Mid-Atlantic	54.6	1,424 (215)
m. Midwest	57.2	3,746 (504)
n. Mountain Plains	^o 50.8	2,275 (267)
o. Northeast	69.8	1,668 (223)
p. Southeast	^{l,m,n,r} 73.5	1,207 (220)
q. Southwest	64.3	2,240 (256)
r. Western	54.4	2,190 (288)

¹ An overall statistically significant difference by SFA characteristic ($p < 0.05$) was observed.

Note: Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Bonferroni p -value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the letter.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, question 9.1.

Figure 1-1—Key to tabular presentation of pair-wise statistically significant differences between cell values

SFA Size	Percent of SFAs	Meaning of Superscript Letter
a. Small (1–999 students)	45.4	NA
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	^a 69.1	The value in this cell is significantly different than the corresponding cell in this column, indicated by the row letter in superscript (i.e., medium -sized SFAs had a significantly higher proportion of SFAs that stated food service equipment replacements were needed than small SFAs).
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	^{a,b} 84.4	Large SFAs had a significantly higher proportion than small or medium SFAs.
d. Very large (≥25,000 students)	^{a,b,c} 91.6	Very large SFAs had a significantly higher proportion than small , medium , or large SFAs.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

This report presents findings from surveys of State CN and SFA directors. While the surveys were designed and tested to elicit accurate responses, some error is likely. Respondents may have unknowingly reported incorrect information, inadvertently checked the wrong response, or intentionally skipped a question. Ideally, the mistakes occur randomly, and consequences of such mistakes are minimal (they “average out”), but there is no way to quantify their magnitude. When numerous SFAs left the same question unanswered, which happened for some of the questions concerning sources of revenues and expenses, estimates could not be made and were left out of the report.¹⁸

While some tabulations may suggest causal relationships, as a descriptive study, causality cannot be established with CN-OPS-II data. Instead, the tabulations can be used for formulating 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. For example, Table 1-6 indicates that needs for equipment replacement vary significantly by FNS region (specifically, the Southeast region has the highest rate responding “yes”). It would be incorrect to conclude that operating in a location in the Southeast region *causes* the need for equipment replacement to be more prevalent. Instead, the finding may spurn interest in a detailed investigation of several factors to understand the underlying reasons for regional differences in prevalence rates.

The sample of SFAs was designed to represent the universe of SFAs and their students within the design categories discussed in section 1.6.1. 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

¹⁸ Items where less than 50 percent of the applicable subgroup answered the question were not tabulated unless the specific topic warranted an examination of the limited data.

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

2 School and Student Participation

2.1 Introduction

As part of the Federal effort to enhance and maintain the wellbeing of all Americans, USDA's CN school-based programs specifically target the nutritional requirements of children through schools. Periodic estimates of participation in CN programs are necessary to inform policy discussions and to provide stakeholders with information on both the context and results of CN program efforts.

Existing estimates of participation by schools and students in CN programs are aggregate measures; they reflect the (sometimes offsetting) forces that encourage or discourage participation. For example, changes in technology that ease the administrative burden associated with participation may lead to an increase in the number of schools participating in NSLP. At the same time, demographic and economic changes may reduce the overall demand for school meals. Aggregate estimates of the number of students participating in NSLP do not necessarily reveal the relative importance of such offsetting forces, but they do facilitate early detection of trends, which may suggest areas for additional analysis or policy reviews.

Each year, CN-OPS-II collects information on participation in NSLP and SBP. For this iteration, the study focused on SY 2014–15 and SY 2015–16. This year's collection also included data on participation in the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program and the SFSP.

2.2 Background

NSLP and SBP are Federal meal assistance programs that operate through schools. The overarching goal of these programs is to ensure that children do not go hungry, and have access to nutritious meals and snacks that optimize their academic performance and development while at school. NSLP, one of the largest nutrition assistance programs administered by USDA–FNS, was first established in 1946. SBP, which began in 1966, was made permanent in 1975. Both programs are usually administered at the State level by a CN director situated within SAs that may be departments of education, health, or agriculture, and at the local level by SFAs, which are typically individual school districts or groups of smaller districts. SAs are tasked with conveying Federal requirements to SFAs and monitoring SFAs for compliance with such requirements.

All public and private nonprofit schools and RCCIs are eligible to participate in NSLP and SBP. All children in participating schools or institutions are eligible to obtain school meals and after-school snacks provided through these programs. Free meals are available to children from families with household incomes at or below 130 percent of FPL, and reduced price meals are available to children from families with incomes between 130 percent and 185 percent of FPL. Full price (paid) meals are made available for children from families with incomes above 185 percent of FPL, or students who are eligible for but not certified to receive F/RP meals.

Eligibility for F/RP meals can be established in multiple ways. Children can be determined eligible through an application process that usually happens at the beginning of a school year, but which can occur at any point during the school year. Alternatively, children may be directly certified without a formal application process because their families participate in SNAP, the Medicaid program (in some States), TANF, or FDPIR. Children are also categorically eligible to participate if they are listed as homeless, migrant, runaway, or participating in Head Start by State and local agencies. The school meals programs also include multiple streamlined counting and claiming provisions (Provisions 1, 2, and 3) that

employ alternative approaches to determining eligibility for F/RP meals and conducting daily meal counts. These alternatives were authorized by Congress to reduce the paperwork required of State and local agencies to administer the school meals programs. HRFKA added a new counting and claiming provision, CEP, as an alternative to household applications for high-poverty schools and SFAs. CEP was gradually phased in over several school years, and was made available nationwide during SY 2014–15. Schools operating under Provisions 2, 3 and CEP serve all meals at no cost to participating children.

CACFP provides aid for the purchase of nutritious foods to child and adult care centers and family or group day care homes, with the objective of improving the health of CACFP participants. USDA administers CACFP through grants to SAs, based on per-meal reimbursements. Child and adult care centers as well as schools and emergency shelters can enter into agreements directly with an SA, or can participate under a sponsoring organization. Family or group day care homes can only participate through a sponsoring organization. CACFP programs provide food to eligible children age 12 and under, migrant children age 15 and younger, functionally impaired adult participants or adults age 60 and older enrolled in an adult day care center, and youths age 18 and younger in at-risk afterschool programs or emergency shelters.

While the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program began as a program to reimburse snacks, suppers were not reimbursable in all States until the 2010 passage of HRFKA. Afterschool programs can operate the At-Risk Afterschool Meals program independently or through a sponsoring organization. To be eligible, programs must (1) be organized primarily to provide care for children 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 children are approved for F/RP meals. Interested schools and organizations apply to the SA to participate in the At-Risk Afterschool Meals program. If approved, a permanent agreement that specifies terms and conditions with the SA is developed and signed. This site area eligibility is valid for 5 years. SFAs administering NSLP do not have to submit a separate management plan, and are only required to add an addendum to the current agreement. The SFA Director Survey for CN-OPS-II Year 1 included questions to determine the number of schools participating as sponsors and/or facilities in the At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program.

SFSP is a CN summer program authorized by Section 13 of the National School Lunch Act of 1975.¹⁹ The program is administered by FNS at the Federal level and is available in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands, Guam, and Puerto Rico. SAs receive Federal grants based on per meal reimbursements and administer funds to local sponsors for the provision of free meals to children and teens in low-income areas during the summer at authorized SFSP sites. 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.²⁰ Per USDA's Economic Research Service, in 2016, approximately 153 million meals were served to qualifying

¹⁹ Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 79 P.L. 396, 60 Stat. 230, codified as amended at P.L. 113–79 (2014). Available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/NSLA.pdf>

²⁰ U.S. Department of Agriculture. (n.d.). *How to participate in summer meals*. Retrieved from <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/sfsp/SFSP-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

children at 47,981 sites nationwide.²¹ The SFA Director Survey for CN-OPS-II Year 1 included questions to determine the number of schools participating as sponsors and/or sites in SFSP.

2.3 Results

This chapter contains estimates of the number of schools and students that participated in NSLP and SBP for SY 2014–15 and SY 2015–16, and the At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program and SFSP for SY 2015–16. The estimates were designed to answer the following research questions:

- How many schools participate in SBP and/or NSLP?
 - SFAs were asked to report the number of schools participating in each program (Table 2-1).
- How many elementary, middle, and high schools participate in SBP and/or NSLP?
 - SFAs provided information on participation by type of school (Table 2-1). To capture the full universe of schools, an additional category was included: “other” schools include all schools that cannot be classified as elementary (grades no greater than sixth grade), middle (no grades lower than sixth nor higher than ninth), or high schools (no grades lower than ninth).
- How has school participation changed over time?
 - The SFA Director Survey contained questions for reporting participation in both SY 2014–15 and SY 2015–16. The changes, by type of school, are presented along with tests for statistically significant differences (Table 2-2). Longer-term changes (SY 2011–12 through SY 2015–16) are examined by comparing the findings from CN-OPS-II to those presented in a previously published report on a survey of these populations, SN-OPS: SY 2013–14 Report (Figure 2-1 and Figure 2-2).²²
- How many schools operate SBP only, NSLP only, or both SBP and NSLP?
 - SFA directors reported the number of schools operating just SBP, just NSLP, and both programs (Figure 2-3).
- What is the number of charter schools operating NSLP and SBP?
 - State CN directors reported the total number of charter schools in their States along with their participation in NSLP and SBP (Table 2-3).
- How many students participate in NSLP and SBP?
 - SFA directors reported the number of students in their schools as well as how many did not have access to NSLP and SBP (Table 2-4) and how many were approved for F/RP meals (Table 2-5).
- How many schools participate in the Afterschool At-Risk Supper Program and SFSP?
 - SFA directors reported the number of schools participating in At-Risk Supper Afterschool Program (Table 2-6) and SFSP (Table 2-9).
- What are non-participating schools’ intentions to participate in the At-Risk Supper Program Afterschool and SFSP?

²¹ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. (2017). *Summer Food Service Program*. Retrieved from <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/child-nutrition-programs/summer-food-service-program>

²² See U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support. (2016). *Special Nutrition Program operations study (SN-OPS): SY 2013–14 report*. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ops/SNOPSyr3.pdf>. References in this chapter to specific tables and figures in this report are cited in footnotes.

- SFAs provided estimates of the number of intended additional participating schools in each program for SY 2016-17 (Section 2.3.3).
- What are schools doing to build awareness and promote the At-Risk Supper Afterschool Program and SFSP?
 - SFAs indicated their strategies by selecting response categories and describing strategies in open-ended responses (Table 2-7, Table 2-8, Table 2-10, and Table 2-11).
- How many SBP and NSLP meals were served in elementary, middle, and high schools?
 - SFAs reported the number of free, reduced price, and full price meals served/claimed for the month of October 2015 (Table 2-13 and Table 2-14).

2.3.1 School Participation in NSLP and SBP

The sample of SFAs was designed to represent all SFAs operating in public schools. Respondents to the SFA Director Survey (Appendix B, questions 1.1 and 1.2) reported the total number of schools in their SFA as well as the number of schools participating in only NSLP, only SBP, and in both programs by school type (elementary, middle/junior, high, and other) in SY 2015–16. Of the 1,984 SFAs that responded to the survey, 1,971 provided information on schools for SY 2015–16, which, using the sample weights, represents 14,727 SFAs (approximately 99 percent of the universe of SFAs in SY 2015–16) and an estimated 94,989 schools.²³ An estimated 91,921 schools (97 percent of schools) participated in NSLP in SY 2015–16 (Table 2-1). For SBP, the estimated 86,652 schools (Table 2-1) participating in SY 2015–16 means that approximately 90 percent of schools participated in SBP.

To identify trends in participation by schools in NSLP and SBP, the data from the SFAs that provided information for both years were used to compute the percentage change in participating schools from SY 2014–15 to SY 2015–16 (Table 2-1). None of the changes were statistically significant. Similarly, there were no statistically significant differences between SY 2014–15 and SY 2015–16 in the percentages of SFAs with *all* schools participating in NSLP and SBP (Table 2-2). In SY 2015–16, approximately 96 percent of SFAs reported that all their schools participated in NSLP, as did 85 percent for SBP, with higher percentages for specific school types. The percentage of SFAs with all their “other” schools participating in NSLP and SBP was the lowest for any school type. Note that the “All schools” participation rate is less than the participation rate for some individual school types (elementary, middle, and high schools) because SFAs can have all of *some* of their school types participating but not all schools in all types. For example, an SFA with all elementary and middle schools participating but not all high schools would have a “Yes” for all elementary and middle schools and a “No” for all schools.

²³ The CN-OPS-II estimate for the total number of schools is less than the estimate of 101,415 from the NCES; see National Center for Education Statistics. (n.d.) *Public elementary/secondary school universe survey data—2015–16 (preliminary directory)—SAS file* [Data set]. Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/pubschuniv.asp>. There are several reasons for this difference. First, CN-OPS-II was not designed to represent all public schools—just those served by SFAs. Second, CN-OPS-II excluded some SFAs such as residential facilities. Third, the NCES survey includes schools that may not participate in either the NSLP or SBP.

Table 2-1—Total number of schools participating in NSLP and SBP in SY 2015–16 by school type, and the percentage change from SY 2014–15

Type of School	Total Schools Participating in SY 2015–16	Percent Change from SY 2014–15
NSLP		
All schools	91,921	-1.0
Elementary	49,591	0.1
Middle	15,775	1.1
High	16,584	1.1
Other	9,971	-13.8
SBP		
All schools	86,652	-0.8
Elementary	46,316	0.4
Middle	14,979	1.8
High	16,041	2.3
Other	9,316	-15.4

Note: Of the 1,984 SFAs in the sample, 1,971 provided information about SY 2015–16, representing 14,727 SFAs in the population; 1,906 provided information for both SY 2014–15 and SY 2015–16, representing 14,211 SFAs in the population.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 1.1 and 1.2.

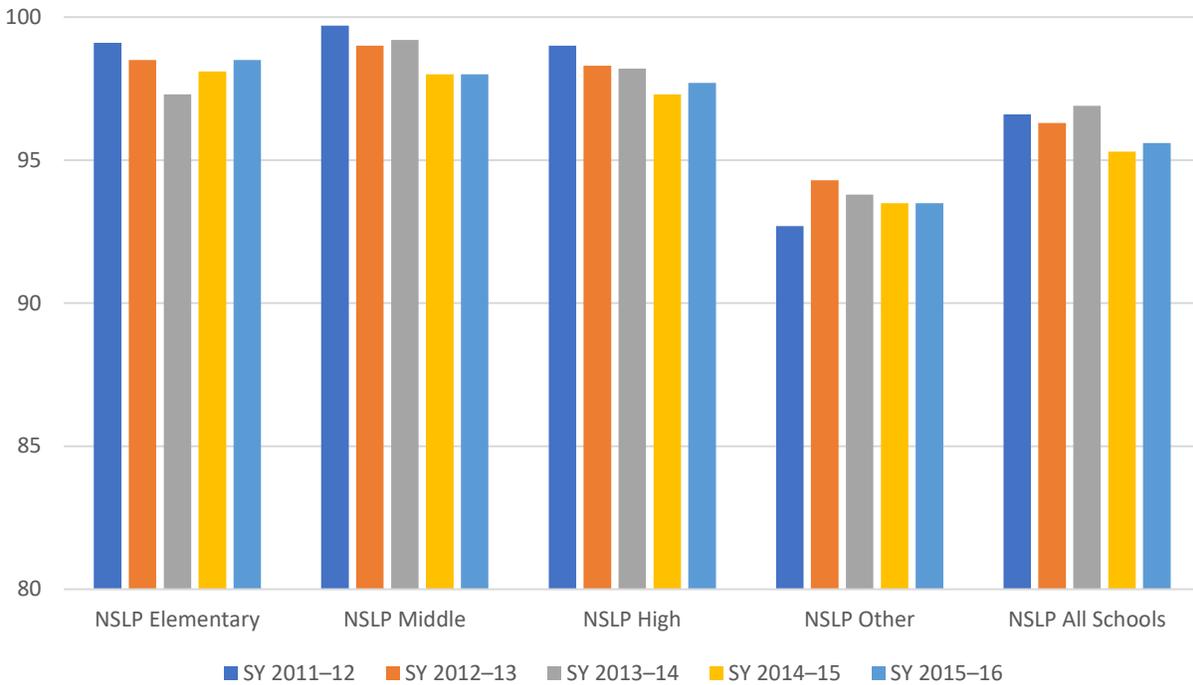
Table 2-2—Percentage of SFAs with all schools participating in NSLP and SBP, by school type in SY 2014–15 and SY 2015–16

Type of School	SY 2014–15		SY 2015–16	
	Percent of SFAs	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)	Percent of SFAs	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
NSLP				
All schools	95.3	14,093 (1,888)	95.6	14,672 (1,964)
Elementary	98.1	11,508 (1,667)	98.5	12,011 (1,738)
Middle	98.0	8,674 (1,363)	98.0	9,112 (1,430)
High	97.3	9,484 (1,455)	97.7	9,961 (1,522)
Other	93.5	5,145 (702)	93.5	5,308 (721)
SBP				
All schools	84.5	14,093 (1,888)	85.0	14,670 (1,965)
Elementary	88.1	11,508 (1,667)	88.8	12,011 (1,738)
Middle	91.0	8,673 (1,364)	91.8	9,120 (1,431)
High	91.9	9,484 (1,455)	92.6	9,950 (1,521)
Other	85.7	5,145 (702)	86.1	5,313 (722)

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 1.1 and 1.2.

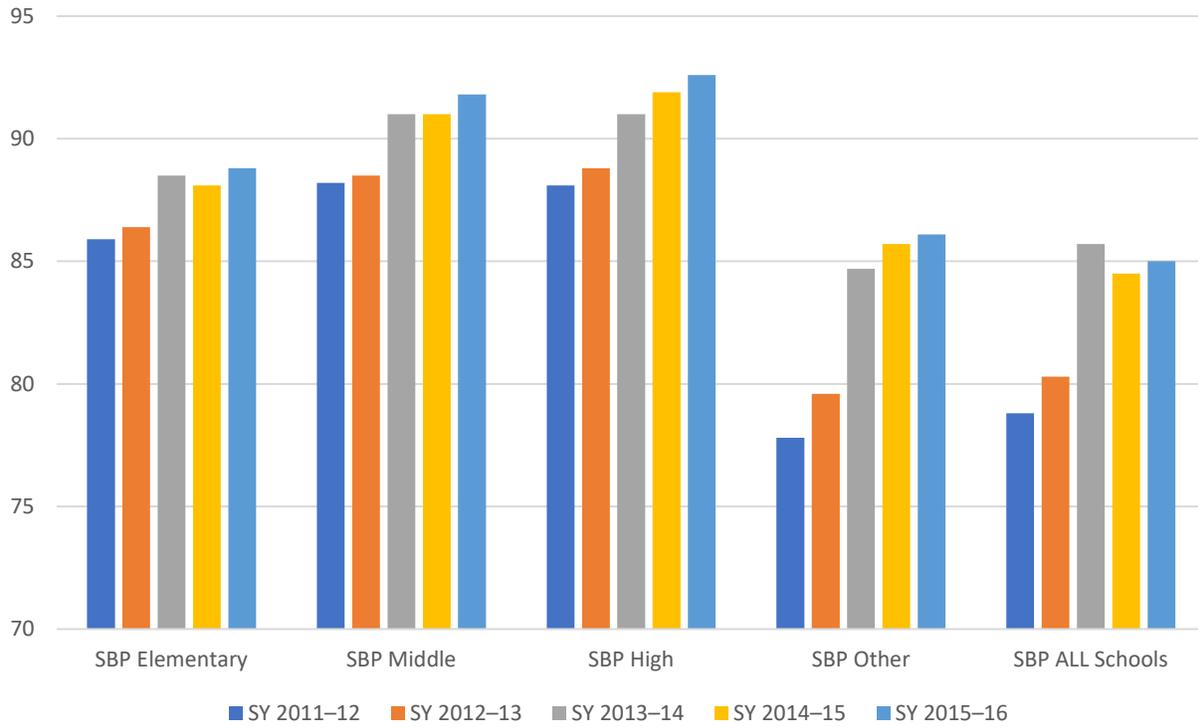
Longitudinal analysis of the period from SY 2011–12 through SY 2015–16 (Figure 2-1) demonstrates that the percentage of SFAs with all schools participating in NSLP has remained above 95 percent. By school type, the percentage of SFAs with all elementary, middle, and high schools participating in NSLP has remained above 97 percent, respectively, while SFAs with all “other” schools participating has remained above 92 percent.

Figure 2-1—Percentage of SFAs with all schools participating in NSLP, SY 2011–12 through SY 2015–16, by school type



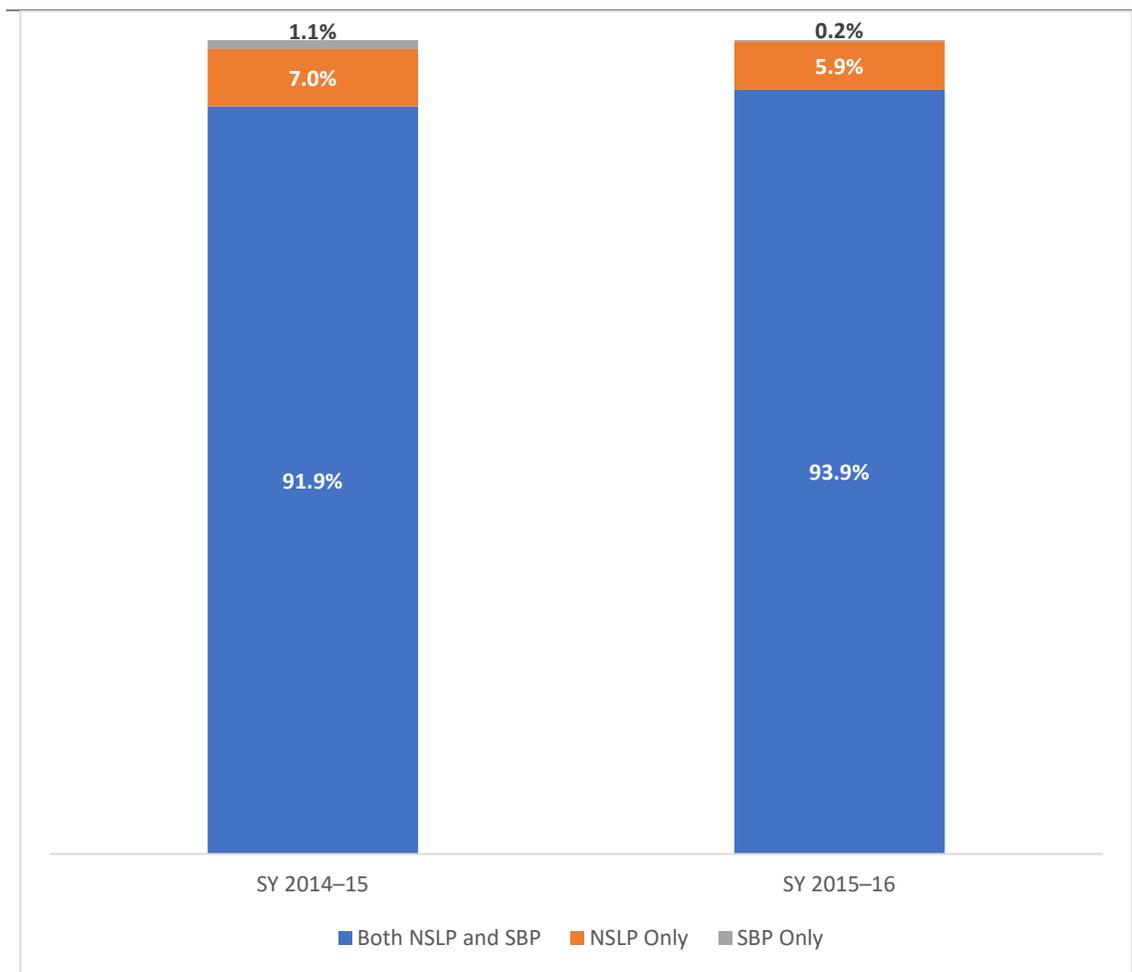
The trend in the percentage of SFAs with all schools participating in SBP (Figure 2-2) indicates an increase in participation in SBP over the 5-year period. In terms of type of school, there has been an upward trend in this measure of participation for all types with “other” schools demonstrating the greatest change, increasing from approximately 78 percent in SY 2011–12 to approximately 86 percent in SY 2015–16 (Figure 2-2).

Figure 2-2—Percentage of SFAs with all schools participating in SBP, SY 2011–12 through SY 2015–16, by school type



Of the schools participating in NSLP and/or SBP in SY 2015-16, most participate in both NSLP and SBP (94 percent), while 6 percent operate only NSLP and less than 1 percent operate only SBP. This pattern did not change in a statistically significant way between SY 2014–15 and SY 2015–16 (Figure 2-3).

Figure 2-3—Percentage of SFAs with all schools participating in only SBP, only NSLP, and both NSLP and SBP in SY 2014-15 and SY 2015-16



Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015-16, questions 1.1 and 1.2. 1,970 SFAs provided information for SY 2015-16 and 1,911 provided information for SY 2014-15.

State CN directors reported the number of charter schools in their States and their participation in NSLP and SBP in SY 2015-16 (Table 2-3). Of the 5,958 charter schools, 91 percent participated in one or both programs (5,424 schools). In SY 2013-14, SAs reported that 85 percent of the 4,537 charter schools participated in NSLP. The number of schools operating one or both programs reported for SY 2013-14 had grown by 41 percent (from 3,852 schools to 5,424) by SY 2015-16.²⁴ This two-year increase is partly due to 31 percent growth in the number of charter schools, and partly due to a 6 percentage point increase in the percentage of charter schools participating.

²⁴ See U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support. (2016). Table 4-6: Among States with charter schools, the percentage of charter schools that participated in NSLP and SBP and whether they operated as a separate SFA, SY 2011-12, SY 2012-13, and SY 2013-14. In *Special Nutrition Program operations study (SN-OPS): SY 2013-14 report*. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ops/SNOPSyr3.pdf>

Table 2-3—Percentage of charter schools operating only NSLP, only SBP, or both in SY 2015–16

	Percent of Schools	Number of Schools	State Agencies Reporting
Total Charter Schools	100.0	5,958	42
Program Participation			
NSLP only	16.2	967	37
SBP only	5.6	335	33
Both NSLP and SBP	69.2	4,122	41
Not participating	9.0	534	42

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 1.5 and 1.6.

2.3.2 Student Participation in NSLP and SBP

SFA directors reported the number of students in their schools by school type. Aggregated across school types, the national estimates for the number of students in the universe of public schools in SY 2015–16 and SY 2014–15 are 46.3 million and 46.0 million, respectively (Table 2-4). All students that attend a school participating in NSLP and/or SBP have access to school meals. Thus, one CN-OPS-II research objective was to determine how many students attended schools that did not participate in NSLP and/or SBP. Except for students in “other” schools, approximately 97 percent of students had access to NSLP. Approximately 95 percent of students attending “other” schools had access to NSLP, but less than 90 percent of these students had access to SBP. Access to SBP was highest in high schools (approximately 93 percent) and moderately lower for elementary and middle schools.

Table 2-4—Percentage of students without access to NSLP and SBP in SY 2014–15 and SY 2015–16, by school type

School Type	SY 2014–15 (Students = 46,033,578)		SY 2015–16 (Students = 46,331,348)	
	Percent of Students	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)	Percent of Students	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
NSLP				
All schools	2.7	13,329 (1,786)	2.6	14,029 (1,879)
Elementary	2.7	10,697 (1,560)	2.3	11,410 (1,655)
Middle	2.2	7,954 (1,257)	1.9	8,408 (1,328)
High	2.5	8,879 (1,360)	2.9	9,539 (1,448)
Other	5.5	4,931 (665)	4.5	5,168 (705)
SBP				
All schools	9.5	13,329 (1,786)	8.7	14,029 (1,879)
Elementary	9.9	10,697 (1,560)	9.2	11,410 (1,655)
Middle	8.0	7,954 (1,257)	7.4	8,408 (1,328)
High	6.7	8,879 (1,360)	6.4	9,539 (1,448)
Other	12.4	4,931 (665)	11.6	5,168 (705)

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 2.1 and 2.2.

Except for high schools, more than 50 percent of students enrolled in each type of school were approved for F/RP meals, with the highest percentages in “other” schools (i.e., 56 and 57 percent in SY 2014–15 and SY 2015–16, respectively; Table 2-5). For each school type, the percentage of students approved for free meals increased slightly in SY 2015–16 compared to SY 2014–15 (Table 2-5). In contrast, the percentage of students approved for reduced price meals decreased slightly in SY 2015–16 compared to SY 2014–15. With respect to approval for free meals, the estimates were consistent with the trends noted in SN-OPS Year 3 (e.g., the percentages of students approved for free meals in all schools were 42, 43, and 44 percent in SY 2011–12, SY 2012–13, and SY 2013–14, respectively).²⁵ Over the 5-year period covered by SN-OPS and CN-OPS-II Year 1, the percentage of students approved for free meals has increased from 42 to 46 percent.

²⁵ See U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support. (2016). Table 3-4: Percentage of students approved for free meals, SY 2011–12, SY 2012–13, and SY 2013–14 and Table 3-5: Percentage of students approved for reduced price meals in SY 2011–12, SY 2012–13, and SY 2013–14. In *Special Nutrition Program operations study (SN-OPS): SY 2013–14 report*. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ops/SNOPSyr3.pdf>

Table 2-5—Percentage of students approved for F/RP meals, by school type in SY 2014–15 and SY 2015–16

School Type	SY 2014–15 (Students = 46,033,578)		SY 2015–16 (Students = 46,331,348)	
	Percent of Students	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)	Percent of Students	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
Students Approved for Free Meals				
All schools	46.6	13,329 (1,786)	46.7	14,029 (1,879)
Elementary	47.3	10,697 (1,560)	48.1	11,410 (1,655)
Middle	43.6	7,954 (1,257)	43.8	8,408 (1,328)
High	39.7	8,879 (1,360)	40.2	9,539 (1,448)
Other	48.5	4,931 (665)	49.5	5,168 (705)
Students Approved for Reduced Price Meals				
All schools	7.8	13,329 (1,786)	7.5	14,029 (1,879)
Elementary	7.9	10,697 (1,560)	7.4	11,410 (1,655)
Middle	8.0	7,954 (1,257)	7.4	8,408 (1,328)
High	8.2	8,879 (1,360)	7.7	9,539 (1,448)
Other	7.7	4,931 (665)	7.6	5,168 (705)

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 2.1 and 2.2.

2.3.3 Participation in the At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program and SFSP

SFAs and individual schools may sponsor At-Risk Afterschool Supper sites at schools. Additionally, a school may serve simultaneously as a sponsor and as a facility; however, the most common situation (71 percent) reported by SFA directors with schools participating in the At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program was for the SFA to serve as the only sponsor (Table 2-6). When SFAs had schools serving as sponsors, the type of school with the most sponsors was middle (42 percent), followed by high schools (35 percent), elementary schools (11 percent), and “other” schools (11 percent) (Table 2-6).

The estimated number of schools participating in the At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program in SY 2015–16 was 10,221 (i.e., 248 + 9,973; Table 2-6). SFA directors were also asked to project how many additional schools they expected to participate during SY 2016–17. From their responses, an estimated 1,610 additional schools would participate in SY 2016–17, bringing the total to (10,221 + 1,610 =) 11,831.²⁶ In terms of participation as sites, approximately 33 percent of SFAs with schools in the program had high

²⁶ The estimate for additional schools participating in the At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program in SY 2016–17 is based on responses to question 1.6 in the SFA Director Survey.

schools participating, followed by elementary (27 percent), other (22 percent), and middle (19 percent) schools (Table 2-6).

HHFKA expanded reimbursable suppers served through the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program to all States. Correspondingly, when comparing estimates of participation in At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program in SY 2015–16 to SY 2013–14 as reported in SN-OPS Year 3, there is compelling evidence that participation has increased. First, 5 percent of SFAs indicated some participation in SY 2013–14, while 7 percent (not shown) indicated participation in SY 2015–16. Second, estimates for the number of schools participating increased from 5,468 in SY 2013–14 to 10,221 in SY 2015–16.²⁷

Table 2-6—Among SFAs with schools participating in the At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program in SY 2015–16, the percentage with schools participating as sponsors and sites

School Type	SFAs with Schools Participating as Sponsors (Number of Schools = 248)	SFAs with Schools Participating as Sites (Number of Schools = 9,973)
Elementary schools	11.4	27.1
Middle schools	42.0	18.8
High schools	35.6	32.6
Other schools	11.1	21.5

Note: Of the 1,984 SFAs in the sample, 195 reported having schools participating in the At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program in SY 2015–16. These represent 1,098 SFAs in the population. In approximately 71.2 percent of the SFAs with schools participating in the At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program, the SFA is the only sponsor.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 1.3 and 1.4.1.

SFAs were asked to describe any strategies used to increase awareness of the At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program among both students (Table 2-7) and the community at large (Table 2-8). In targeting students, approximately 53 percent of SFAs use newsletters, while other common strategies include advertising at family-friendly events, distributing USDA materials, partnerships with local agencies, using social media, making materials available at community meetings, and public service announcements (Table 2-7). Few SFAs use text messaging to build awareness. Text messaging, if used more often, could provide an opportunity to increase awareness of the program.

²⁷ See U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support. (2016). Table 3-8: Percentage of SFAs participating in the At-Risk Supper Program, by SFA characteristics, SY 2013–14 and Table 3-9: Number of schools participating in the At-Risk Supper Program, SY 2013–14. In *Special Nutrition Program operations study (SN-OPS): SY 2013–14 report*. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ops/SNOPSyr3.pdf>

Table 2-7—Strategies used to build awareness of the At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program among eligible nonparticipating students, SY 2015–16

Strategies Used to Build Awareness Among Eligible Student Nonparticipants¹	Percent of SFAs
Newsletters	53.1
Advertising at family-friendly events	38.5
USDA materials (flyers, bookmarks, and postcards)	35.9
Partnering with local agencies	29.6
Social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube)	27.4
Community meetings	26.6
Public service announcements	25.8
Mass mailings	17.3
Presentations to faith-based organizations	7.1
Website ²	3.2
Administrative action ²	3.7
National Hunger Hotline	3.2
Texting campaign	1.7
Other	14.0
None	0.5

¹ Multiple responses allowed.

² New categories created after reviewing the “other” responses.

Note: 163 SFAs reported using strategies to build awareness of the availability of the At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program, representing 980 SFAs in the population.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 1.7, 1.8, and 1.9.

The most common strategies noted by SFAs for building awareness in the community at large were advertising at family-friendly events (41 percent), followed by distributing USDA materials, partnerships with local agencies, social media, and public service announcements (Table 2-8). Non-specific comments (included in the “other” category in Table 2-8) included remarks such as “talk to parents” and “work with xyz organization,” or general comments about intentions to increase participation in the program rather than descriptions of strategies.

Table 2-8—Strategies used to build awareness of the At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program among the local community at large, SY 2015–16

Strategies Used to Build Awareness Among the Local Community at Large¹	Percent of SFAs
Advertising at family-friendly events	41.2
USDA materials (flyers, bookmarks, and postcards)	37.0
Partnering with local agencies	32.6
Social media	29.3
Public service announcements	27.0
Presentations to faith-based organizations	10.3
Website ²	3.7
Administrative action ²	0.7
Other	11.0
None	9.9

¹ Multiple responses allowed.

² New categories created after reviewing the “other” responses.

Note: 163 SFAs reported using strategies to build awareness of the availability of the At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program, representing 980 SFAs in the population.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 1.7, 1.8, and 1.9.

Similar trends were observed for SFAs/schools participating in SFSP. An estimated 34 percent of SFAs (5,028) have schools participating in SFSP as sponsors and/or sites (Table 2-9).²⁸ Elementary schools were the most frequent type of school serving as sponsors (9 percent) and as sites (76 percent) (Table 2-9). The estimated number of schools participating as sites (23,171) was approximately 23 percent of all public schools in summer 2015. SFAs usually serve as the only sponsor (78 percent), but SFAs did report that an estimated 1,408 schools were sponsors in summer 2015.

²⁸ The SFA directors were not asked about providing summer meals through the Seamless Summer Option.

Table 2-9—Among SFAs with schools participating in SFSP in summer 2015, the percentage with schools participating as sponsors and sites

School Type	SFAs with Schools Participating as Sponsors (Number of Schools = 1,408)	SFAs with Schools Participating as Sites (Number of Schools = 23,171)
Elementary schools	8.8	76.2
Middle schools	3.9	36.1
High schools	5.4	42.3
Other schools	1.5	20.8

Note: Of the 1,984 SFAs in the sample, 805 reported having schools participating in SFSP in summer 2015. These represent 5,028 SFAs in the population. In approximately 78.3 percent of the SFAs with schools participating in SFSP, the SFA is the only sponsor.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 1.10 and 1.11.1.

SFAs reported strategies used to increase the awareness of students and the community at large about SFSP. These are reported in Table 2-10 and Table 2-11. Newsletters and USDA materials were the most commonly used strategies used to make students aware of SFSP. The FNS Summer Meal Site Finder (35 percent) and mapping tools (7 percent) were, in total, mentioned as often as using public service announcements and social media to target student awareness.

Table 2-10—Strategies used to build awareness of SFSP among eligible nonparticipating students, summer 2015

Strategies Used to Build Awareness among Eligible Student Nonparticipants¹	Percent of SFAs
Newsletters	56.4
USDA materials (flyers, bookmarks, and postcards)	56.3
Social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube)	42.9
Public service announcements	42.3
FNS Summer Meal Site Finder	34.6
Partnering with local agencies	27.5
Advertising at family-friendly events	25.2
Mass mailings	24.9
Community meetings	13.3
Presentations to faith-based organizations	11.7
Website ²	5.1
National Hunger Hotline	7.6
FNS mapping tools	7.0
Texting campaign	4.5
Newspaper ²	2.0
Other	20.7

¹ Multiple responses allowed.

² New categories created after reviewing the “other” responses.

Note: 964 SFAs reported using strategies to build awareness of the availability of SFSP, representing 6,314 SFAs in the population.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 1.14, 1.15, and 1.16.

USDA materials were noted as the most frequently used strategy to build awareness of SFSP in the community at large (60 percent; Table 2-11).

Table 2-11—Strategies used to build awareness of SFSP among the community at large, summer 2015

Strategies Used to Build Awareness among the Local Community at Large ¹	Percent of SFAs
USDA materials (flyers, bookmarks, and postcards)	59.5
Social media	41.7
Public service announcements	40.2
Partnering with local agencies	29.7
Advertising at family-friendly events	27.3
Presentations to faith-based organizations	12.8
Website ²	9.6
Newspaper ²	4.0
Other	12.7
None	5.5

¹ Multiple responses allowed.

² New categories created after reviewing the “other” responses.

Note: 964 SFAs reported using strategies to build awareness of the availability of SFSP, representing 6,314 SFAs in the population.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 1.14, 1.15, and 1.16.

Participation in At-Risk Afterschool Supper Programs and SFSP varied significantly by SFA characteristics, including size, urbanicity, percentage of students approved for F/RP meals, and FNS region (Table 2-12). Participation by very large SFAs was significantly greater than that of small, medium, and large SFAs in the At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program, and significantly greater than that of small and medium SFAs in SFSP. Correspondingly, participation in small SFAs was significantly less than that of medium and large SFAs in both programs. Rural SFAs had significantly lower participation in the At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program, while SFAs in towns had significantly higher participation in SFSP. SFAs with the highest percentage of students approved for F/RP meals had significantly greater participation in both programs relative to SFAs with lower percentages of students approved for F/RP meals. The Western region SFAs had the highest participation in the At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program relative to all other regions, and SFAs in the Southeast region had the highest participation in SFSP relative to all other regions.

Table 2-12—Percentage of SFAs participating in the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program and percentage of SFAs participating in SFSP, by SFA characteristic, SY 2015–16

	At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program		SFSP	
	Percent of SFAs	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)	Percent of SFAs	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
All SFAs	7.4	14,778 (1,978)	34.0	14,773 (1,977)
SFA Size¹				
a. Small (1–999 students)	^{b,c} 3.3	7,412 (598)	^{b,c} 21.8	7,408 (597)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	^c 8.5	5,417 (974)	^c 39.9	5,412 (973)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	17.0	1,638 (332)	62.5	1,642 (333)
d. Very large (≥25,000 students)	^{a,b,c} 35.3	310 (74)	^{a,b} 74.9	310 (74)
Urbanicity¹				
e. City	14.0	1,734 (223)	39.5	1,729 (223)
f. Suburban	9.8	3,271 (547)	33.1	3,265 (546)
g. Town	9.7	2,522 (437)	^{f,h} 49.9	2,522 (437)
h. Rural	^{e,f,g} 3.5	6,638 (726)	^e 27.3	6,644 (726)
Percent of Students Approved for F/RP Meals¹				
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP) ²	6.3	4,289 (601)	25.3	4,302 (603)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP) ²	4.6	4,306 (589)	27.8	4,300 (588)
k. High (≥60 percent F/RP)	^{ij} 10.2	6,182 (788)	^{ij} 44.4	6,170 (786)
Region¹				
l. Mid-Atlantic	9.3	1,429 (216)	24.6	1,419 (216)
m. Midwest	4.9	3,752 (505)	25.9	3,746 (504)
n. Mountain Plains	^p 2.8	2,275 (267)	32.4	2,275 (267)
o. Northeast	3.9	1,658 (223)	25.7	1,663 (222)
p. Southeast	12.6	1,210 (221)	^{l,m,n,o} 52.6	1,215 (222)
q. Southwest	5.1	2,240 (256)	43.2	2,240 (256)
r. Western	^{m,n,o,q} 17.5	2,215 (290)	42.3	2,215 (290)

¹ An overall statistically significant difference by SFA characteristic ($p < 0.05$) was observed.

Note: Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Bonferroni p -value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the letter.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, survey questions 1.3 and 1.10.

2.3.4 Meals Served/Claimed

Of the estimated 593 million lunches served /claimed during October 2015, approximately two-thirds were free, one-quarter were full price, and the remaining were reduced price (Table 2-13).

Approximately one-half of the lunches (54 percent) were served/claimed in elementary schools, followed by 20 percent in high schools. The distributions of reduced price and full price lunches were similar: most were served in elementary schools, followed by high schools. An even greater percentage of breakfasts were served/claimed for free (82 percent; Table 2-14). When compared to lunches, a relatively greater percentage of breakfasts were served in elementary schools, and free breakfast accounted for over 60 percent of elementary school breakfasts (Table 2-14).

Table 2-13—Number and percent of NSLP meals served/claimed in October 2015, as reported by SFA Directors, by price category and school type

Price Category and School Type	Total Meals	Percent of Lunches	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
Free Lunches (67.7% of all meals served in NSLP)			
All schools	401,962,919	100.0%	13,624 (1,816)
Elementary	215,131,537	53.5%	11,381 (1,634)
Middle	66,960,900	16.7%	9,174 (1,404)
High	80,296,290	20.0%	10,106 (1,500)
Other	39,574,192	9.8%	8,622 (1,182)
Reduced Price Lunches (5.8% of all meals served in NSLP)			
All schools	34,667,351	100.0%	13,095 (1,770)
Elementary	16,083,310	46.4%	11,098 (1,591)
Middle	6,480,581	18.7%	9,119 (1,386)
High	8,327,729	24.0%	9,957 (1,481)
Other	3,775,731	10.9%	8,366 (1,166)
Full Price Lunches (26.5% of all meals served in NSLP)			
All schools	157,196,458	100.0%	13,215 (1,784)
Elementary	75,833,480	48.2%	11,219 (1,609)
Middle	29,272,187	18.6%	9,164 (1,393)
High	35,279,321	22.4%	10,061 (1,490)
Other	16,811,470	10.7%	8,432 (1,173)

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 2.3 and 2.4. SFA Director reports may differ from FNS administrative data due to reporting errors, differences in the timing of the calculation, statistical sampling error, and other factors.

Table 2-14—Number and percent of SBP meals served/claimed in October 2015, by price category and school type

Price Category and School Type	Total Meals	Percent of Breakfasts	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
Free Breakfasts (81.5% of all meals served in SBP)			
All schools	239,845,884	100.0%	13,090 (1,752)
Elementary	147,423,807	61.5%	10,928 (1,571)
Middle	30,590,064	12.8%	8,852 (1,355)
High	38,255,019	15.9%	9,749 (1,450)
Other	23,576,994	9.8%	8,451 (1,156)
Reduced Price Breakfasts (4.6% of all meals served in SBP)			
All schools	13,521,637	100.0%	12,578 (1,706)
Elementary	6,948,484	51.4%	10,624 (1,526)
Middle	1,978,591	14.6%	8,800 (1,339)
High	3,038,050	22.5%	9,610 (1,431)
Other	1,556,512	11.5%	8,208 (1,444)
Full Price Breakfasts (13.9% of all meals served in SBP)			
All schools	41,069,278	100.0%	12,732 (1,723)
Elementary	22,363,917	54.5%	10,802 (1,550)
Middle	5,545,698	13.5%	8,880 (1,349)
High	7,590,019	18.5%	9,717 (1,439)
Other	5,569,644	13.6%	8,212 (1,143)

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 2.5 and 2.6.

3 School Meal Program Eligibility Determination and Verification

3.1 Background

FNS seeks to improve school meal program integrity by reducing certification errors that occur during F/RP meal eligibility determinations for households; such errors are found primarily in household applications for F/RP meals. Improvements to school meals applications center on eliminating calculation and processing errors by SFAs and eliminating household reporting error and burden.

3.1.1 School Meal Application Eligibility Determination

For students from low-income households to receive F/RP school meals, households may apply using paper, electronic forms, or online (web- or computer-based) applications. In SY 2015–16, nearly 9 million low-income students were approved to receive benefits through paper and online applications.²⁹ SFAs may use an automated process in which computer software is used to determine household eligibility based on the school meals application. For example, SFAs may scan in applications or enter in application information for computer processing and eligibility determination. The automated determinations may produce computer printouts, or SFAs may save computer screenshots. Alternatively, SFAs may use a manual process for eligibility determination, in which an application reviewer makes the determination.

One key strategy to increase the integrity of school meal applications is to utilize web- or computer-based applications, and to increase the quality of online applications by incorporating integrity features, such as those included in the USDA Web-Based Prototype Application for School Meals. This report will update SY 2013–14 estimates to show whether the use of web- or computer-based applications has become more common,³⁰ as continuing to monitor the primary types of applications used by households in non-CEP schools helps FNS assess changes and determine where to focus efforts for improvement. Direct certification also adds to the integrity of the eligibility determination process because it relies on automated matching between student enrollment and State or local agencies administering SNAP, TANF, FDPIR and Medicaid (where applicable). CEP also reduces certification errors because it eliminates the need for applications when at least 40 percent of enrolled students at the SFA, school, or group of schools are directly certified for free meals. Instead, under CEP, participating schools serve meals at no charge to all enrolled students (see Chapter 3). These efforts are aimed to not only reduce certification errors (regardless of whether schools accept applications or not), but also save administrative time and resources during the eligibility determination process.

3.1.2 Direct Certification

Students in households that receive benefits from SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR are *directly certified* for free meals based on their enrollment status in these programs. If one adult or child in the household is receiving SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR benefits, then all children in the household are approved to receive free meal benefits. Direct certification is achieved by matching student enrollment records against records of household participants in SNAP, TANF, and FDPIR via automated record linkage methods. Students in foster care or Head Start, or who are homeless, migrants, runaways, or living in households receiving certain other means-tested benefits are categorically eligible for free meals and may also be directly

²⁹ SFA Verification Collection Report (VCR)-742.

³⁰ See U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support. (2016). *Special Nutrition Program operations study (SN-OPS): SY 2013–14 report*. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ops/SNOPSyr3.pdf>

certified (although their eligibility does not extend to other children in the household). In some States, students may also be directly certified for free or reduced priced school meals based on Medicaid income and participation data. Direct certification can reduce errors because SFAs can approve children for free meals using documentation obtained directly from State or local agencies without further application from the household.

Direct certification systems and activities vary by State and SFA, as factors such as State privacy laws, data sharing agreements, technology sophistication, and staffing often limit or expand the capabilities of each direct certification process. Usually, the SA maintains responsibility for matching student enrollment records to households and children participating in SNAP or other programs; SFAs take these lists and review the results for potential matches and unmatched records, either manually or electronically. However, in a minority of States, SFAs are responsible for conducting the match between student records and SNAP and other program records.³¹

3.1.3 Verification and Independent Application Reviews

Unless the SA assumes responsibility, SFAs that use F/RP school meal applications are required to verify the eligibility of households annually. Verification is confirmation of eligibility for meal benefits when eligibility is determined through the application process; this may also include confirming that the child or any member of the household is receiving SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR benefits; that a child is in foster care or Head Start; or is homeless, migrant, or a runaway if this information was included on an application for meal benefits as the basis for their eligibility determination. SFAs may begin the verification process after they complete the certification process and must select the final pool of applications for verification by October 1 each year. Of the pool of applications, SFAs may verify a “standard sample” or if qualified, one of two “alternative samples.”^{32,33} Verification samples consist of error-prone applications (i.e., applications that fall within \$100 per month of the applicable income eligibility guideline) and/or applications that the SFA randomly selects. SAs collect yearly reports from SFAs on results of verification in the SFA (VCR-742).

SFAs may conduct *direct verification* (unless completed jointly with the SA), which entails using public agency records to verify program participation in from SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR, as well as Medicaid, the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (an optional expansion or supplement to State Medicaid Programs) , and categorically eligible children, such as homeless, runaway, migrant, and children in foster care.

SFAs are obligated to verify all questionable applications, a process known as *verification for cause*. This process aims to improve school meals program integrity. SFAs may begin the verification for cause

³¹ Moore, Q., Gothro, A., Conway, K., & Kyler, B. (2014). *National School Lunch Program direct certification improvement study: Main report*. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ops/NSLPDirectCertificationImprovement.pdf>

³² There are three verification sample types: “standard,” “alternate one,” and “alternate two.” The standard sample size includes applications approved by the LEA for the school year as of October 1, and is the lesser of either 3 percent of all applications, selected from error-prone applications, or 3,000 error-prone applications. For alternate one, the sample size is similar to the standard sample size except that the LEA randomly selects applications rather than using error-prone applications. For alternate two, sample size includes applications approved by the LEA for the school year as of October 1 and is the lesser of 1 percent of all applications, selected from error-prone applications, or 1,000 error-prone applications plus the lesser of 0.5 percent or 500 applications that provide a case number from a qualifying assistance program in lieu of income information.

³³ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2017). *2017 Edition of the Eligibility Manual for School Meals*. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/2017-edition-eligibility-manual-school-meals>

process on a case-by-case basis after making eligibility determinations for household applications. Applications may be considered questionable because the household's participation in other programs is unconfirmed, because the household appears income-ineligible based on other records, or because the reported household size conflicts with that reported for another program. CN-OPS-II examines the additional criteria that SFAs may use for deeming an application questionable, such as checking applications of previous years' nonresponding households or flagging applications with repeated reports of zero income from year to year.

SFAs use income sources as the primary source of household eligibility confirmation; such evidence is most often employer pay stubs or public assistance program and government letters. Pay stubs and other income documents have the name of the household member, amount of income received, frequency with which the income was received, and the date the income was received. Evidence for individual children must be an official letter or notice indicating that the child or any household member receives benefits from a specific program. When households do not adequately respond to the request for verification, the SFA must make one follow-up contact attempt (in writing or by phone) and must provide language assistance for persons with limited English proficiency. SFAs must notify households of any change in their eligibility determination and provide an opportunity for the household to reapply when there is a reduction in benefits. SFAs may accept emailed documentation from households in response to verification documentation requests.

SFAs with high levels of, or a high risk for, certification error must have a second, independent review of F/RP school meal applications, as required by HRFKA Section 304, which went into effect in the February 2014 final rule.³⁴ The second review must be done before households are informed of initial eligibility determinations and must not delay the determination process of notifying the household within 10 operating days of application receipt. The second, independent review is conducted by an individual or entity that did not make the original eligibility determination, and who is trained on how to make eligibility determinations. The reviewer checks for application completeness and confirms that applications were correctly approved based on current income eligibility guidelines or categorical eligibility information. SFAs with high levels of certification error include those with 10 percent or more of the certification/benefit issuances in error based on administrative reviews. The criteria for considering SFAs at "high risk" are determined at SAs' discretion, although SAs are strongly encouraged to include SFAs that are (1) new to NSLP and SBP, (2) have a proportion of 5 to 10 percent of certification/benefit issuances determined to be in error, (3) have recently hired new administrative staff, and (4) have implemented a new electronic system.

3.2 Results

Data presented in the section address the following research questions.

- What technology is used for eligibility determinations and verification?³⁵
 - SFAs were asked to report the primary school meal application format used by households, whether web- or computer-based applications (i.e., apps) were integrated

³⁴ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2014, April 30). *Memo SP 44-2014: Questions and answers related to the independent review of applications*. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/qas-related-independent-review-applications>

³⁵ The survey did not ask for types of verification technology used by SFAs.

with other data systems, and the basis and method for eligibility determinations. Table 3-1, Table 3-2, and Figure 3-1 show these findings.

- What is the relative number of children directly certified during the year compared to those directly certified at the start of the school year?
 - SFAs reported the number of students directly certified before and after October 31, 2015 during SY 2015–16.³⁶ Estimates showing relative percentages of directly certified students are presented in Table 3-3.
- What challenges do SFAs face in matching enrolled students to household participation in SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR?
 - Findings on challenges reported by SFAs are presented in Table 3-4.
- Is direct verification used?
 - The percentage of SFAs that use direct verification is presented in Table 3-5—.
- Does the district accept emailed copies of verification documentation? Do SFAs follow up with households that did not respond to initial requests for verification documentation?
 - These results are presented Section 4.2.6.
- What are State-chosen criteria for second “independent review” of applications?
 - These results are presented in Figure 3-2.

3.2.1 School Meal Application Formats and Integration with Other Data Systems

In SY 2015–16, SFAs reported that households primarily applied for F/RP school meals for their children using a paper application format (74 percent; Table 3-1). Web- or computer-based applications (9 percent) and computer-read or scannable paper applications (3 percent) were reported far less frequently as primary application formats. The prevalent household use of paper applications may indicate that few SFAs offer online application formats to families, or that parents and guardians do not use such options when they are available. Compared to SY 2013–14, the number of SFAs reporting that no households submitted school meal applications increased 5 percentage points, from 7 percent in SY 2013–14 (data not shown) to 12 percent in SY 2015–16. This increase is because of improvements in the direct certification process, and because more SFAs operate under Provision 2 or 3 or CEP, in which school applications are not collected annually.

Among SFAs that reported that parents and guardians primarily use web- or computer-based school meal applications (9 percent; Table 4-1), at least two-thirds reported integrating the meal application with other data systems (Table 3-2). Specifically, the clear majority of these SFAs integrated the web- or computer-based application with a point-of-sale (POS) system (84 percent), a meal claiming system (82 percent), a direct certification system (75 percent), and/or student records (66 percent). These percentages are comparable to those reported in SY 2013–14, except that integration with direct certification data systems decreased from 83 percent of SFAs in SY 2013–14 to 75 percent in SY 2015–16 (data not shown). This difference is based on a relatively small group of SFAs (237) and may reflect sampling error.

³⁶ SFAs have until the last operating day in October to report the number of students directly certified in the SFA VCR.

Table 3-1—Primary formats of the applications used by parents and guardians to apply for school meals, as reported by SFAs, SY 2015–16

Format ¹	Percent of SFAs
Manually entered paper application	74.3
Web-based or computer-based application	9.1
Computer-read or scannable paper application	3.1
No response	1.3
No parents in the SFA submitted applications for school meals	12.1

¹ Response options are presented as stated from the survey.
Note: 1,984 SFAs provided information for this table, which represents 14,824 SFAs in the population.
Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, survey question 5.5.

Table 3-2—Among SFAs that primarily use web- or computer-based applications for F/RP school meals, the percentage that integrate the school meal application with other data systems, SY 2015–16

Type of Other Data System ¹	Percent of SFAs
Point-of-sale	83.7
Meal claiming	81.5
Direct certification	74.7
Student records	65.7
Other	1.1

¹ Multiple responses were allowed. Response options are presented as stated from the survey.
Note: 237 SFAs provided information for this table, which represents 1,348 SFAs in the population. The table includes SFAs that used web- or computer-based F/RP school meal applications as the primary type and integrated the application with other systems.
Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 5.5 and 5.6.

3.2.2 Direct Certification: Timing and Matching Challenges

Starting in SY 2011–12, FNS required that direct certification matching with SNAP records occur at least three times per school year for schools operating standard counting and claiming. SFAs report the number of students directly certified as of the last operating day in October on the SFA Verification Collection Report (VCR). SFAs that used direct certification in SY 2015–16 certified the vast majority of their students before October 31st (84 percent of students on average) relative to after October 31st (16 percent of students on average; Table 3-3). The proportion certified before October 31st relative to after varied little by subgroup, except by level of students approved for F/RP meals (high [≥60 percent], medium [30–59 percent], or low [0–29 percent]). On average, SFAs with 30–59 percent of students approved for F/RP lunches (or “medium percent of students F/RP levels”) certified 86 percent of students before October 31st, whereas schools with lower or higher proportions of students approved certified 82 and 83 percent, respectively, on average before October 31st.

Table 3-3—Percentage of directly certified students certified before and after October 31, relative to all students directly certified in SY 2015–16, by SFA characteristic

SFAs that Use Direct Certification ¹	Percent of Students Directly Certified Before October 31		Percent of Students Directly Certified After October 31		Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	
	83.6	90.8	16.4	8.2	13,079 (1,766)
SFA Size					
a. Small (1–999 students)	83.4	91.6	16.6	7.4	6,444 (524)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	84.5	90.5	15.5	8.5	4,876 (877)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	81.8	89.4	18.2	9.6	1,486 (302)
d. Very large (≥25,000 students)	81.9	88.9	18.1	10.1	273 (63)
Urbanicity					
e. City	83.0	93.9	17.0	5.1	1,449 (191)
f. Suburban	82.1	88.7	17.9	10.3	2,936 (492)
g. Town	84.8	91.0	15.2	8.0	2,311 (400)
h. Rural	84.1	90.9	16.0	8.1	5,867 (643)
Percent of Students Approved for F/RP Meals²					
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	82.4	90.0	17.6	9.0	3,687 (527)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	85.8	90.7	14.2	8.3	3,884 (536)
k. High (≥60 percent F/RP)	82.9	91.5	17.1	7.5	5,507 (703)
Region					
l. Mid-Atlantic	84.9	91.0	15.1	8.0	1,319 (202)
m. Midwest	84.2	90.5	15.8	8.5	3,432 (465)
n. Mountain Plains	84.3	90.1	15.7	8.9	1,979 (234)
o. Northeast	80.9	88.6	19.1	10.4	1,487 (195)
p. Southeast	85.6	95.5	14.4	3.5	1,082 (197)
q. Southwest	82.7	89.9	17.3	9.1	1,947 (227)
r. Western	82.8	90.6	17.2	8.4	1,832 (246)

¹ Overall, 96 percent of all SFAs that provided data for this table used direct certification. Data are missing for 8 percent of all SFAs.

² An overall statistically significant difference by SFA characteristic ($p < 0.05$) was observed.

Note: No pair-wise tests remained statistically significant in the Percent of Students Approved for F/RP Meals characteristic after applying the Bonferroni adjustment.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, survey questions 5.1 and 5.2.

Among SFAs directly responsible for matching lists of enrolled students in the SFA to lists of household participants in SNAP, TANF, and FDPIR, one-third or less reported specific matching challenges (Table 3-4). Difficulty reconciling State-generated direct certification lists with local POS systems (33 percent) and lack of staff time and resources to perform matching (32 percent) were the most frequently reported challenges. Other challenges were reported by less than 20 percent of SFAs, such as the high level of burden (17 percent) and the need to use a manual matching process (16 percent).

Table 3-4—Challenges reported among SFAs responsible for direct certification of students, SY 2015–16

Challenge ²	Percent of SFAs
Difficulty reconciling State-generated direct certification lists with local POS systems	33.2
Lack of staff time and resources to perform data matching	32.4
High level of burden (for example, due to computer systems that were outdated or not user friendly)	16.8
Need to use a manual matching process	16.2
Difficulty investigating or reconciling partially matched or unmatched children	12.7
Data insecurity/concerns about personally identifiable information	5.2
Lack familiarity with system functions designed for district use	4.6
Other	2.9
No reported challenges	36.6

¹ Direct certification is conducting by matching lists of enrolled students in the SFA to lists of household participants in the SNAP, TANF, and FDPIR programs.

² Multiple responses were allowed. Response options are presented as stated from the survey.

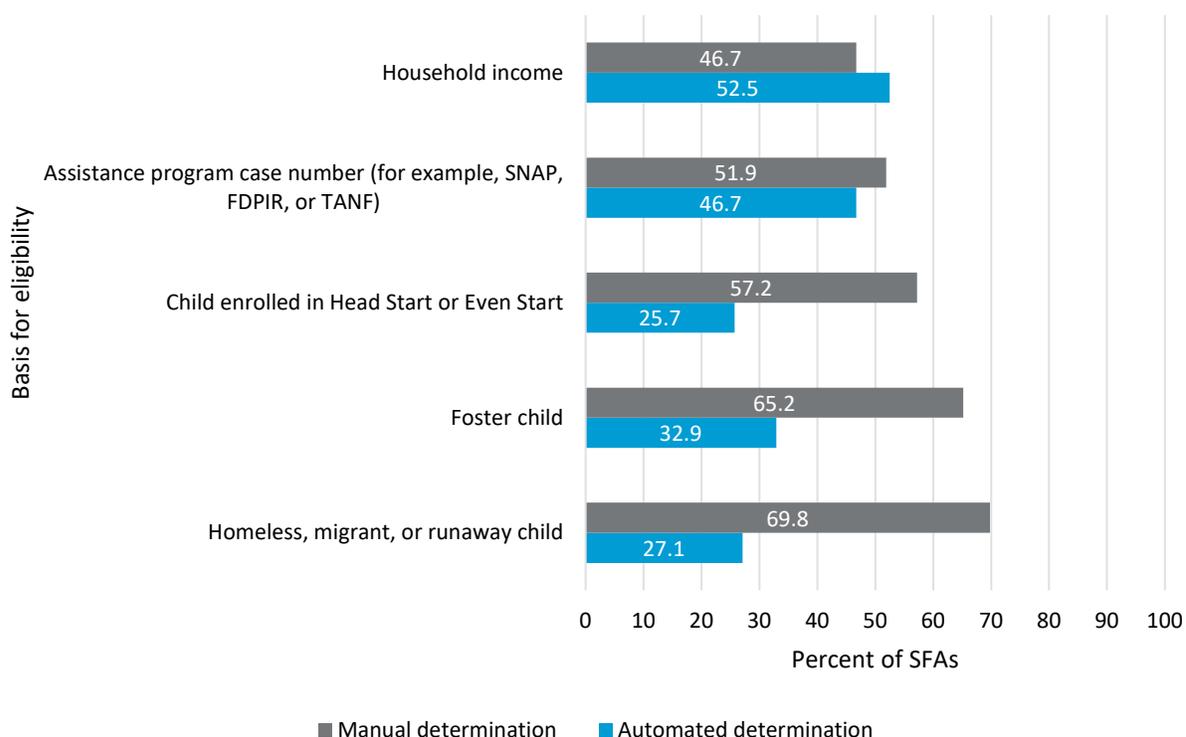
Note: 826 SFAs provided information for this table, which represents 6,020 SFAs in the population. The table includes SFAs responsible for matching lists of enrolled students in the SFA to lists of household participants in SNAP, TANF, and FDPIR, and excludes SFAs that reported the State was responsible for the matching process.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, survey questions 5.3 and 5.4.

3.2.3 Basis for Eligibility Determinations

Determinations of eligibility for F/RP school meals were more commonly made on a manual basis than an automated basis in SY 2015–16 (Figure 3-1). Manual determinations involve a staff person looking up information, entering data, and doing calculations with pencil and paper, a calculator, or Microsoft Excel functions. Automated determinations involve a computer program that performs similar functions, such as a computer algorithm, software, or Excel program. Manual and automated processes were not defined in the survey for SFAs and therefore may have been interpreted differently. SFAs made manual categorical eligibility determinations based on Head Start participation, foster child status, and homeless, migrant, or runaway status, at least twice as frequently as through automated methods (58, 65, and 70 percent, versus 26, 33, and 27 percent, respectively). Roughly the same proportions of SFAs used manual and automated determinations of categorical eligibility (52 and 47 percent, respectively) based on case numbers from assistance programs such as SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR. Household income eligibility determination was the only eligibility basis for which SFAs used automated methods more often than manual methods (53 versus 47 percent, respectively).

Figure 3-1—Percentage of SFAs using manual and automated school meal application eligibility determinations, by basis for eligibility, SY 2015–16



¹ Multiple responses were allowed. Response options are presented as stated from the survey.

Note: 1,747 SFAs provided information for this figure, which represents 12,830 SFAs in the population. This figure includes SFAs that used a school meal application.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, survey questions 5.5 and 5.7.

3.2.4 SFA Direct Verification

Among SFAs that used a F/RP school meal application, just over one-third (35 percent) reported that they used direct verification of applications. This estimate is higher than the 12 percent of SFAs that reported in the VCR-742 that they confirmed at least one application via direct verification as of November 15. It is possible that a higher percentage of surveyed SFAs reported using direct verification because of the way the question was asked. That is, the survey question asked whether SFAs used direct verification (regardless of whether any applications were confirmed as a result) and did not specify the November 15 cut-off date for verification completion. The percentage using direct verification of applications varied by SFA size and region (Table 3-5—). Very large and small SFAs used direct verification more frequently than large and medium-sized SFAs; the difference between small- and medium-size SFAs was statistically significant. Regional differences in SFAs’ use of direct verification were statistically significant between Western SFAs and Mid-Atlantic, Mountain Plains, Midwest, and Southwest SFAs, as well as between Mountain Plains and Southwest SFAs.

Table 3-5—Percentage of SFAs that conduct direct verification of school meal applications, by SFA characteristic, SY 2015–16

	Percent of SFAs	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
SFAs Conducting Direct Verification	35.2	12,534 (1,707)
SFA Size¹		
a. Small (1–999 students)	^b 38.9	6,117 (508)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	30.4	4,711 (845)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	33.5	1,440 (292)
d. Very large (≥25,000 students)	43.0	266 (62)
Urbanicity		
e. City	42.0	1,328 (176)
f. Suburban	31.7	2,926 (494)
g. Town	30.7	2,207 (378)
h. Rural	36.9	5,664 (624)
Percent of Students Approved for F/RP Meals		
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	35.8	3,064 (444)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	34.8	4,130 (567)
k. High (≥60 percent F/RP)	35.2	5,341 (696)
Regions¹		
l. Mid-Atlantic	23.6	1,262 (192)
m. Midwest	37.3	3,362 (460)
n. Mountain Plains	^q 26.4	2,074 (248)
o. Northeast	35.4	1,455 (195)
p. Southeast	36.6	848 (154)
q. Southwest	36.9	1,784 (214)
r. Western	^{l,m,n,q} 47.4	1,750 (244)

¹ An overall statistically significant difference by SFA characteristic ($p < 0.05$) was observed.

Notes: 1,707 SFAs provided information for this table, which represents 12,534 SFAs in the population. This table includes SFAs that used a school meal application. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Bonferroni p -value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the letter.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, survey questions 5.5 and 5.15.

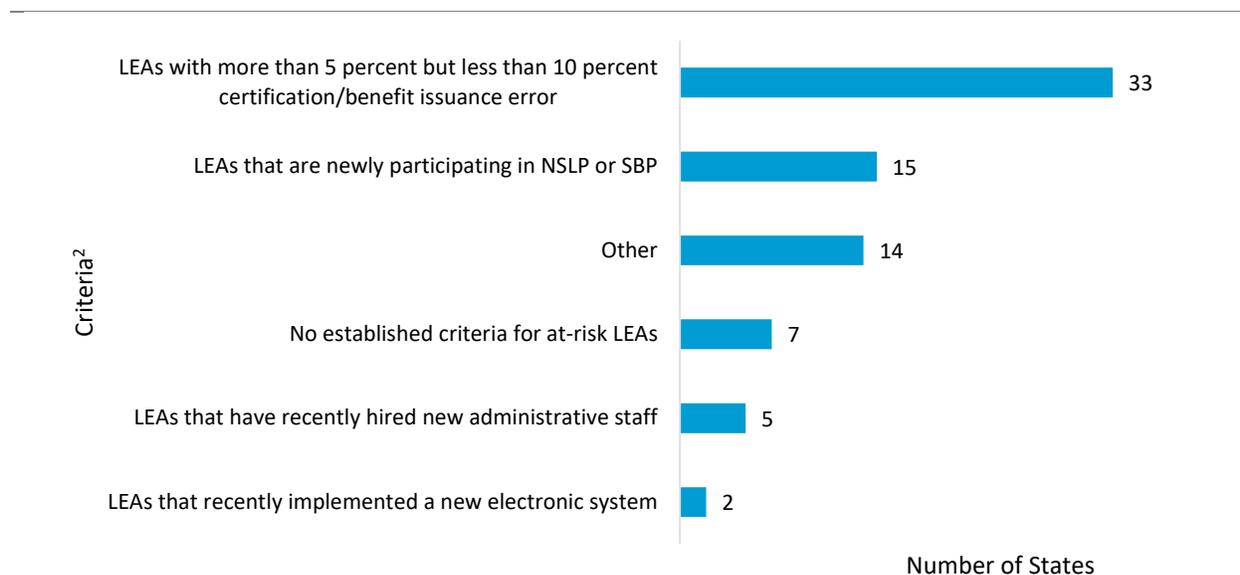
3.2.5 SFA Verification Practices: Acceptance of Emailed Documentation and Follow Up with Nonresponding Households

Nearly 4 in 10 SFAs (38 percent) accepted verification documents emailed from parents or guardians (data not shown). Nearly all SFAs (97 percent) followed up with households to request verification documentation when households did not respond to initial requests (data not shown).

3.2.6 State Criteria for Second Application Reviews in At-Risk LEAs

LEAs that demonstrate a high level of, or risk for, certification errors are required to conduct a second review of school meals applications. Such LEAs are selected by the state using two criteria. The first criterion is that the LEA has 10 percent or more error rate in certification/benefit issuances. SAs may determine the second criterion. The most frequently reported second criterion by SAs in SY 2015–16 was when the LEA had more than 5 percent, but less than 10 percent, certification/benefit issuance errors (33 of 55 States; Figure 3-2). SAs less frequently reported using other second criteria—such as when LEAs were newly participating in NSLP or SBP (15 States) or had recently hired new administrative staff (5 States). Seven SAs reported that they had no established second criteria for second reviews of at-risk LEAs.

Figure 3-2—State Agencies’ use of various criteria for second review of school meal applications in at-risk LEAs, SY 2015–16¹



¹ Section 304 of the HHFKA requires LEAs with high levels of, or a high risk for, certification error to have an 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 “at risk” based on SA discretion. This figure presents data on SAs’ use of the second “at risk” criterion.

² Multiple responses were allowed. Response options are presented as stated from the survey.

Note: 54 SAs provided information for this table.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2015–16, survey question 1.1.

4 Meal Prices and Counting

4.1 Background

NSLP and SBP are Federal meals programs administered by USDA's FNS through SAs.³⁷ Public and nonprofit private schools, as well as RCCIs, may participate in the programs. Such entities must operate their school meals service as a nonprofit. Any revenues gained must accrue to an SFA's nonprofit food service account.^{38,39}

To receive reimbursement, SFAs must count the number of free, reduced price, and paid (i.e., full price) meals served each day.⁴⁰ SFAs report meal counts to their SA, and in return receive Federal cash reimbursement for meals served via NSLP and SBP.⁴¹ Schools may also receive USDA Foods for meals served. SAs are required to ensure that SFAs perform accurate meal counting and reimbursement category determinations during administrative reviews, which occur every 3 years. There are currently no Federal requirements specifying which methods SFAs must use to count and claim meals; however, the process must include internal controls that validate total meal counts.

Reimbursement rates for NSLP and SBP are updated annually, and adjustments are made based on the *Food Away from Home* series of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for All Urban Consumers. For SY 2016–17, the changes to reimbursement rates reflected the 2.64 percent increase in CPI that occurred between May 2015 and May 2016.⁴²

Over the past several years, reimbursement rates have increased steadily. In SY 2013–14, the reimbursement for a student lunch in NSLP was \$0.28 for a paid lunch, \$2.53 for a reduced price lunch, and \$2.93 for a free lunch within the 48 contiguous States (Table 4-1). By SY 2016–17, these rates had risen to \$0.30 for a paid lunch, \$2.76 for a reduced price lunch, and \$3.16 for a free lunch. Breakfast prices increased similarly.

³⁷ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2013). *National School Lunch Program*. Retrieved from <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/cn/NSLPFactSheet.pdf>

³⁸ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Research, Nutrition, and Analysis. (2008). *School lunch and breakfast cost study—II: Final report* [Report No. CN-08-MCII]. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/MealCostStudy.pdf>

³⁹ All revenues from food service are accrued to the nonprofit food service account. The balance in this account must not exceed 3 months' average expenditures.

⁴⁰ Reimbursable meals must also meet additional nutrition requirements. See U.S. Department of Agriculture. (n.d.). *Reimbursable meals requirements*. Retrieved from https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/rec_quality.pdf

⁴¹ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Research, Nutrition and Analysis. (2008). *NSLP/SBP access, participation, eligibility, and certification study. Erroneous payments in the NSLP and SBP volume I: Study findings*. [Report No. CN-07-APEC]. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/nslpsbp-access-participation-eligibility-and-certification-study-%E2%80%93-erroneous-payments-nslp-and-sbp>

⁴² U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2016, August 5). National School Lunch, Special Milk, and School Breakfast Programs; national average payments/maximum reimbursement rates. *Federal Register*, 81(151), 51842–51845. Retrieved from <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-08-05/pdf/2016-18650.pdf>

Table 4-1—Reimbursement rates

	Reimbursement Rates					
	Lunch			Breakfast		
	Paid	Reduced	Free	Paid	Reduced	Free
SY 2013–14	0.28	2.53	2.93	0.28	1.28	1.58
SY 2014–15	0.28	2.58	2.98	0.28	1.32	1.62
SY 2015–16	0.29	2.67	3.07	0.29	1.36	1.66
SY 2016–17	0.30	2.76	3.16	0.29	1.41	1.71

Note: Rates are for the contiguous States.

Source: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/rates-reimbursement>

SFAs that have a high percentage of students approved for F/RP meals receive additional reimbursement. SFAs qualify for an additional 2-cent reimbursement per lunch if they served at least 60 percent or more of their lunches at free or at a reduced price during the second preceding school year.⁴³ SFAs can also receive an additional 6 cents per lunch reimbursement if they are certified by their SA as meeting the new meal pattern requirements.⁴⁴

Changes to reimbursement rates play an integral role in the administration of NSLP and SBP. SFAs cover the costs of providing free and reduced price meals to students with Federal reimbursements. To cover any remaining costs, SFAs must use other State and non-Federal funding sources, and/or adjust prices charged to students for paid and reduced price meals.⁴⁵ The national NSLP and SBP cost study conducted in SY 2005–06 (SLBCS-II) found that student payments for full and reduced price meals accounted for 24 percent of total SFA revenues.⁴⁶

4.1.1 Special Reimbursement Provisions

SFAs operating under certain alternate reimbursement provisions may track meal counts by type less frequently.⁴⁷ Under Provision 2, SFAs are only required to provide counts of reimbursable meals by type during the base year to establish monthly percentages of F/RP meals served. Reimbursement for subsequent years of operation under the provision (non-base years) is then predicated on these base year counts. For non-base years, SFAs are only required to take *total* daily meal counts. Schools must serve meals at no charge to all students, and compensate any costs not covered by Federal reimbursement with non-Federal funds.⁴⁸

⁴³ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2014, April 10). *Memo SP 30-2014: Determining eligibility for two cent differential reimbursement in new school food authorities—revised*. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/determining-eligibility-two-cent-differential-reimbursement-new-schools>

⁴⁴ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2017). *School meals: Certification of compliance*. Retrieved from <http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/certification-compliance>

⁴⁵ SFAs are allowed to charge a maximum of \$0.40 for a reduced price lunch and a maximum of \$0.30 for a reduced price breakfast.

⁴⁶ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Research, Nutrition, and Analysis. (2008). *School lunch and breakfast cost study—II: Final report* [Report No. CN-08-MCII]. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/MealCostStudy.pdf>

⁴⁷ 7 CFR § 245.9. For additional information/context, see <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/7/245.9>

⁴⁸ 7 CFR § 245.9. See <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/7/245.9>

Provision 3 is similar to Provision 2, but instead, SFAs receive the same level of Federal cash and commodity assistance received during the base year, which is applied to the subsequent 4 years. Participating schools must serve meals to all students at no charge in non-base years, and cover any costs not covered by Federal reimbursement with non-Federal sources.⁴⁹

CEP was piloted in several States beginning in July 2011, and was made available nationwide in 2014.⁵⁰ This provision allows SFAs, schools, or groups of schools to provide lunches and breakfasts at no charge to *all* enrolled students regardless of their individual eligibility. To participate, SFAs, schools, or groups of schools must identify via direct certification that at least 40 percent of their enrolled students are categorically eligible for free meals without an application. An ISP of 40 percent or more can be used for up to 4 consecutive years, with the option to re-elect CEP at the end of the 4-year cycle. Reimbursement is calculated by multiplying the ISP by 1.6 to determine the percentage of meals reimbursed at the Federal free rate. The remaining percentage of meals (up to 100 percent) is reimbursed at the paid rate. For example, an SFA with an ISP of 55.00 percent would have 88 percent of their meals reimbursed at the free rate (55.00×1.6). The remaining 12 percent ($100 - 88$) of meals served would be reimbursed at the paid rate. If costs of operating NSLP and SBP exceed these levels of reimbursement, then SFAs must use additional, non-Federal funding sources to cover costs.

4.2 Results

The remainder of Chapter 5 presents national estimates based on SFA responses to the CN-OPS-II Year 1 survey. These estimates aim to provide an overall picture of how SFAs approach certain financial and service operations in NSLP and SBP. Data presented in Chapter 5 address the following research questions.

- What are the average prices charged for full price, reduced price, and adult meals for SY 2015–16?

SFAs were asked to report the prices charged for meals⁵¹ served in SBP by meal type for SY 2015–16. Average prices charged are also presented by SFA characteristics. Table 4-2, Table 4-3, Table 4-4, Table 4-5, Table 4-6, and Table 4-7 show the results of this analysis.

- How have meal prices changed over time?
 - In addition to reporting meal prices for the current school year (SY 2015–16), SFAs were asked about meal prices charged the previous school year (SY 2014–15). Chapter 5 also uses historical data collected from the SN-OPS report series to compare prices over the period SY 2011–12 to SY 2015–16. These estimates are presented in Appendix D Table D-2 and Table D-3 along with Figure D-2.
- What method of counting is used in non-cafeteria points-of-service?
 - SFAs were asked about the counting and tracking methods used for non-cafeteria points-of-service, and for comparison, for cafeteria points-of-service. Figure 4-1 shows the various methods used in SY 2015–16.

⁴⁹ The base year is not included in the 4-year cycle under Provision 3.

⁵⁰ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2016). *Community Eligibility Provision planning and implementation guidance*. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/fall-2016-edition-community-eligibility-provision-planning-and-implementation-guidance>

⁵¹ Due to concerns regarding respondent burden, CN-OPS-II Year 1 data collection was limited to meal price data for breakfasts only.

- What training and oversight is provided to cashiers on meal counting?
 - SFAs were also asked to report the types of training and oversight provided to cashiers, including meal counting. The frequency with which this training is provided was also examined. Results are shown in Table 4-8, Table 4-9, and -10.
- What alternatives to the traditional cashier model are used?
 - SFAs were asked to report on the alternative points-of-service used to deliver meals to students in NSLP and SBP. These include meals delivered directly to the classroom, kiosk or cart service, vending machines, and other methods. Results are shown in Figure 4-2.

Tables 5-2 through 5-7 present meal prices by school type (columns) and SFA characteristic (rows). Three types of statistical tests were conducted to evaluate differences between reported meal prices. First, among all SFAs, we tested to see if meal prices differed by school type. These comparisons can be visually seen along the first row of data in each of the tables. All combinations were tested, for example: elementary vs. middle, elementary vs. high, elementary vs. other, middle vs. high, middle vs. other, and high vs. other. Because there were 6 possible comparisons, statistical significance was set at $p < .008$ ($0.05/6$). If statistical significance was observed in any of the combinations, a detailed footnote was added to the first row of the table.

Second, we tested for differences in meal prices by SFA characteristic, in each school type separately (by column). An overall Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test was conducted first to ensure that we only focus on the significant main effects. Following a significant ANOVA result by SFA characteristic, the third statistical test compared meal prices in each subgroup. A Bonferroni adjustment was used to control for multiple comparisons. Overall significant ANOVA tests by SFA characteristic are presented in the numbered footnotes of the result tables, while significant adjusted subgroup comparisons are presented by letter superscripts within the table (by individual column). There are instances when an overall test was significant by SFA characteristic, but individual comparisons among the subgroups did not remain significant after applying the Bonferroni adjustment.

4.2.1 Full Prices

In SY 2015–16, the prices for a full price breakfast were lowest in elementary schools (\$1.37) and were progressively higher in “other” (\$1.41), middle (\$1.45), and high schools (\$1.46; Table 4-2). Among all SFAs, a statistically significant difference by school type was observed between elementary and middle schools, elementary and high schools, elementary and “other” schools, middle and high schools, and high and “other” schools, after applying a multiple comparison (Bonferroni) adjustment. Average prices were highest for all school types in very large SFAs. Rural SFAs charged lower prices across all school types. In elementary schools, prices charged in rural locales (\$1.31) were significantly lower than those charged in town (\$1.38), suburban (\$1.44), and urban/city SFAs (\$1.48). Among high schools, rural SFAs (\$1.41) also charged significantly lower prices than suburban SFAs (\$1.54), and prices in suburban areas (\$1.54) were significantly higher than those in towns (\$1.44).

SFAs serving communities with a high percentage of students approved for F/RP meals charged lower prices for full price breakfasts (compared to SFAs with a lower percentage of students approved for F/RP meals) across all school types. The difference in price between SFAs with high and low percentage of students approved for F/RP meals was statistically significant in elementary (\$1.48 vs. \$1.31), middle (\$1.58 vs. \$1.37), and high schools (\$1.60 vs. \$1.39).

All types of schools, except “other” schools, reported statistically significant differences by region in the price charged for a full price breakfast. Generally, prices were highest in the Western region and lowest in the Southwest region. Again, elementary schools charged the lowest prices, followed by progressively higher prices in middle schools, high schools, and “other” schools.

Table 4-2—Average price charged for a full price breakfast, by SFA characteristics, SY 2015–16

	Average Price by School Type				Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>) ¹
	Elementary	Middle	High	Other	
All SFAs that Charged for a Full Price Breakfast²	\$1.37	\$1.45	\$1.46	\$1.41	9,758 (1,369)
SFA Size					
a. Small (1–999 students)	\$1.35	\$1.45	\$1.44	\$1.42	4,462 (377)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	\$1.38	\$1.45	\$1.46	\$1.40	3,935 (710)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	\$1.36	\$1.45	\$1.48	\$1.37	1,174 (239)
d. Very large (≥25,000 students)	\$1.43	\$1.49	\$1.50	\$1.52	187 (43)
Urbanicity³					
e. City	\$1.48	\$1.55	\$1.51	\$1.62	857 (117)
f. Suburban	\$1.42	\$1.50	^g \$1.54	\$1.44	2,290 (398)
g. Town	\$1.38	\$1.44	\$1.44	\$1.42	1,904 (330)
h. Rural	^{e,f,g} \$1.31	\$1.41	^f \$1.41	\$1.35	4,448 (501)
Percent of Students Approved for F/RP Meals⁴					
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	ⁱ \$1.48	^j \$1.58	^j \$1.60	\$1.49	2,115 (337)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	\$1.38	\$1.46	\$1.45	\$1.41	3,535 (494)
k. High (≥60 percent F/RP)	ⁱ \$1.30	ⁱ \$1.37	ⁱ \$1.39	\$1.38	4,108 (538)
Region³					
l. Mid-Atlantic	^{q,r} \$1.32	\$1.43	^r \$1.42	\$1.31	1,004 (156)
m. Midwest	^{q,r} \$1.37	^{q,r} \$1.46	^{p,q,r} \$1.46	\$1.41	2,472 (358)
n. Mountain Plains	^{q,r} \$1.40	^{q,r} \$1.48	^{p,q,r} \$1.47	\$1.50	1,810 (223)
o. Northeast	^{q,r} \$1.38	^q \$1.51	^{p,q} \$1.55	\$1.34	1,295 (178)
p. Southeast	^{q,r} \$1.38	^r \$1.36	^r \$1.30	\$1.28	612 (114)
q. Southwest	\$1.19	^r \$1.29	^r \$1.27	\$1.30	1,428 (168)
r. Western	\$1.56	\$1.64	\$1.75	\$1.62	1,137 (172)

¹ *n* is less than the *N* of 1,984 because some SFAs do not serve breakfast, or serve breakfast at no charge under special provisions.

² Among all SFAs, a statistically significant difference by school type was observed between elementary and middle schools, elementary and high schools, elementary and “other” schools, middle and high schools, and high and “other” schools.

³ An overall statistically significant difference emerged by SFA characteristic (main effect) ($p < 0.05$) in elementary, middle, high, and “other” schools.

⁴ An overall statistically significant difference emerged by SFA characteristic (main effect) ($p < 0.05$) in elementary, middle, and high schools.

Notes: Prices are reported for breakfast for all school types. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Bonferroni p -value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the letter.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–2016, question 3.1.

4.2.2 Adult Meal Prices

Prices charged for adult breakfasts were similar across school types and did not vary as much as full price breakfasts in SY 2015–16.⁵² Among all SFAs, there was only \$0.03 difference between the highest prices charged (\$1.98 in “other” schools) and the lowest prices (\$1.95 in elementary schools; Table 4-3). Among all SFAs, a statistically significant difference by school type was observed between elementary and middle schools, and elementary and high schools, after applying a multiple comparison (Bonferroni) adjustment. Elementary, middle, and high schools charged significantly less in rural areas compared to suburban areas. High schools in rural areas also charged significantly less than high schools in cities and towns.

Prices charged for adult breakfasts also differed by percent of students approved for F/RP meals. Middle schools in SFAs with a high percentage of students approved for F/RP meals charged significantly lower prices for an adult breakfast (\$1.94) than middle schools in SFAs with a low percentage of students approved for F/RP meals (\$2.04). High schools in SFAs with high and medium percentages of students approved for F/RP meals also charged significantly lower prices (\$1.93 and \$1.95) compared to high schools in SFAs with low percentage of students approved for F/RP meals (\$2.07). Notably, elementary, middle, and high schools in five of the regions (Midwest, Mountain Plains, Northeast, Southeast and Southwest) charged significantly less than the Western region.

⁵² Adult meals are not reimbursable.

Table 4-3—Average price charged for an adult breakfast, by SFA characteristics, SY 2015–16

	Average Price by School Type				Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>) ¹
	Elementary	Middle	High	Other	
All SFAs that Charged for an Adult Breakfast²	\$1.95	\$1.97	\$1.97	\$1.98	11,264 (1,597)
SFA Size³					
a. Small (1–999 students)	^d \$1.90	\$1.92	\$1.92	\$1.94	5,045 (426)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	\$1.95	\$1.97	\$1.97	\$2.01	4,498 (814)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	\$2.02	\$2.03	\$2.05	\$1.98	1,443 (293)
d. Very large (≥25,000 students)	\$2.13	\$2.16	\$2.14	\$2.11	278 (64)
Urbanicity⁴					
e. City	\$1.99	\$2.06	\$2.07	\$2.08	1,107 (166)
f. Suburban	\$2.05	\$2.08	\$2.09	\$2.01	2,343 (409)
g. Town	\$1.97	\$1.96	\$1.98	\$2.02	2,242 (394)
h. Rural	^f \$1.88	^f \$1.88	^{e,f,g} \$1.88	\$1.93	5,419 (613)
Percent of Students Approved for F/RP Meals⁵					
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	\$2.00	\$2.04	^j \$2.07	\$2.00	2,784 (433)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	\$1.95	\$1.95	\$1.95	\$2.02	3,507 (498)
k. High (≥60 percent F/RP)	\$1.92	ⁱ \$1.94	ⁱ \$1.93	\$1.95	4,973 (666)
Region⁶					
l. Mid-Atlantic	^{m,p,r} \$2.05	^{m,p} \$2.14	^{m,n,p,q,r} \$2.16	\$2.15	965 (153)
m. Midwest	^r \$1.84	^r \$1.86	^{o,r} \$1.85	^r \$1.78	2,676 (385)
n. Mountain Plains	^r \$1.90	^r \$1.91	^r \$1.90	^r \$1.94	1,971 (239)
o. Northeast	^r \$2.01	^r \$2.01	^{p,r} \$2.07	^p \$2.23	1,188 (168)
p. Southeast	^r \$1.84	^r \$1.86	^r \$1.85	^r \$1.83	1,025 (195)
q. Southwest	^r \$1.86	^r \$1.90	^r \$1.90	\$1.96	1,924 (227)
r. Western	\$2.29	\$2.34	\$2.38	\$2.29	1,515 (230)

¹ *n* is less than the *N* of 1,984 because some SFAs do not serve breakfast, or serve breakfast for free under special provisions.

² Among all SFAs, a statistically significant difference by School Type was observed between elementary and middle schools, and elementary and high schools.

³ An overall statistically significant difference emerged by SFA characteristic ($p < 0.05$) in elem., middle, and “other” schools.

⁴ An overall statistically significant difference emerged by SFA characteristic ($p < 0.05$) in elem., middle, and high schools.

⁵ An overall statistically significant difference emerged by SFA characteristic ($p < 0.05$) in middle and high schools.

⁶ An overall statistically significant difference emerged by SFA characteristic ($p < 0.05$) all school types.

Notes: Prices are reported for all breakfast types. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Bonferroni p -value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the letter.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–2016, question 3.1.

4.2.3 Reduced Meal Prices

In all SFAs, the prices charged for a reduced price breakfast were the same across school type (approximately \$0.30; Table 4-4). Prices did not differ significantly by SFA size. For the SFA characteristics of urbanicity, and the percent of students approved for F/RP meals, prices significantly varied in middle and high schools, respectively. Statistically significant differences in prices for reduced price breakfasts were also observed by region. Specifically, in the Northeast, prices for a reduced price breakfast were lower than any other region. These SFAs charged an average price of \$0.26 in “other” schools and \$0.27 in elementary, middle, and high schools. SFAs in the Mid-Atlantic, Midwest, Mountain Plains, and Southwest regions all charged \$0.30 in elementary, middle, high, and “other” schools.

Table 4-4—Average price charged for a reduced price breakfast, by SFA characteristics, SY 2015–16

	Average Price by School Type				Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>) ¹
	Elementary	Middle	High	Other	
All SFAs that Charged for a Reduced Price Breakfast	\$0.29	\$0.30	\$0.29	\$0.29	7,952 (1,116)
SFA Size					
a. Small (1–999 students)	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.29	3,641 (315)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	3,250 (583)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.30	938 (190)
d. Very large (≥25,000 students)	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.30	123 (28)
Urbanicity²					
e. City	\$0.30	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.30	647 (90)
f. Suburban	\$0.29	\$0.29	^g \$0.29	\$0.29	1,921 (329)
g. Town	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.30	1,477 (257)
h. Rural	\$0.29	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.29	3,683 (420)
Percent of Students Approved for F/RP Meals³					
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	1,724 (269)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	2,869 (396)
k. High (≥60 percent F/RP)	\$0.30	^{i,j} \$0.30	ⁱ \$0.30	\$0.30	3,359 (451)
Region⁴					
l. Mid-Atlantic	^o \$0.30	^o \$0.30	^o \$0.30	^o \$0.30	929 (142)
m. Midwest	^o \$0.30	^o \$0.30	^o \$0.30	^o \$0.30	1,950 (285)
n. Mountain Plains	^o \$0.30	^o \$0.30	^o \$0.30	^o \$0.30	1,538 (191)
o. Northeast	^{p,q} \$0.27	^{p,q,r} \$0.27	^{p,q,r} \$0.27	^{p,q,r} \$0.26	1,014 (142)
p. Southeast	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.30	512 (96)
q. Southwest	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.30	1,332 (160)
r. Western	\$0.30	\$0.29	\$0.30	\$0.30	678 (100)

¹ *n* is less than the N of 1,984 because some SFAs do not serve breakfast, or serve breakfast for free under special provisions.

² An overall statistically significant difference emerged by SFA characteristic (main effect) (*p* < 0.05) in high schools.

³ An overall statistically significant difference emerged by SFA characteristic (main effect) (*p* < 0.05) in middle and high schools.

⁴ An overall statistically significant difference emerged by SFA characteristic (main effect) (*p* < 0.05) in elementary, middle, high, and “other” schools.

Notes: Prices are reported for all breakfast types. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Bonferroni *p*-value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the letter.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–2016, questions 3.1.

4.2.4 Prices in SY 2014–15

In SY 2014–15, SFAs reported they charged the highest prices, on average, for full priced breakfasts in middle and high schools (\$1.40 in both), and the lowest prices in elementary schools (\$1.31; Table 4-5). Among all SFAs, a statistically significant difference by school type was observed between elementary and middle schools, elementary and high schools, and elementary and “other” schools, after applying a multiple comparison (Bonferroni) adjustment.

Meal prices did not vary greatly by SFA size, though elementary schools in small and very large SFAs charged lower prices (\$1.30 in both) than all other school types; conversely, prices in small and very large middle schools (\$1.42) were higher than the other school types. High schools in large SFAs charged the highest prices (\$1.44) for a full price breakfast relative to the other school types.

The full prices charged for breakfasts differed significantly by urbanicity, level of students approved for F/RP meals, and region. Middle schools in urban/city SFAs and high schools in suburban SFAs charged more (\$1.52 and \$1.49) than any other school type or SFA locale. Prices for a full price breakfast in SY 2014–15 were lowest across all school types in rural SFAs, with elementary schools charging \$1.27 and high schools \$1.35.

SFAs with a high percentage of students approved for F/RP meals charged significantly lower prices than SFAs with a low percentage of students approved for F/RP meals across all elementary, middle, and high schools. In these SFAs’ elementary schools, the full price for breakfast in high poverty SFAs was \$1.25 in SY 2014–15, compared to \$1.42 in SFAs with a low percentage of students approved for F/RP meals, respectively. The prices for high and low poverty SFAs were \$1.34 and \$1.48 in middle and high schools.

Prices for a full price breakfast were lowest in the Southeastern and Southwestern regions. Prices in the Southeast were \$1.21 in elementary and high schools, \$1.25 in middle schools, and \$1.23 in “other” schools. In the Southwest, these prices were \$1.19 in elementary schools (the lowest price for a full price breakfast among all regions), \$1.29 in middle schools, \$1.23 in high schools, and \$1.26 in “other” schools. All school types charged significantly higher prices in the Western region, with elementary schools charging \$1.45, middle schools \$1.52, “other” schools \$1.62, and high schools charging \$1.67 for a full price breakfast in SY 2014–15.

Table 4-5—Average price charged for a full price breakfast, by SFA characteristics, SY 2014–15

	Average Price by School Type				Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>) ¹
	Elementary	Middle	High	Other	
All SFAs that Charged for a Full Price Breakfast²	\$1.31	\$1.40	\$1.40	\$1.38	6,705 (902)
SFA Size					
a. Small (1–999 students)	\$1.30	\$1.42	\$1.41	\$1.40	3,374 (278)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	\$1.32	\$1.37	\$1.37	\$1.35	2,470 (445)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	\$1.33	\$1.41	\$1.44	\$1.36	725 (148)
d. Very large (≥25,000 students)	\$1.30	\$1.42	\$1.40	\$1.37	136 (31)
Urbanicity³					
e. City	\$1.34	\$1.52	\$1.45	\$1.51	636 (77)
f. Suburban	\$1.39	^g \$1.48	^g \$1.49	\$1.38	1,483 (252)
g. Town	\$1.31	\$1.37	\$1.38	\$1.36	1,266 (215)
h. Rural	^f \$1.27	^f \$1.33	^f \$1.35	\$1.32	3,157 (344)
Percent of Students Approved for F/RP Meals⁴					
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	^j \$1.42	\$1.48	\$1.48	\$1.44	1,473 (223)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	\$1.33	\$1.41	\$1.41	\$1.39	2,357 (320)
k. High (≥60 percent F/RP)	ⁱ \$1.25	ⁱ \$1.34	ⁱ \$1.34	\$1.35	2,875 (359)
Region³					
l. Mid-Atlantic	\$1.31	\$1.45	^{p,r} \$1.42	\$1.23	711 (105)
m. Midwest	^q \$1.32	\$1.40	^{p,q,r} \$1.41	\$1.36	1,621 (228)
n. Mountain Plains	\$1.35	\$1.42	^{p,r} \$1.43	\$1.47	1,384 (160)
o. Northeast	\$1.30	\$1.43	^{p,r} \$1.43	\$1.31	941 (124)
p. Southeast	^t \$1.21	^t \$1.25	^t \$1.21	\$1.23	411 (80)
q. Southwest	^t \$1.19	\$1.29	^t \$1.23	\$1.26	904 (100)
r. Western	\$1.45	\$1.52	\$1.67	\$1.62	733 (105)

¹ *n* is less than the N of 1,984 because some SFAs do not serve breakfast, or serve breakfast for free under special provisions.

² Among all SFAs, a statistically significant difference by school type was observed between elementary and middle schools, elementary and high schools, and elementary and “other” schools.

³ An overall statistically significant difference emerged by urbanicity (main effect) ($p < 0.05$) in elementary, middle, high, and “other” schools.

⁴ An overall statistically significant difference emerged by percent of students approved for F/RP meals (main effect) ($p < 0.05$) in elementary, middle, and high schools.

Notes: Prices are reported for all breakfast types. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Bonferroni p -value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the letter.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–2016, question 3.2.

The average prices charged for an adult breakfast were highest in “other” schools in SY 2014–15 (\$1.94), followed by middle and high schools (\$1.90) and elementary schools (\$1.89; Table 4-6). Among all SFAs, a statistically significant difference by school type was observed between elementary and middle schools, and elementary and high schools, after applying a multiple comparison (Bonferroni) adjustment. Prices did not vary greatly by SFA size in SY 2014–15. The lowest prices were found among elementary, middle, and high schools in small SFAs, which all charged \$1.88 on average; the price was \$1.94 in “other” schools in small SFAs. Very large SFAs charged higher prices for an adult breakfast (\$2.00 in elementary, \$2.07 in middle, \$2.03 in high, and \$1.93 in “other” schools) than did smaller SFAs.

Prices differed significantly by urbanicity. For middle schools, rural SFAs charged \$1.84 for an adult breakfast compared to \$2.02 in suburban SFAs. This was reflective of a trend observed in SY 2014–15: suburban SFAs consistently charged higher prices than SFAs in other locales, and rural SFAs charged the lowest prices.

Significant differences in price were also observed by percentage of students approved for F/RP meals. Prices were highest in SFAs with a low percentage of students approved for F/RP meals for elementary, middle, and high schools (\$1.96, \$1.97, and \$1.98, respectively), and lowest in SFAs with a high percentage of students approved for F/RP meals (\$1.86 in both elementary and middle schools, and \$1.84 in high schools). Prices in “other” schools varied little by level of percent of students approved for FR/P meals in SY 2014–15.

Average prices for an adult breakfast varied significantly among regions. Prices charged by SFAs in the Western region (\$2.21) were a minimum of 19 cents higher (\$2.02 in the Northeast) and a maximum of 45 cents higher (\$1.76 in the Southeast) than any other region in elementary schools. Western SFAs also charged higher prices than other regions in middle schools (16–49 cents higher) and high schools (12–51 cents higher). In “other” schools, Northeastern SFAs charged the highest average price for an adult breakfast (\$2.29), which was 8 to 50 cents higher than any other region.

Table 4-6—Average price charged for an adult price breakfast, by SFA characteristics, SY 2014–15

	Average Price by School Type				Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>) ¹
	Elementary	Middle	High	Other	
All SFAs that Charged for an Adult Price Breakfast²	\$1.89	\$1.90	\$1.90	\$1.94	7,142 (978)
SFA Size					
a. Small (1–999 students)	\$1.88	\$1.88	\$1.88	\$1.94	3,454 (287)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	\$1.89	\$1.89	\$1.89	\$1.95	2,692 (486)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	\$1.93	\$1.94	\$1.95	\$1.89	837 (170)
d. Very large (≥25,000 students)	\$2.00	\$2.07	\$2.03	\$1.99	160 (35)
Urbanicity³					
e. City	\$1.86	\$1.96	\$1.98	\$1.98	678 (95)
f. Suburban	\$1.98	^g \$2.02	\$1.99	\$2.00	1,423 (246)
g. Town	\$1.89	\$1.88	\$1.89	\$1.97	1,430 (246)
h. Rural	\$1.86	^f \$1.84	\$1.84	\$1.88	3,525 (384)
Percent of Students Approved for F/RP Meals⁴					
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	\$1.96	\$1.97	\$1.98	\$1.93	1,772 (270)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	\$1.89	\$1.90	\$1.91	\$1.94	2,248 (304)
k. High (≥60 percent F/RP)	\$1.86	\$1.86	\$1.84	\$1.94	3,122 (404)
Region⁵					
l. Mid-Atlantic	\$1.98	^p \$2.10	^{m,n,p} \$2.09	\$2.04	629 (96)
m. Midwest	^t \$1.80	^t \$1.79	^{o,r} \$1.78	^{o,r} \$1.79	1,688 (240)
n. Mountain Plains	^t \$1.83	^t \$1.84	^t \$1.84	^{o,r} \$1.83	1,427 (165)
o. Northeast	\$2.02	\$1.99	^p \$2.03	^{p,q} \$2.29	772 (106)
p. Southeast	^t \$1.76	^t \$1.77	^t \$1.76	^t \$1.79	557 (110)
q. Southwest	^t \$1.84	^t \$1.87	^t \$1.85	^t \$1.83	1,177 (134)
r. Western	\$2.21	\$2.26	\$2.27	\$2.21	891 (127)

¹ *n* is less than the N of 1,984 because some SFAs do not serve breakfast, or serve breakfast for free under special provisions.

² Among all SFAs, a statistically significant difference by school type was observed between elementary and middle schools, and elementary and high schools.

³ An overall statistically significant difference emerged by SFA characteristic ($p < 0.05$) in middle, high, and “other” schools.

⁴ An overall statistically significant difference emerged by SFA characteristic ($p < 0.05$) in high schools.

⁵ An overall statistically significant difference emerged by SFA characteristic ($p < 0.05$) in elementary, middle, high, and “other” schools.

Notes: Prices are reported for all breakfast types. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Bonferroni p -value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the letter.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–2016, question 3.2.

Among all SFAs, the average prices charged for a reduced price breakfast did not vary, with SFAs charging \$0.29 across all school types in SY 2014–15 (Table 4-7). There was also little variation across school types by SFA size, urbanicity, or percent of students approved for F/RP meals. Significant differences were observed by SFA region. Specifically, Northeastern SFAs charged the lowest prices across all school types (\$0.27 in elementary, middle, and high schools, and \$0.26 in “other” schools). SFAs in all other regions charged \$0.30 for all school types in SY 2014–15, except for Southwestern SFAs, which charged \$0.29 in high schools, and Western SFAs, which charged \$0.29 in middle schools.

Table 4-7—Average price charged for reduced price breakfasts, by SFA characteristics, SY 2014–15

	Average Price by School Type				Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>) ¹
	Elementary	Middle	High	Other	
SFAs that Offered Reduced Price Breakfasts	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	5,375 (733)
SFA Size					
a. Small (1–999 students)	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	2,647 (225)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	2,059 (369)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	\$0.30	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.30	580 (118)
d. Very large (≥25,000 students)	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.30	89 (21)
Urbanicity					
e. City	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.29	\$0.30	485 (59)
f. Suburban	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	1,284 (213)
g. Town	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	963 (166)
h. Rural	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	2,519 (284)
Percent of Students Approved for F/RP Meals					
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	1,259 (187)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	1,846 (250)
k. High (≥60 percent F/RP)	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.29	2,270 (296)
Region²					
l. Mid-Atlantic	°\$0.30	°\$0.30	°\$0.30	°\$0.30	668 (97)
m. Midwest	°\$0.30	°\$0.30	°\$0.30	°\$0.30	1,282 (182)
n. Mountain Plains	°\$0.30	°\$0.30	°\$0.30	°\$0.30	1,140 (139)
o. Northeast	^{p,q,r} \$0.27	^{p,q,r} \$0.27	^{p,q,r} \$0.27	^{p,q,r} \$0.26	719 (98)
p. Southeast	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.30	326 (62)
q. Southwest	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.29	\$0.30	818 (94)
r. Western	\$0.30	\$0.29	\$0.30	\$0.30	422 (61)

¹ *n* is less than the *N* of 1,984 because some SFAs do not serve breakfast, or serve breakfast for free under special provisions.

² An overall statistically significant difference emerged by SFA characteristic (main effect) ($p < 0.05$) in elementary, middle, high, and “other” schools.

Notes: Prices are reported for all breakfast types. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Bonferroni p -value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the letter.

Sources: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–2016, question 3.2.

4.3 Meal Counts

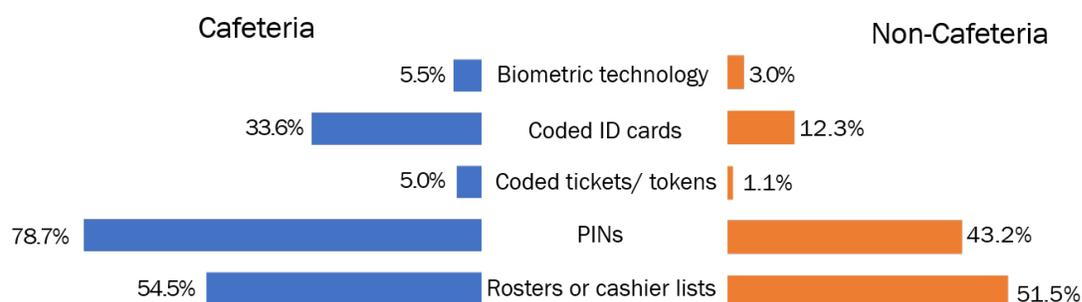
In 1991, FNS published a manual regarding meal counting and claiming procedures, issuing guidance on eligibility documentation, collection procedures, POS meal counts, reporting, claim reimbursement and internal controls.⁵³ The manual also provided examples of meal counting and claiming systems including the use of coded tickets/tokens, automatic tab tickets, bar coded and magnetic strip cards, and coded identification cards as means to track and count meals.

SAs continue to provide links to this manual on their CN websites as a reference for schools and SFAs. While some of the systems addressed in the report are still in use, the technological environment has greatly changed; SFAs now also have access to more sophisticated methods of tracking and counting meals, such as personal identification numbers (PINs) and biometric technologies. SFAs were asked to report their use of older and newer methods at both cafeteria and non-cafeteria POS.

Most SFAs (79 percent) reported using PINs to track the number of F/RP meals served to students in cafeteria POS systems (Figure 4-1 and Table D-4). Rosters or cashier lists were used by 55 percent of SFAs, and 34 percent used coded identification cards. Approximately 5 percent of SFAs used either coded tickets or tokens or some form of biometric technology.

In non-cafeteria settings, SFAs most frequently used rosters or cashier lists (52 percent), PINs (43 percent), and coded ID cards (12 percent).

Figure 4-1—Percentage of SFAs using various methods to track and count F/RP meals served to students in the cafeteria and at non-cafeteria POS, SY 2015–16



¹ Multiple responses were allowed. Response options are presented as stated in the survey.

Note: 1,984 SFAs provided a response, representing 14,824 SFAs in the population.

Source: SFA Director Survey, question 10.1.

4.3.1 Training and Monitoring of Cashiers

SAs are required to provide TA and training to SFAs on various aspects of meal service in NSLP and SBP. To ensure that regulatory and procedural requirements of running the meal programs are met, SAs must conduct administrative reviews. During these reviews, SAs perform on-site monitoring of meal counting

⁵³ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (1991). *Meal counting and claiming manual*. Retrieved from http://ped.state.nm.us/nutrition/na_nb11/USDA_MealCountingManual.pdf

and claiming systems, where they observe how reimbursable and other meals are counted and recorded correctly and evaluate adherence to meal pattern requirements.

SAs must also ensure provisions such as “offer versus serve” (OVS) are implemented correctly. This provision requires that SFAs give students the opportunity to decline some food offerings they do not intend to eat, to reduce food waste.⁵⁴ Since most of these activities occur at the point of meal service, SFAs were asked to report the types and frequency of training provided to cashiers and to indicate which activities were subject to on-site monitoring in SY 2015–16.

Almost all SFAs reported that they provided some type of training to cashiers in SY 2015–16. Training was provided by 92 percent of SFAs on how to monitor whether students select the types and amounts of food needed to qualify for reimbursable meals; 89 percent provided training on “offer versus serve” methods (Table 4-8). Between 85 and 87 percent of SFAs provided training on various meal counting methods and operating POS systems.

Fewer SFAs trained cashiers on acceptable types of payment (77 percent), on managing cash for à la carte and adult meals (73 percent), and on meal and food pricing (72 percent). Only 42 percent of SFAs provided training about applications for F/RP meals, and less than 5 percent reported providing any other type of training to cashiers.

Table 4-8—Types of training provided to cashiers, SY 2015–16

Training Topic ¹	Percent of SFAs
Monitoring student meal selections for reimbursable meals	91.6
Offer versus serve	89.1
Operating a POS system	86.9
Method of counting meals	84.6
Acceptable types of payments	76.9
Managing cash for à la carte and adult meals	72.7
Meal and food pricing	72.4
Applications for F/RP meals	41.8
Other	3.8
No response	1.5

¹ Multiple responses were allowed. Response options are presented as stated in the survey.

Note: 1,984 SFAs provided a response, representing 14,823 SFAs in the population.

Source: SFA Director Survey, question 10.2.

SFAs were most likely to report (range: 41 percent–59 percent) that they provided training of most types only once per school year (Table 4-9). Over one-third of SFAs offered training in monitoring student meal selections for reimbursable meals (35 percent), and in “offer versus serve” meals (34 percent) more than once each school year. Approximately one in four offered training more than once per year in managing cash for à la carte and adult meals (25 percent), methods of counting meals (25 percent), and operating a POS system (28 percent). Training on meal counting methods was provided with equal

⁵⁴ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2015, July 21). *Updated offer versus serve guidance for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program effective beginning school year 2015–16*. Memo SP 41-2015. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/updated-offer-vs-serve-guidance-nslp-and-sbp-beginning-sy2015-16>

frequency at the cashiers' time of hire (26 percent) and more than once each school year (25 percent). Training on operating a POS system was also provided with equal frequency at hire (29 percent), and more than once each school year (28 percent). Between 18 and 22 percent of SFAs reported that training on meal and food pricing and applications for F/RP meals was provided at the time of a cashier's hire, and more than once each school year.

Table 4-9—Frequency of training provided to cashiers, SY 2015–16

Type of Training ¹	Percent of SFAs				Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
	When Cashier is Hired	Once per School Year	More than Once Each School Year	No Response	
Monitoring student meal selections for reimbursable meals	18.0	45.6	35.4	1.0	13,580 (1,880)
Offer versus serve	17.8	46.5	34.3	1.4	13,211 (1,847)
Operating a POS system	29.0	41.1	28.0	1.8	12,884 (1,847)
Method of counting meals	25.9	48.3	25.0	0.8	12,536 (1,713)
Acceptable types of payments	29.8	49.1	19.8	1.4	11,399 (1,644)
Managing cash for à la carte and adult meals	26.3	48.0	24.6	1.0	10,782 (1,590)
Meal and food pricings	18.7	58.5	21.2	1.6	10,734 (1,523)
Applications for free or reduced price meals	18.4	56.7	22.2	2.8	6,197 (782)
Other	15.2	23.6	25.2	36.0	565 (82)

¹ Multiple responses were allowed. Response options are presented as stated in the survey.
Source: SFA Director Survey, questions 10.2 and 10.2.1.

Among SFAs that conducted on-site monitoring of cashiers, approximately 42 percent did so three or more times a year (Table 4-10). On-site monitoring was conducted at least once a year by 34 percent of SFAs, while 23 percent monitored cashiers twice per year. Only 1 percent of SFAs conducted monitoring less than once per year.

Table 4-10—Among SFAs that conduct on-site monitoring of cashiers, SFAs’ reported frequency of on-site monitoring of cashiers, SY 2015–16

Frequency	Percent of SFAs
Three or more times a year	41.6
Once a year	33.6
Twice a year	23.4
Less than once a year	1.1
No response	0.3

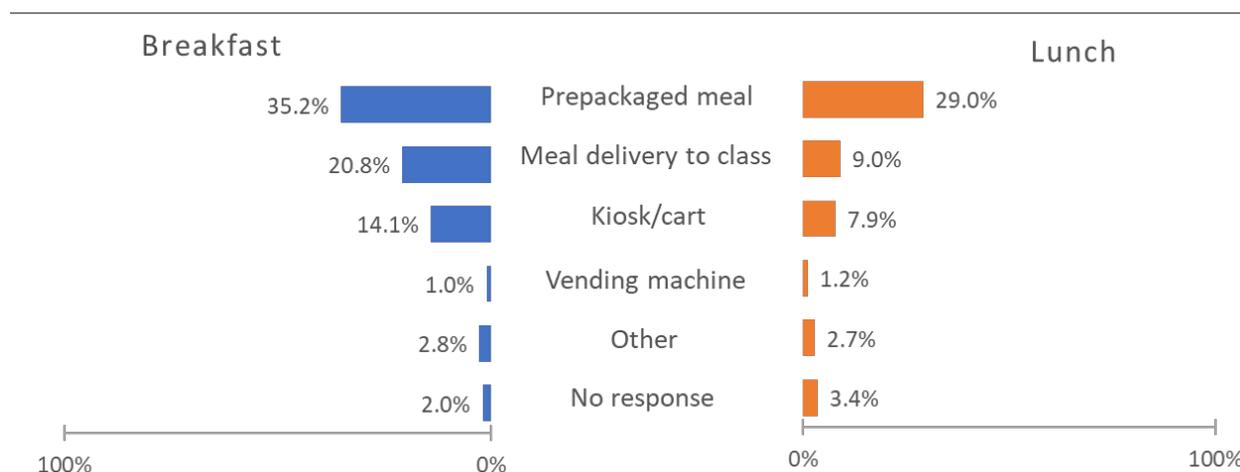
Note: 1,755 SFAs reported conducting on-site monitoring of cashiers, representing 11,978 SFAs nationally.

Source: SFA Director Survey, questions 10.3 and 10.4.

SFAs were also asked about the alternative methods they used for breakfast and meal service. A plurality of SFAs reported using prepackaged meals as an alternative service method for breakfast and lunch (35 and 29 percent, respectively; Figure 5-2 and Table D-5), while 9 percent of SFAs used meal delivery to the classroom, and 8 percent used kiosk or cart services. Less than 5 percent of SFAs reported using meals dispensed from vending machines or any other alternative method for lunch service.

Meal delivery to the classroom and kiosk or cart service were widely used by SFAs as alternative methods for breakfast service (21 and 14 percent, respectively). Generally, SFAs were more likely to use non-conventional POS methods for breakfast service than for lunch service in SY 2015–16.

Figure 4-2—Alternative POS methods¹ used by SFAs for breakfast and lunch service, SY 2015–16



¹ Multiple responses allowed. Response options are presented as stated in the survey.

Note: 1,984 SFAs provided a response, representing 14,824 SFAs in the population.

Source: SFA Director Survey, question 10.5.

5 School Food Service Financial Management

5.1 Introduction

The Federal cost of school food programs was estimated to be just under \$18 billion in fiscal year (FY) 2016, with NSLP costing approximately \$12 billion and SBP just over \$4 billion.⁵⁵ Commodity costs and the Special Milk Program added the remaining \$1.5 billion. SFA revenues may consist of Federal reimbursements, payments from participating students, and nonreimbursable food sales. SFA expenditures include food cost, labor and benefits, supplies, and other indirect costs. Indirect costs may include services such as payroll, human resources, electricity, and trash. This chapter will examine revenues and expenditures of the food service account, management of the account, and issues related to unpaid meal charges.

5.2 Background

Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations contains all guidelines for USDA. Regulations 210.9, 210.14, 210.19, and 210.20 pertain to the financial management of school food service accounts.^{56–59} These regulations state that all SFAs shall maintain a nonprofit school food service,⁶⁰ which means that revenues can only be used in the operation or improvement of the school food service program, to principally benefit the school children. Additionally, financial reporting is required by all SFAs participating in CN programs.⁶¹ The SFAs must ensure that SFAs meet all requirements to account for revenues and expenditures of the nonprofit school food service.⁶²

5.3 Nonprogram Revenue

The nonprogram revenue requirement, as outlined in Section 206 of HHFKA, states that SFAs are required to ensure that “all revenue from the sale of nonprogram foods accrues to the nonprofit school food service account” and that “revenue available to support the production of reimbursable school meals does not subsidize the sale of nonprogram foods.”⁶³

Nonprogram foods may include à la carte items, adult meals, items included in fundraisers, and items sold in vending machines. Separating the nonprogram food costs from the program food costs may be difficult given the variety of reporting systems utilized by SFAs.⁶⁴ The USDA Nonprogram Food Revenue Tool was developed to help SFAs calculate the amount of revenue needed to comply with the nonprogram revenue requirement.⁶⁵ SFAs that are not tracking and/or are unaware of the USDA tool encounter greater challenges to compliance.

⁵⁵ Federal Cost of School Food Programs. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/pd/cncost.pdf>

⁵⁶ Agreement with State Agency, 7 CFR § 210.9 (2016).

⁵⁷ Resource Management, 7 CFR § 210.14 (2016).

⁵⁸ Additional Responsibilities, 7 CFR § 210.19 (2016).

⁵⁹ Reporting and Recordkeeping, 7 CFR § 210.20 (2016).

⁶⁰ Additional Responsibilities, 7 CFR § 210.19 (2016).

⁶¹ Reporting and Recordkeeping, 7 CFR § 210.20 (2016).

⁶² Additional Responsibilities, 7 CFR § 210.19 (2016).

⁶³ Smith-Holmes, S. (2015). *Nonprofit school food service account, nonprogram food revenue requirements*. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/nonprofit-school-food-service-account-nonprogram-food-revenue-requirements>

⁶⁴ (Smith-Holmes, 2015).

⁶⁵ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (n.d.). *Nonprogram food revenue tool instructions* [Microsoft Excel spreadsheet]. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/guidance-paid-lunch-equity-and-revenue-nonprogram-foods>

5.4 Unpaid Meal Challenge

A special topic of interest in the current study is the challenge of unpaid meals. Children who are certified as eligible to receive free meals may receive breakfast and lunch at no cost through SBP and NSLP. Those who are not certified as eligible for free meals may purchase a meal at a reduced price or the paid rate. However, there are circumstances when a child cannot pay for a reduced price or paid meal at the time of service. When this problem occurs frequently, the financial integrity of the nonprofit school food service account may start to decline. USDA has made unpaid meal charges a priority, and has reviewed policies and worked with schools to try to alleviate this longstanding issue.^{66,67} Currently, SFAs use a variety of different methods to address the unpaid meal challenge. When a meal charge payment is overdue to the nonprofit school food service account, the debt is classified as delinquent if it is still collectable and actively being pursued.⁶⁸ Some SAs may allow delinquent debts to be carried over to the next school year to facilitate collection. The results in this chapter provide FNS with additional data on approaches currently being used by SFAs.

5.5 Results

This section presents national estimates based on SFA responses to the CN-OPS-II Year 1 survey questions on financial management. These estimates aim to provide an overall picture of the nonprofit food service account operation. Data presented in Chapter 6 address the following research questions.

- What are SFA annual revenues and expenditures?
 - SFAs were asked to report their revenue and expenditure data for SY 2013–14 and SY 2014–15. Results are presented by SFA characteristic in Table 5-1 and Table 5-2
- How have annual revenues and expenditures changed over time?
 - The change in annual revenues and expenditures can be explored in Table 5-1 and Table 5-2. To facilitate the comparison, see Figure 5-1, which presents the distribution of SFAs by annual revenues as a percentage of annual expenditures (break-even) for both years.
- What is the role of the business manager in making decisions that impact the nonprofit school food service account?
 - SFAs were asked about the primary decision-makers for their nonprofit school food service accounting in SY 2015–16. A possible response option was “business manager.” Results from this survey question are presented in Table 5-3.
- What difficulties have SFAs experienced in monitoring costs paid out of the nonprofit school food service account?
 - SFAs that monitor costs paid out of nonprofit school food service accounts were asked to report difficulties in SY 2015–16; the results are presented in Table 5-4.
- What challenges do SFAs face in separating costs and revenues for measuring compliance with the nonprogram revenue requirement?

⁶⁶ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2016). *Overcoming the unpaid meal challenge: Proven strategies from our nation's schools*. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/2017-edition-overcoming-unpaid-meal-challenge-proven-strategies-our-nation%E2%80%99s-schools>

⁶⁷ Kline, A. (2016). *Unpaid meal charges: Local meal charge policies*. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/unpaid-meal-charges-local-meal-charge-policies>

⁶⁸ Long, C., & Burr, D. (2016). *Unpaid meal charges: Clarification on collection of delinquent meal payments*. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/unpaid-meal-charges-clarification-collection-delinquent-meal-payments>

- SFAs were asked whether they track the accrual of revenue from nonprogram food sales and about their knowledge and use of the USDA nonprogram foods revenue tool in SY 2015–16. Results from these two survey questions are presented in Table 5-5 and Table 5-6.
- What was the size of nonpayment, and what was the success of recovery?
 - SFAs were asked to report both the amount owed and recovered due to unpaid meals. The success of recovery was calculated by dividing the amount recovered by the amount owed. Results are present in Table 5-7 and Figure 5-2.
- What methods are used to collect money owed from unpaid meal charges?
 - SFAs were asked about specific methods used to collect money owed from unpaid meal charges in SY 2015–16. Results are presented in Table 5-8.
- What are the implications for nonpayment?
 - Implications for nonpayment can also be found in Table 5-8, focusing on response options such as “Administrative actions” and “Use debt collection agency.”
- What alternative meal policies are used for children in arrears?
 - SFAs were asked about using alternative meal policies for children in arrears in SY 2015–16. The results for this survey question are presented in Table 5-9.

5.5.1 SFA Revenues and Costs⁶⁹

The most recent revenue/expenditure data are from SY 2014–15, because this was the last full year of financial data available when the CN-OPS-II Year 1 survey was conducted in the summer and fall of 2016. The survey also collected revenue/expenditure data from SY 2013–14 to facilitate comparisons over time. Results for both years are presented and discussed in the tables and text below. Given the wide range of the revenue and expenditure data, the median gives a more accurate measure of central tendency (the median is the data value such that 50 percent of the values are above the median, and 50 percent are below). Based on these self-reported revenue and expenditure data, we also calculated the percentage of SFAs who broke even (defined as the ratio of revenues to expenditures = $1.0 \pm .05$). The break-even analysis is more informative when there are large discrepancies between revenues and costs.

Among all SFAs, median revenues in SY 2014–15 were \$475,009 (Table 5-1). Median expenditures in SY 2014–15 for all SFAs were \$491,838 and exceeded median revenues by approximately \$18,000. The greater revenues and expenditures reported in the Southeast region are most likely due to the higher concentration of large and very large SFAs (28 percent of SFAs in the Southeast are large or very large).

In SY 2014–15, revenues differed significantly ($p < 0.05$) by SFA size, urbanicity, and region. SFAs in each size category reported significantly greater revenues than those in smaller size categories. Rural SFAs reported significantly smaller revenues than urban and suburban SFAs. Revenues in urban SFAs were significantly lower than in town SFAs. Suburban revenues were significantly higher than urban SFAs.

⁶⁹ The survey instrument was designed to gather data from SFAs on revenue from local sources (e.g., paid meals, reduced price meals, subsidy from the school district or local government); State sources (State meal reimbursements for free or reduced price meals); Federal sources (Federal meal reimbursements for free, reduced price, or paid meals); and other sources of revenue. However, respondents had difficulty disaggregating their revenue into these local, State, and Federal categories, thus this report only presents the total revenue from all sources. Expenditures are also presented as totals in this report.

Southeast SFAs reported significantly higher revenues than Midwest and Mountain Plains SFAs. Western SFAs reported significantly smaller revenues than Midwest SFAs.

Expenditures also differed significantly by SFA size, urbanicity, and region in SY 2014–15. As with revenues, SFAs in each size category reported significantly greater expenditures than those in smaller size categories. Rural SFAs reported significantly smaller expenditures than urban and suburban SFAs. Urban SFAs reported significantly greater expenditures than town SFAs. Expenditures in Southeast SFAs were significantly greater than those in Mid-Atlantic, Midwest, Mountain Plains, and Northeast SFAs. Mountain Plains expenditures were significantly lower than those in the Northeast.

Table 5-1—Revenue/expenditures received/made by SFAs during SY 2014–15, by SFA characteristics

	Median Revenues	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)	Median Expenditures	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)	Median Difference between Revenues and Expenditures (Expenditures – Revenues)
All SFAs	\$475,009	11,167 (1,543)	\$491,838	10,921 (1,509)	\$912
SFA Size^{1,2}					
a. Small (1–999 students)	\$176,027	5,275 (430)	\$186,078	5,170 (425)	\$974
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	^a \$854,937	4,238 (767)	^a \$876,818	4,153 (750)	\$0
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	^{a,b} \$3,718,447	1,371 (279)	^{a,b} \$3,750,693	1,325 (269)	\$8,957
d. Very large (≥25,000 students)	^{a,b,c} \$19,038,726	284 (67)	^{a,b,c} \$19,252,315	273 (65)	-\$165,674
Urbanicity^{1,2}					
e. City	^{g,h} \$781,955	1,241 (170)	^{g,h} \$1,214,179	1,213 (168)	\$0
f. Suburban	^{h,e} \$1,004,377	2,585 (438)	^h \$1,009,781	2,493 (421)	-\$72
g. Town	\$819,382	1,950 (346)	\$835,384	1,892 (335)	-\$1
h. Rural	\$261,097	4,962 (559)	\$277,776	4,957 (555)	\$3,763
Percent of Students Approved for F/RP Meals					
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	\$525,771	3,280 (472)	\$569,869	3,167 (460)	\$1552
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	\$450,557	3,260 (462)	\$458,583	3,161 (447)	\$734
k. High (≥60 percent F/RP)	\$453,757	4,627 (609)	\$484,817	4,593 (602)	\$394
Region^{1,2}					
l. Mid-Atlantic	\$676,755	1,142 (178)	\$650,354	1,148 (175)	\$3,240
m. Midwest	\$435,255	2,883 (395)	\$447,405	2,799 (384)	\$0
n. Mountain Plains	\$256,205	1,803 (210)	^o \$263,455	1,830 (213)	\$1,109

o. Northeast	\$628,915	1,132 (161)	\$623,085	1,122 (158)	-\$149
p. Southeast	^{m,n} \$1,849,713	1,006 (185)	^{l,m,n,o} \$1,627,116	981 (181)	-\$3,747
q. Southwest	\$353,551	1,538 (182)	\$445,911	1,482 (177)	\$2,661
r. Western	^m \$432,203	1,663 (232)	\$432,046	1,559 (221)	\$14,535

¹ For median revenues, there was an overall statistically significant difference by SFA characteristic ($p < 0.05$).

² For median expenditures, there was an overall statistically significant difference by SFA characteristic ($p < 0.05$).

Note: Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Bonferroni p -value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the letter.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 12.1.1 and 12.5.1.

Among all SFAs, median revenues in SY 2013–14 were \$462,167 (Table 5-2). Median expenditures in SY 2013–14 for all SFAs were \$487,599, and exceeded median revenues by approximately \$25,000. Similar to SY 2014–15, the greater revenues and expenditures reported in the Southeast region (relative to other regions) in SY 2013–14 are likely due to the proliferation in that region of large and very large SFAs.

In SY 2013–14, revenues differed significantly ($p < 0.05$) by SFA size, urbanicity, and region. Each SFA size category reported significantly greater revenues than all smaller categories. Rural SFAs reported significantly smaller revenues than urban and suburban SFAs. Revenues in urban SFAs were significantly lower than in town SFAs; suburban revenues were significantly higher than urban SFAs. Southeast SFAs reported significantly higher revenues than Mountain Plains and Northeast SFAs.

Expenditures also differed significantly by SFA size, urbanicity, and region in SY 2013–14. Very large SFAs reported significantly greater expenditures than small, medium, and large SFAs. Similarly, large SFAs reported significantly greater expenditures than small and medium SFAs. Significantly smaller expenditures were reported by rural SFAs than urban and suburban SFAs. Expenditures in the Northeast were significantly greater than those in the Western region.

Table 5-2—Revenue/expenditures received/made by SFAs during SY 2013–14, by SFA characteristics

	Median Revenues	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)	Median Expenditures	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)	Median Difference between Revenues and Expenditures (Expenditures – Revenues)
All SFAs	\$462,167	10,923 (1,502)	\$487,599	10,705 (1,481)	\$192
SFA Size^{1,2}					
a. Small (1–999 students)	\$165,708	5,243 (430)	\$183,126	5,073 (417)	\$400
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	^a \$838,041	4,109 (743)	\$867,367	4,060 (735)	\$0
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	^{a,b} \$3,734,330	1,303 (265)	^{a,b} \$3,672,918	1,299 (264)	\$0
d. Very Large (≥25,000 students)	^{a,b,c} \$18,186,911	268 (64)	^{a,b,c} \$18,621,730	273 (65)	-\$288,528
Urbanicity^{1,2}					
e. City	^{h,e} \$803,326	1,169 (165)	^{h,f} \$1,209,188	1,127 (159)	-\$7
f. Suburban	^{h,e} \$980,592	2,492 (418)	^h \$989,840	2,448 (415)	\$0
g. Town	\$804,944	1,907 (337)	\$851,405	1,883 (334)	\$1,109
h. Rural	\$256,914	4,966 (557)	\$268,696	4,917 (548)	\$1,184
Percent of Students Approved for F/RP Meals					
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	\$534,858	3,206 (459)	\$609,367	3,067 (448)	\$0
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	\$416,597	3,183 (448)	\$452,358	3,130 (444)	\$2,678
k. High (≥60 percent F/RP)	\$459,160	4,535 (595)	\$452,796	4,508 (589)	\$0
Region^{1,2}					
l. Mid-Atlantic	\$622,287	1,101 (172)	\$677,329	1,099 (170)	\$2,810
m. Midwest	\$407,877	2,793 (385)	\$441,107	2,806 (383)	\$243

n. Mountain Plains	\$240,683	1,823 (209)	\$242,098	1,819 (211)	\$676
o. Northeast	\$611,258	1,137 (160)	\$629,226	1,111 (157)	\$0
p. Southeast	^{n,o} \$1,716,919	980 (180)	\$1,848,677	952 (176)	-\$3,007
q. Southwest	\$388,269	1,477 (178)	\$398,796	1,436 (172)	\$0
r. Western	\$370,677	1,613 (218)	\$465,868	1,481 (212)	\$10,304

¹ For median revenues, there was an overall statistically significant difference by SFA characteristic ($p < 0.05$).

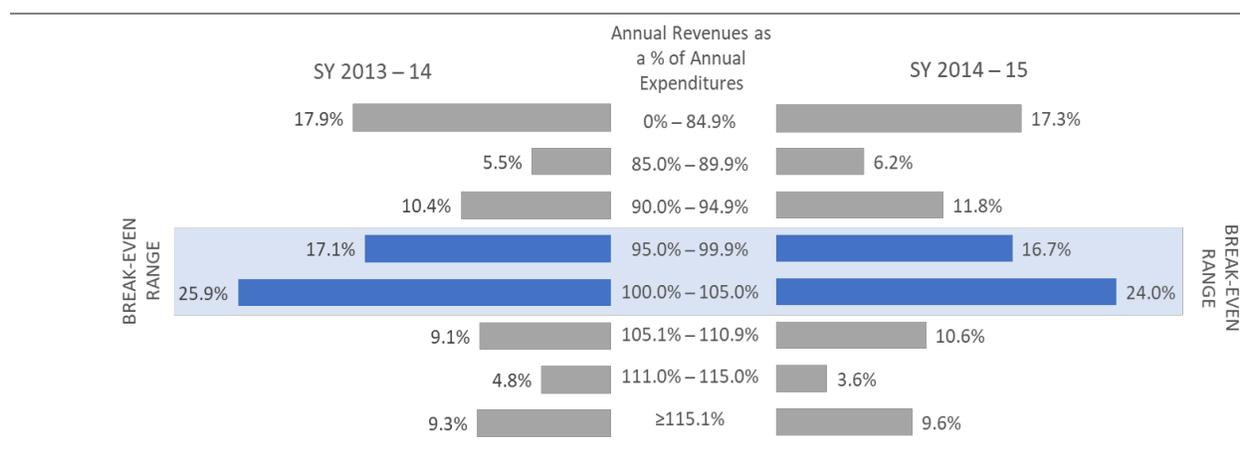
² For median expenditures, there was an overall statistically significant difference by SFA characteristic ($p < 0.05$).

Note: Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Bonferroni p -value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the letter.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 12.2.1 and 12.6.1.

The ratio of revenues to expenditures was calculated as another measure of SFA financial wellbeing. To facilitate consistency with previous reports on CN programs, the break-even category was defined as a ratio of 1.0 ± 0.05 . The break-even ratio of $1.0 \pm .05$ indicates that an SFA is considered to have broken even if the ratio of revenues to expenses is equal to 1.0, in which revenues would equal expenses, or between .95 and 1.05, indicating the revenues were within 5 percentage points lower or higher than total expenses. In SY 2013–14, 43 percent of SFAs were in the break-even category (17 percent had revenues lower than or equal to expenditures, and 26 percent had revenues greater than expenditures), compared to 41 percent in SY 2014–15 (17 percent had revenues lower than or equal to expenditures, and 24 percent had revenues greater than expenditures; Figure 5-1 and Table D-6). In SY 2014–15, 35 percent fell below the break-even cutoff (with revenues that were less than 96 percent of expenditures), while 24 percent were above (revenues greater than 105 percent of expenditures). In SY 2013–14, 34 percent fell below the break-even cutoff and 23 percent were above.

Figure 5-1—Distribution of SFAs by annual revenues as a percentage of annual expenditures, SY 2013–14 and SY 2014–15



Note: Revenue and expenditure information for SY 2013–14 was provided by 1,434 SFAs, which represents 10,341 SFAs in the population. Revenue and expenditure information for SY 2014–15 was provided by 1,446 SFAs, which represents 10,436 SFAs in the population.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 12.1.1, 12.2.1, 12.5.1, and 12.6.1.

5.5.2 Management of the Nonprofit Food Service Account

Among SFAs that monitored costs paid out of nonprofit school food service accounts, 40 percent reported the district business manager as the primary decision maker for management of the nonprofit food service account, particularly with respect to the costs that are charged to the account (Table 5-3). In 35 percent of SFAs, the SFA director was the primary decision maker. The school superintendent was the primary decision maker in 17 percent of SFAs, while 7 percent of SFAs listed another individual as the primary decision maker.

Table 5-3—Among SFAs that monitor costs paid out of nonprofit school food service accounts, the primary decision maker for nonprofit school food service accounting in SY 2015–16

Primary Decision Maker	Percent of SFAs
District business manager	39.5
SFA director	35.1
School superintendent	17.0
Other	7.4
No response	1.0

Note: 1,513 SFAs that monitor costs paid from the nonprofit school food service accounts provided information for this table, which represents 10,553 SFAs in the population.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 6.2 and 6.5.

Among SFAs that monitored costs paid out of nonprofit school food service accounts, 52 percent reported no challenges in monitoring costs (Table 5-4). Further, 16 percent of SFAs reported that they were not responsible for monitoring the nonprofit account; an additional 11 percent stated that other financial management needs take priority over monitoring the nonprofit account. Other challenges were reported by 10 percent or less of SFAs, such as time (10 percent), lack of training (8 percent), and no process in place to monitor the nonprofit account (3 percent), while 7 percent of SFAs reported not having a nonprofit account as a challenge to monitoring costs paid out. In this case, some SFAs may have managed the account centrally for all schools (i.e., not all schools maintain school-level accounts), or the SFA relied on some schools to do their own record keeping and to provide those records to the SFA to report centrally along with other schools.

Table 5-4—Among SFAs that monitor costs paid out of nonprofit school food service accounts, the percentage reporting difficulties in SY 2015–16

Challenge ^{1,2}	Percent of SFAs
No challenges	52.3
I am not responsible for oversight or monitoring of nonprofit food service accounts	16.2
Other financial management needs take priority	10.7
It takes too much time	10.4
I/my staff lack training or guidance in these types of accounting policies or procedures	8.1
Some/all schools do not have nonprofit food service accounts	7.3
No process in place to monitor or collect school documentation	3.2
Other	3.4

¹ Multiple responses were allowed.

² Response options are presented as stated from the survey.

Note: 1,513 SFAs that monitor costs paid from the nonprofit school food service accounts provided information for this table, which represents 10,553 SFAs in the population.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 6.2 and 6.3.

In SY 2015–16, just over half of all SFAs (52 percent) reported that all or most schools track all nonprogram food sales (Table 5-5). All or most schools tracked some nonprogram food sales in 14 percent of SFAs. Additionally, 20 percent of SFAs track nonprogram food sales at the SFA level, but not within individual schools. Just under 10 percent of SFAs have schools that do not track nonprogram food sales (8 percent).

Table 5-5—Percentage of SFAs that track the accrual of revenue from nonprogram food sales in SY 2015–16

	Percent of SFAs
All or most schools track all nonprogram food sales	52.4
SFA (not schools) tracks nonprogram food sales	19.8
All or most schools track some nonprogram food sales	14.3
All or most schools do not track nonprogram food sales	8.1
No response	5.4

Note: 1,984 SFAs provided information for this table, which represents 14,824 SFAs in the population.
Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, question 6.1.

Among SFAs that monitor costs paid out of the nonprofit school food service accounts, approximately one-third report that all schools in the SFA use the USDA Nonprogram Foods Revenue Tool (Table 5-6),

while 4 percent of SFAs report that some schools in the SFA use the tool. Over half of SFAs either don't know what the tool is (36 percent) or know that the tool is available but do not use it (24 percent).

Table 5-6—Among SFAs that monitor costs paid out of nonprofit school food service accounts, the percentage reporting knowledge and use of the USDA nonprogram foods revenue tool in SY 2015–16

USDA Nonprogram Foods Revenue Tool	Percent of SFAs
I don't know what the tool is	35.7
All schools in our SFA use the tool	34.5
I know the tool is available but our SFA doesn't use it	23.8
Some schools in our SFA use the tool	4.4
No response	1.6

Note: 1,513 SFAs that monitor costs paid from the nonprofit school food service accounts provided data for this table, representing 10,553 SFAs in the population.
Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 6.2 and 6.4.

5.5.3 Addressing the Unpaid Meal Challenge

Approximately 71 percent of SFAs tracked the amount owed for unpaid school meals and provided dollar amounts for the amount owed. The median amount owed was \$1,086 (Table 5-7). The percentage of SFAs that incurred unpaid meal costs in SY 2014–15 (53 percent) is similar that in SY 2010–11 (58 percent).⁷⁰ The median amount owed in SY 2014–15 differed significantly by SFA size, urbanicity, and region. Very large SFAs reported a significantly greater amount owed than small, medium, and large SFAs. Large SFAs reported a significantly greater amount owed than small and medium, and medium SFAs reported a significantly greater amount owed than small SFAs. Urban SFAs reported a significantly greater amount owed than suburban, town, and rural SFAs. Suburban SFAs reported a significantly greater amount owed than rural SFAs. SFAs in the Northeast region reported a significantly greater amount owed than SFAs in the Midwest, Mountain Plains, and Southwest regions.

⁷⁰ May, L., Standing, K., Chu, A., Gasper, J., & Riley, J. (2014). *Special Nutrition Program Operations Study: State and school food authority policies and practices for school meals programs school year 2011–12*. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/SNOPSYear1.pdf>

Table 5-7—Among SFAs that track the amount of money owed from unpaid school meals, the median amount owed in SY 2014–15, by SFA characteristics

	Median Owed	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
SFAs that Track the Amount of Money Owed from Unpaid School Meals, and Reported a Dollar Amount Greater than \$0 for Money Owed¹	\$1,086	7,906 (1,148)
SFA Characteristics		
SFA Size²		
a. Small (1–999 students)	\$497	3,364 (292)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	^a \$1,498	3,226 (584)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	^{a,b} \$4,961	1,080 (219)
d. Very large (≥25,000 students)	^{a,b,c} \$27,866	235 (53)
Urbanicity²		
e. City	^{f,g,h} \$3,377	792 (122)
f. Suburban	^h \$1,877	2,022 (348)
g. Town	\$1,139	1,424 (251)
h. Rural	\$751	3,507 (413)
Percent of Students Approved for F/RP Meals		
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	\$1,277	1,824 (300)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	\$997	2,791 (400)
k. High (≥60 percent F/RP)	\$1,121	3,291 (448)
Region²		
l. Mid-Atlantic	\$1,779	1,001 (157)
m. Midwest	\$870	1,957 (292)
n. Mountain Plains	\$807	1,162 (150)
o. Northeast	^{m,n,q} \$1,435	1,091 (152)
p. Southeast	\$2,095	540 (104)
q. Southwest	\$948	1,143 (143)
r. Western	\$1,059	1,012 (150)

¹ 309 SFAs reported \$0.00 owed.

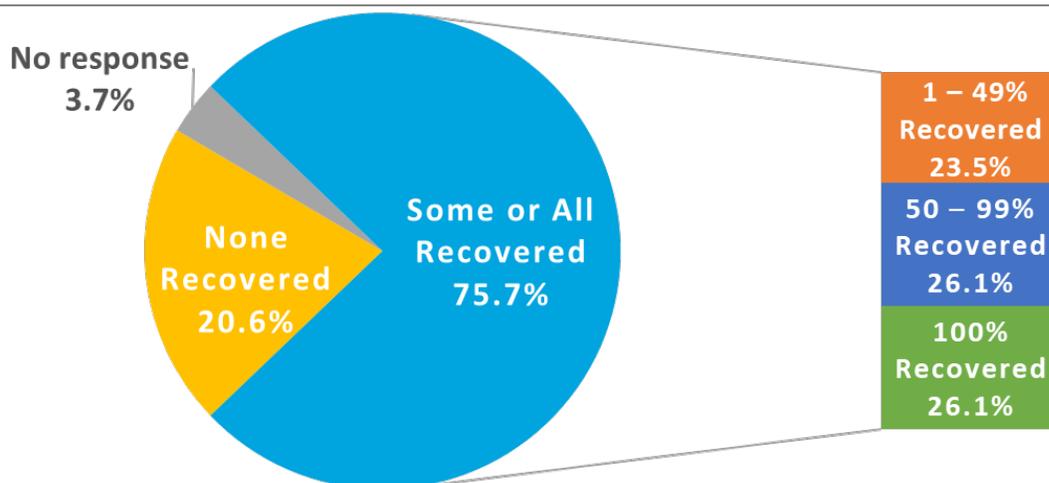
² There was an overall statistically significant difference by SFA characteristic ($p < 0.05$).

Note: Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Bonferroni p -value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the letter.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 6.7 and 6.8.

Approximately 21 percent of SFAs that tracked the amount of money owed from unpaid school meals did not recover any funds (Figure 5-2 and Table D-7). Further, 23 percent of SFAs recovered less than 50 percent of monies owed, 26 percent recovered somewhere between 50 and 99 percent, and another 26 percent of SFAs recovered the full amount owed.

Figure 5-2—Percentage of SFAs that recover money owed from unpaid school meals, among those that track the amount owed in SY 2014–15



Note: 1,148 SFAs that responded that they track the amount of money owed from unpaid school meals provided data for this table, representing 7,906 SFAs in the population.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 6.7, 6.8, and 6.9.

Among SFAs that track the amount of money owed from unpaid school meals, sending bills to parents is the primary method used (95 percent) to collect unpaid meal debt (Table 5-8). Over half provide the students with alternate meals until the debt is paid (55 percent). About a third of SFAs use administrative actions to collect money owed (34 percent) or try to retroactively approve the student for F/RP meals (33 percent). Other methods reported were a call or email to the responsible party. A debt collection agency was used in 10 percent of SFAs, and no effort was made to collect money in 2 percent of SFAs.

Table 5-8—Percentage of SFAs using specific methods to collect money owed from unpaid-for school meals in SY 2015–16

Method^{1,2}	Percent of SFAs
Send bill to parents	95.0
Provide the student with alternate meals until the debt is paid	54.7
Administrative actions	34.2
Try to retroactively approve the student for F/RP meals	32.9
Use debt collection agency	9.5
No effort made	2.3
Other	22.3
Calls	11.7
Emails	4.1

¹ Multiple responses were allowed.

² Response options are presented as stated from the survey.

Note: 1,149 SFAs that responded that they track the amount of money owed from unpaid school meals provided data for this table, representing 7,911 SFAs in the population.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, question 6.10.

Where a child is not certified to receive a free meal, and cannot pay for a meal, 78 percent serve the child the regular reimbursable meal or an alternate meal (Table 5-9), while only 0.5 percent do not serve the child a meal.

Table 5-9—Percentage of SFAs using alternative meal policies for children in arrears in SY 2015–16

Alternative Meal Policy	Percent of SFAs
Serve the child the reimbursable meal	46.8
Serve the child an alternate meal	31.6
Do not serve the child a meal	0.5
No response	2.1
Other	8.8
Not Applicable	10.3

Note: 1,984 SFAs provided information for this table, which represents 14,824 SFAs in the population.
Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, question 6.6.

6 Professional Training and Hiring Standards for School Nutrition Program Personnel

An important new topic included in the CN-OPS-II study is USDA's minimum training and hiring standards, which went into effect on July 1, 2015. Below, a summary of the new training and hiring standards in Section 7.1 is followed with a discussion of survey findings on how SFAs and SAs implement the new training standards for school nutrition personnel, as well as other forms of TA and training offered. Section 7.2 presents survey findings related to the new minimum education, experience, and prior training requirements included in the hiring standards for SFA directors and State CN directors hired on or after July 1, 2015.

6.1 Background

6.1.1 Overview of the Professional Standards

As part of the implementation of HHFKA, USDA issued the final rule establishing minimum professional standards for school nutrition personnel who manage and operate NSLP and SBP (referred to hereafter as the "professional standards"). The regulations, which went into effect July 1, 2015, established a national standard for hiring new State and local directors and annual training for all school nutrition program employees. The goal of the regulations is to provide "consistent, national professional standards that strengthen the ability of school nutrition professionals and staff to perform their duties effectively and efficiently."⁷¹ The professional standards aim to ensure that school nutrition employees at all levels have the relevant knowledge and training necessary to effectively manage and operate the school meal programs. The regulations include hiring standards and training standards. To meet the professional standards, school nutrition programs must meet both training and hiring standards, as applicable.⁷²

6.1.2 Training Standards

The professional standards lay out specific training standards for all school nutrition program personnel in SFAs. The required number of hours of annual continuing education (CE)/training was phased in over a period of 2 years, SY 2015–16 to SY 2016–17, and varies for directors, managers, staff who work 20 hours or more per week, and part-time staff who work fewer than 20 hours per week.

Required SFA training must be completed by the end of the school year. To demonstrate to the SA that the SFA has met the training requirements, SFAs are required to keep records to document the types of CE/training activities completed by school nutrition employees. FNS created an optional Professional Standards Training Tracking Tool to help SFAs track this information. Training documentation is reviewed by the SA during the SFA administrative reviews.

SA training requirements include CE/training for SA directors and agency staff. Specifically, CN directors and State directors of distributing agencies must complete at least 15 hours of CE/training each year, which may include the following key areas and topics: nutrition (menu planning, nutrition education, general nutrition); operations (food production, food service, cashier and POS, purchasing/procurement, receiving and storage, food safety, and hazard analysis and critical control points); administration (F/RP

⁷¹ 7 CFR §§ 210 and 235.

⁷² FNS developed the *Guide to Professional Standards in School Nutrition Programs* to help school nutrition staff apply the rule through various training topics for all staff levels. The guide is available at <https://professionalstandards.fns.usda.gov/>

meal benefits, program management, financial management, human resources and staff training, facilities and equipment planning); communications; and marketing. State directors must provide (or ensure that State CN staff/State food distribution staff receive) annual CE/training. FNS offers a variety of tools and guides for SAs and SFAs to use in their training, including the *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs*, *Crediting Handbook for the Child and Adult Care Food Program*, product formulation statements, the web-based menu planner training module, and other materials. FNS also partners with the University of Mississippi's Institute of Child Nutrition to provide training to child nutrition professionals.

In addition, State directors of school nutrition programs must provide a minimum of 18 hours of training to SFAs each year, which include topics such as administrative practices (training in application, certification, verification, meal counting, and meal claiming procedures); the accuracy of approvals for F/RP meals; the identification of reimbursable meals at POS; nutrition, health, and food safety standards; and the efficient and effective use of USDA Foods.⁷³

6.1.3 Residential Child Care Institutions and Charter Schools

Study research questions ask what difficulties SAs experience with RCCIs and charters that affect compliance with Professional Standards requirements. The results present the extent to which SAs perceive that SFAs are able to meet the training requirements, comparing SFAs with RCCIs or charters to typical SFAs. RCCIs and charter schools may face unique challenges in hiring and training personnel.⁷⁴ More research is needed to understand the types of difficulties RCCIs and charters encounter in complying with the professional standards.

6.1.4 Team Up for School Nutrition Success Initiative

Team Up provides tailored TA to school nutrition professionals in schools that are having difficulty complying with the nutrition standards. The initiative piloted in November 2014 and was expanded into all seven FNS regions in 2015. Team Up provides trainings through best-practice presentations and workshops; peer mentors; and various resources to school nutrition personnel on training and TA topics, including menu planning, financial management, increasing program participation, and food safety. Each participating SFA director completes a specialized action plan with specific goals to help the SFA reach compliance with nutrition standards for school meals and improve their school food service operation. FNS partners with the University of Mississippi's Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) to host Team Up workshops nationwide. In 2016, FNS expanded Team Up to allow SAs to organize customized Team Up workshops to reach a wider audience of school nutrition professionals. The CN-OPS-II survey of SFAs asked respondents if they participated in Team Up, and if so, how often they communicated with their Team Up mentors.

⁷³ For State distributing agencies, these topics include the efficient and effective use of USDA-donated foods, inventory rotation and control, and health and food safety standards.

⁷⁴ RCCIs operate facilities with students with cognitive disabilities or students at risk of incarceration, and charter schools often operate in high poverty areas, both of which can make it difficult to recruit qualified staff to work in these environments.

6.1.5 Hiring Standards

Any new school nutrition program director hired on or after July 1, 2015 must meet the hiring standards, which consist of minimum education and prior food safety training.⁷⁵ The minimum education requirements vary by LEA size.

State-level directors hired on or after July 1, 2015 must meet standards that involve education, knowledge and experience, and skills and abilities. To meet the education standard, State directors of school nutrition programs are required to have a bachelor's degree in a specific major: these include food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related field. State directors of distributing agencies are required to have a bachelor's degree (in any major). Both State directors must also have extensive relevant knowledge and experience, as well as abilities and skills to lead, manage, and supervise people. These topics were not addressed in the survey.

6.2 Training Standards

Section 7.2 presents survey findings regarding the percentages of SFA personnel that meet the new training and CE standards, SFAs' methods for documenting the training and education requirements, and the perceived ease of documentation.

6.2.1 Results

The data presented in Section 7.2 address the following research questions:

- Which SFA employee categories (directors, managers, or staff) are generally meeting the training professional standards annually?
 - SFAs were asked to report whether staff were meeting the new training and CE professional standards requirements, their methods for documenting the training and education requirements, and the perceived ease of documentation. Table 6-1 and Table 6-2 display these findings.
- What difficulties do SAs experience with RCCIs that affect compliance with professional standards requirements?
 - State CN directors were asked to report their perceptions of SFAs' ability to meet the training requirements for SFAs with RCCIs versus typical SFAs. Table 6-3 shows these findings.
- What difficulties do SAs experience with charter schools that affect compliance with professional standards requirements?
 - State CN directors were asked to report their perceptions of SFAs' ability to meet the training requirements in SFAs with charter schools versus typical SFAs without charter schools. Table 6-4 shows the results from these items.
- How are SFAs tracking annual CE and training requirements?
 - Are SFAs using the Professional Standards Training Tracking Tool?
 - How useful is the Professional Standards Training Tracking Tool?

⁷⁵ Existing directors have been grandfathered into their current positions.

- What barriers and challenges have SFAs experienced in documenting staff completion of CE and training activities, and in using the Professional Standards Training Tracking Tool?

SFAs were asked to report their methods of documenting CE and training activities, including use of the Professional Standards Training Tracking Tool. SFAs that used the Training Teaching Tracking Tool were asked to report its perceived usefulness, as well as any barriers and challenges that SFAs encountered in documenting CE and training activities by the end of the school year.

- Figure 6-1, Figure 6-2, and Figure 6-3 show these findings.
- How are State CN directors tracking, or how do they anticipate tracking, their own annual continuing education/training requirements?
 - State CN directors were asked to report their methods of documenting CE and training activities. Table 6-5 shows these findings.
- What types of training and technical assistance are available to SFA staff?
 - What are the training, technical assistance, and CE topics that are most needed by SFAs?
 - What sources for training and technical assistance are used?
 - Are certain topics requested by SFAs regularly?
 - How useful was the training and technical assistance SFAs received?
 - SFAs were asked to report the types of trainings, TA, and CE that SFA staff received in various training topics, as well as by staff position and by specific topics and subtopics. SFAs and SAs were asked to report the organizations responsible for administering the various training and TA to SFAs and SAs, and which specific topics these organizations addressed. Table 6-6 and Table 6-7, and Figure 6-4, Figure 6-5, and Figure 6-6 show these findings.
- Do SFAs that have attended a Team Up training have ongoing follow-up?
 - Are relationships with Team Up mentors maintained?
 - SFAs were asked to report their average frequency of communication with their ICN Team Up mentors, as well as SFAs' perceptions of the mentors. Figure 6-7 and Table 6-8 show these findings.

SFAs and SAs Meeting the Training and CE Standards

SFAs were asked if they tracked or intended to conduct a review of CE and training activities for school nutrition personnel by the end of SY 2015–16 to meet the minimum training standards (Table 6-1). The standards in SY 2015–16 were at least 6 hours of annual CE or training for SFA managers and 4 hours for all other staff, regardless of the number of hours worked. Among SFAs tracking CE and training, the overwhelming majority of employees—92 percent of SFA managers, 89 percent of school nutrition staff, and 87 percent of part-time nutrition program staff—had met, or were expected to meet, the minimum training and CE hours standard before the end of SY 2015–16.

Table 6-1—Among SFAs tracking CE and training, percentage of SFAs meeting the minimum CE/training hours standards, by type of school nutrition personnel,¹ SY 2015–16

Type of School Nutrition Personnel	School Nutrition Employees Already Met or are Expected to Meet Training Standard	
	Percent of SFAs	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
SFA managers	91.5	12,751 (1,770)
School nutrition program staff	89.1	12,066 (1,704)
Part-time school nutrition program staff ²	87.1	7,906 (1,202)

¹ The yearly minimum training and CE standard were 6 hours for SFA managers and 4 hours for school nutrition program regular and part-time staff.

² Individuals who work fewer than 20 hours a week and are involved in routine non-managerial operations of school nutrition programs.

Note: 1,885 SFAs tracked or intended to conduct a review of CE and training activities for school nutrition personnel before the end of the 2015–16 school year, which represents 13,738 SFAs in the population.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 7.5, 7.5.1, and 7.9.

SAs were asked to report if they met or anticipated meeting the training standards for their State CN directors. The overwhelming majority (53 SAs, or 96 percent) reported that their State CN directors had completed or anticipated completing CE and training standards in SY 2015–16 (data not shown). SAs were also asked to report if they had provided or anticipated providing their SFA personnel with the required training. All 55 SAs reported that they provided or anticipated providing the required training topics to SFA personnel in SY 2015–16 (data not shown).

SAs were asked to report on SFA feedback regarding the new CE and training standard required under the new professional standards (Table 6-2). SAs were asked to report the proportion of that feedback that was positive, by rating the overall proportion of feedback that agreed with positive statements on a Likert-type scale from 1 (none of the feedback was positive) to 5 (all the feedback was positive).

SAs reported, on average, that some to most of the SFA feedback they received was positive regarding the new CE and training activities standards, with mean ratings ranging from 2.7 to 3.8 for the different statements (Table 6-2). On average, SAs reported receiving the highest proportion of positive feedback for the statement that “Activities are a good use of time, even given other work priorities” and “There are enough opportunities to engage in these activities” (both means = 3.8). SAs also reported positive feedback on “It is clear which training topics are relevant to school nutrition employees’ jobs” (mean = 3.7), and “It is clear which types of training can be counted toward training requirements” (mean = 3.6). SAs reported the lowest average proportion of positive feedback from SFAs on the statements “SFAs have enough manpower to monitor training activities” (mean = 2.9) and “Completing required training is feasible for part-time staff” (mean = 2.7).

Table 6-2—SA Ratings of the proportion of positive feedback about the new CE and training activities standards, SY 2015–16

Statement ²	State Agency Rating ¹			Number of State Agencies that reported a rating	Number of State Agencies where no SFA feedback was received
	Mean	Median	Mode		
Activities are a good use of time, even given other work priorities.	3.8	4.0	4.0	44	11
There are enough opportunities to engage in these activities.	3.8	4.0	4.0	44	11
The activities do not pose a financial burden.	3.2	3.0	4.0	43	12
Completing required training activities is feasible for part-time staff.	2.7	3.0	2.0	41	13
It is clear which training topics are relevant to school nutrition employees' jobs.	3.7	4.0	4.0	43	12
It is clear what types of training can be counted towards training requirements.	3.6	3.5	3.0	42	13
Employees have adequate internet access to complete training activities.	3.2	3.0	3.0	40	15
SFAs have enough manpower to monitor training activities.	2.9	3.0	3.0	38	17
SFAs have enough manpower to document training activities.	3.0	3.0	3.0	40	15
Other	3.4	3.0	2.0	5	12

¹ Scale scores ranged from 1–5, where a rating of 1 = “none of the feedback received from SFAs regarding this statement/topic was positive,” and 5 = “all feedback from SFAs regarding this statement/topic was positive.”

² Response statements are taken verbatim from the survey.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2015–16, survey question 2.3.

Perceptions and Feedback Regarding Meeting the Training Standards

SAs were asked their perceptions of the ability of SFAs with RCCIs to meet the training standards compared to typical SFAs. All SAs were asked to respond separately for small, medium, and large SFAs since the Professional Standards differ by SFA size (Table 6-3). For small SFAs, SAs reported it was either more difficult for SFAs with RCCIs to meet the training standards compared to typical SFAs, or that there

was no difference. For medium and large/very large SFAs, SAs most frequently reported that SFAs' ability to meet training standards was no different in SFAs with RCCIs compared to typical SFAs.

Table 6-3—SAs' perception of the ability of SFAs with RCCIs to meet training standards versus typical SFAs, SY 2015–16

	Number of State Agencies Reporting On...		
	Small SFAs ¹	Medium SFAs ²	Large/Very Large SFAs ³
More difficult to meet training requirements	26	6	2
No difference in meeting training requirements	20	12	12
Easier to meet training requirements	0	0	2
Not applicable/no SFAs with RCCIs	7	35	37
No response	2	2	2
Total	55	55	55

¹ Those with 2,499 or fewer students enrolled.

² Those with 2,500–9,999 students enrolled.

³ Those with 10,000 or more students enrolled.

Note: State CN directors were asked to respond separately for small, medium, and large/very large SFAs, as applicable.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2015–16, survey question 2.5.1.

SAs that had SFAs with charter schools were asked their perceived ability to meet the standards compared to typical SFAs, based on SFA size (Table 6-4). For small and medium SFAs, SAs reported it was either more difficult for SFAs with charter schools to meet the training standards compared to typical SFAs or that there was no difference. For large/very large SFAs, SAs reported that their ability to meet training standards was no different for SFAs with charter schools compared to typical SFAs.

Table 6-4—SFAs' perception of the ability of SFAs with charter schools to meet training standards versus typical SFAs, SY 2015–16

	Number of States Reporting On...		
	Small SFAs ¹	Medium SFAs ²	Large/Very Large SFAs ³
More difficult to meet training requirements	25	13	6
No difference in meeting training requirements	14	11	12
Easier to meet training requirements	0	0	1
Not applicable/no SFAs with charter schools	14	29	33
No response	2	2	3
Total	55	55	55

¹ Those with 2,499 or fewer students enrolled.

² Those with 2,500–9,999 students enrolled.

³ Those with 10,000 or more students enrolled.

Note: State Child Nutrition directors were asked to respond separately for small, medium, and large/very large SFAs, as applicable.

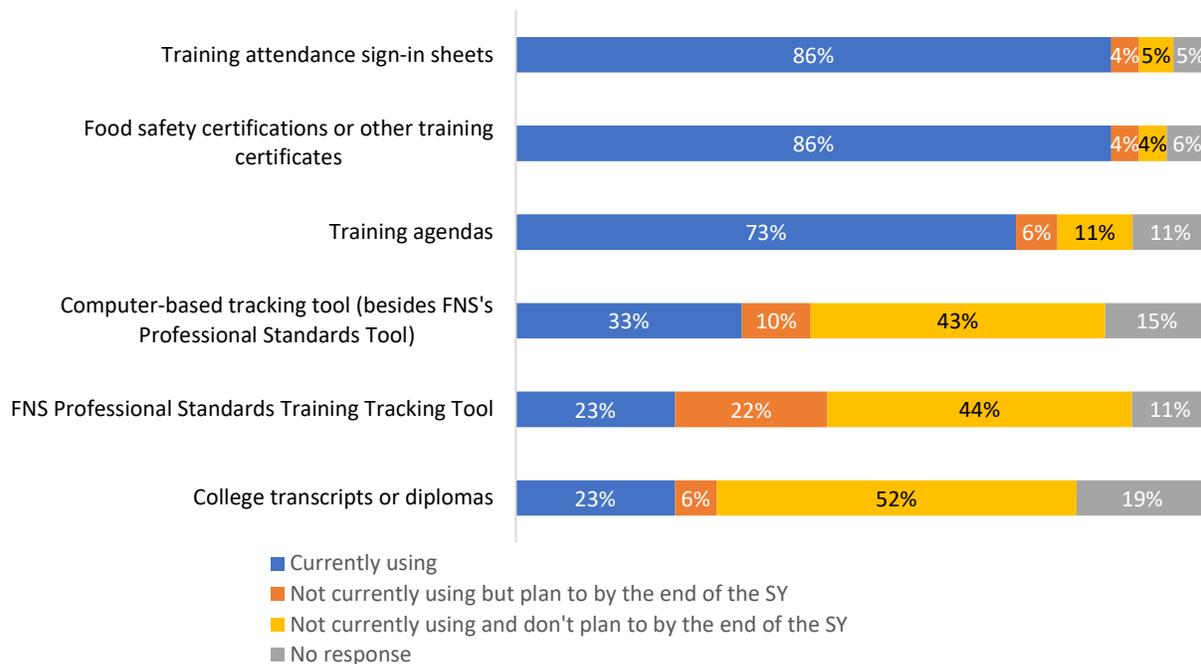
Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2015–16, survey question Q.2.5.2.

Documentation of CE and Training

Most SFAs (93 percent) tracked, or intended to conduct a review of, the types of CE and training activities provided to school nutrition personnel. To document CE and training activities completed by school nutrition personnel by the end of the school year (Figure 6-1), SFAs were asked to indicate which methods they used, which they expected to use by the end of SY 2015–16, and which they did not use and did not expect to use by the end of SY 2015–16. SFAs were mostly using food safety certifications or other training certificates, training attendance sign-in sheets (both 86 percent), and training agendas (73 percent) to document and track training activities. Nearly one-fourth (23 percent) of SFAs used the FNS Professional Standards Training Tracking Tool, and just over one-fifth (22 percent) of SFAs planned to start using the Tool by the end of the school year.



Figure 6-1—Methods to document CE and training activities completed by school nutrition personnel, by SFA use (or planned use), SY 2015–16



¹ Multiple responses were allowed. Response options are presented as stated from the survey.

Notes: 1,885 SFAs provided information for this figure, which represents 13,738 SFAs in the population. This figure includes SFAs that tracked or intended to conduct a review of CE and training activities for school nutrition personnel before the end of the 2015–2016 school year. Nonresponse ranged from 5 percent (training attendance sign-in sheets) to 19 percent (college transcripts or diplomas).

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, survey questions 7.5, 7.5.1, and 7.6.

SFAs that reported using the Training Tracking Tool were asked about its usefulness (Figure 6-2). Overall, most SFAs agreed with each of the positive statements about the Tool’s usefulness. Almost all SFAs (84 percent) agreed that the Tool’s reports helped them meet reporting requirements for administrative reviews. More than three-quarters agreed that the Tool was user-friendly and made tracking training easy (77 percent and 76 percent, respectively). Two-thirds of SFAs (66 percent) agreed that they had received enough training, TA, or other resources to use the Tool effectively.



Figure 6-2—SFAs’ perception of the utility of the FNS Professional Standards Training Tracking Tool, SY 2015–16



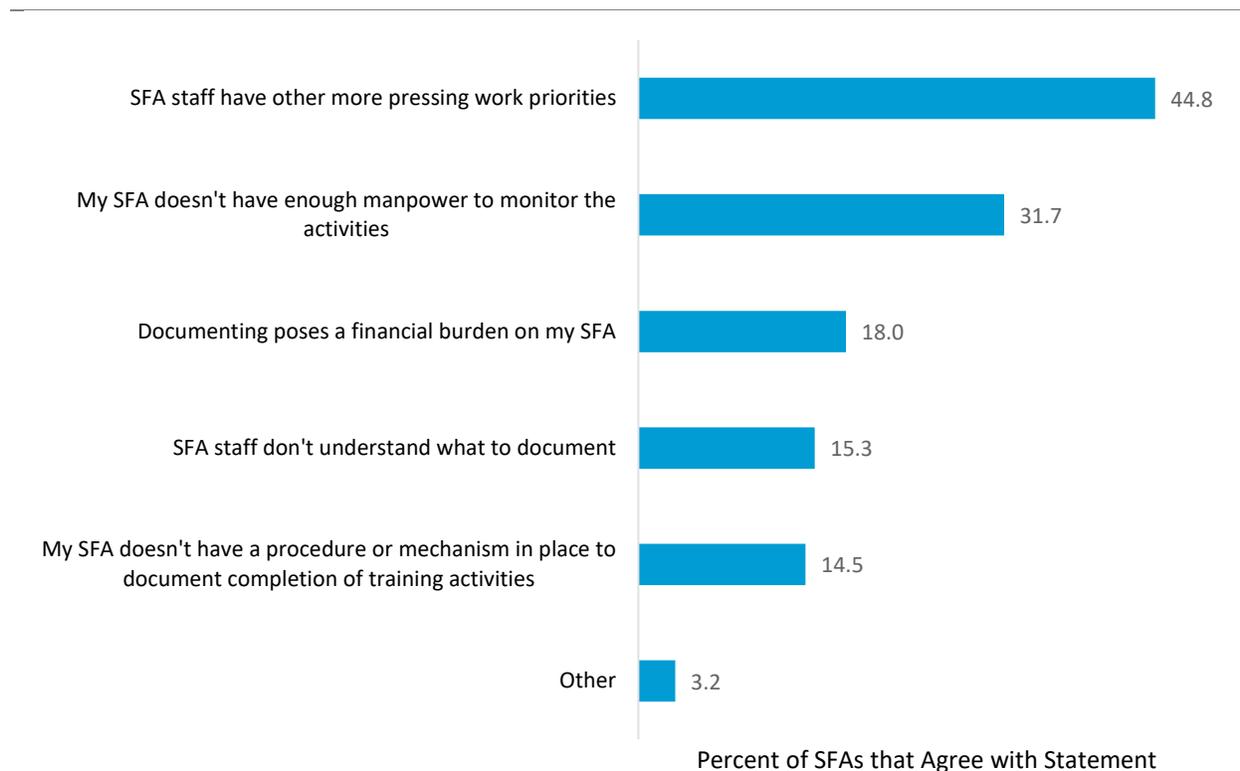
¹Multiple responses were allowed. Response options are presented as stated from the survey.

Note: 446 SFAs provided information for this figure, which represents 3,175 SFAs in the population. This figure includes SFAs who reported using the FNS Professional Standards Training Tracking Tool at the time of the survey.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, survey questions 7.6 and 7.8.

SFAs that tracked training activities, or intended to conduct a review of, CE and training activities for school nutrition personnel before the end of SY 2015–16, were asked about the challenges they faced in documenting personnel completion of CE and training activities (Figure 6-3). Less than half of SFAs reported that such documentation was challenging. Nearly half of SFAs (45 percent) agreed that SFA personnel had other, more pressing work priorities. Other challenges were noted by less than one-third of SFAs.

Figure 6-3—Percentage of SFAs that perceived challenges in documenting personnel completion of CE and training activities, SY 2015–16



¹ Multiple responses were allowed. Response options are presented as stated from the survey.

Note: 1,885 SFAs provided information for this figure, which represents 13,738 SFAs in the population. This figure includes SFAs that tracked or intended to conduct a review of CE and training activities for school nutrition personnel before the end of the 2015–2016 school year.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, survey questions 7.5, 7.5.1, and 7.7.

SAs tracked the types of CE and training activities completed by SA staff as well. SAs were asked to report the methods they used, or expected to use, by the end of SY 2015–16 to document CE and training activities completed by SA staff (Table 6-5). SAs mostly used training agendas (45 States, or 82 percent), training attendance sign-in sheets (40 States, or 73 percent), and food safety certifications or other training certificates (37 States, or 67 percent) to document and track training activities. Most SAs did not use, and did not plan to use, the FNS Professional Standards Training Tracking Tool by the end of SY 2015–16 (47 States, or 85 percent), and about half did not use and did not plan to use college transcripts or diplomas (34 States, or 62 percent) or a computer-based tracking tool (other than the FNS Professional Standards Training Tracking Tool; 32 States, or 58 percent) by the end of SY 2015–16.

Table 6-5—Number of SAs using, or planning to use, various methods to document CE and training activities completed by SA staff, SY 2015–16

Methods ¹	Number of State Agencies			
	Currently Using	Not Currently Using but Expect to Use by the End of SY 2015–16	Not Currently Using and Do Not Expect to Use by the End of SY 2015–16	No Response
Training agendas	45	2	6	2
Training attendance sign-in sheets	40	2	10	3
Food safety certifications or other training certificates	37	5	10	3
Computer-based tracking tool (besides the FNS Professional Standards Training Tracking Tool)	19	8	24	4
College transcripts or diplomas	17	3	31	4
The FNS Professional Standards Training Tracking Tool	6	7	40	2
Other method	6	1	11	37

¹ Multiple responses were allowed. Response options are presented as stated from the survey.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2015–16, survey question 2.6.

Training Topics

SFAs were asked if their SFA directors and school nutrition personnel received trainings in various topics as part of the training requirement in SY 2015–16. These data are only available for those SFAs that tracked, or intended to conduct a review of, CE and training activities for school nutrition personnel (93 percent; not shown in Table 6-6). Among the training topics specified in regulations, training in operations was the most frequently reported type provided; around two-thirds of all SFAs provided this training to all personnel categories. Training in nutrition topics was the second most commonly reported training, but all SFA directors and SFA managers were more likely (in roughly two-thirds of SFAs) to have received that training than were all school nutrition program staff or all part-time school nutrition program staff at SFAs (in less than half of SFAs). SFAs reported less often that staff received training in administration and communications, marketing, and/or public relations.

SFA directors and SFA managers most frequently received trainings in all topics. Roughly two-thirds of SFAs trained their SFA directors in all topic areas, and 40–66 percent trained all their SFA managers in all topic areas (Table 6-6). SFAs were least likely to train all part-time nutrition program staff. All part-time nutrition staff were trained in operations by 63 percent of SFAs, but only 17 percent trained all part-time nutrition staff in administration (although 22 percent received training in communications, marketing, and/or public relations).

Table 6-6—Percentage of SFA directors and school nutrition personnel who received training on various topics, SY 2015–16

	Operations ¹	Nutrition ²	Administration ³	Communications, Marketing and/or Public Relations	Other
Percent of SFAs					
SFA directors that received training	66.3	68.3	67.0	57.6	6.9
SFA managers⁴ that received training (n = 1,770)					
All	65.6	60.8	46.4	40.4	2.9
Some	13.7	15.5	15.1	11.9	0.4
None	4.8	6.5	13.6	20.1	7.2
No response	15.8	17.2	24.8	27.7	89.5
School nutrition program staff⁵ that received training (n = 1,704)					
All	67.1	48.5	21.5	25.5	3.1
Some	15.2	16.1	18.1	11.3	1.0
None	5.1	14.1	28.7	29.1	6.8
No response	12.6	21.2	31.7	34.1	89.1
Part-time school nutrition program staff⁶ that received training (n = 1,202)					
All	63.2	43.0	17.3	22.3	3.1
Some	10.8	7.2	5.3	3.7	0.8
None	7.5	20.4	35.7	33.0	6.9
No response	18.6	29.5	41.7	41.0	89.2

¹ Includes food production, serving food, cashiering/POS, food purchasing/procurement, receiving and storage, food safety, and hazard analysis and critical control points.

² Includes menu planning, nutrition education, and general nutrition.

³ Includes checking eligibility for F/RP meal benefits, program management, financial management, human resources and staff training, and facilities and equipment planning.

⁴ Employees who are directly responsible for the management of the day-to-day operations of school nutrition programs.

⁵ Employees who are involved in routine non-managerial operations of school nutrition programs and work ≥20 hours a week.

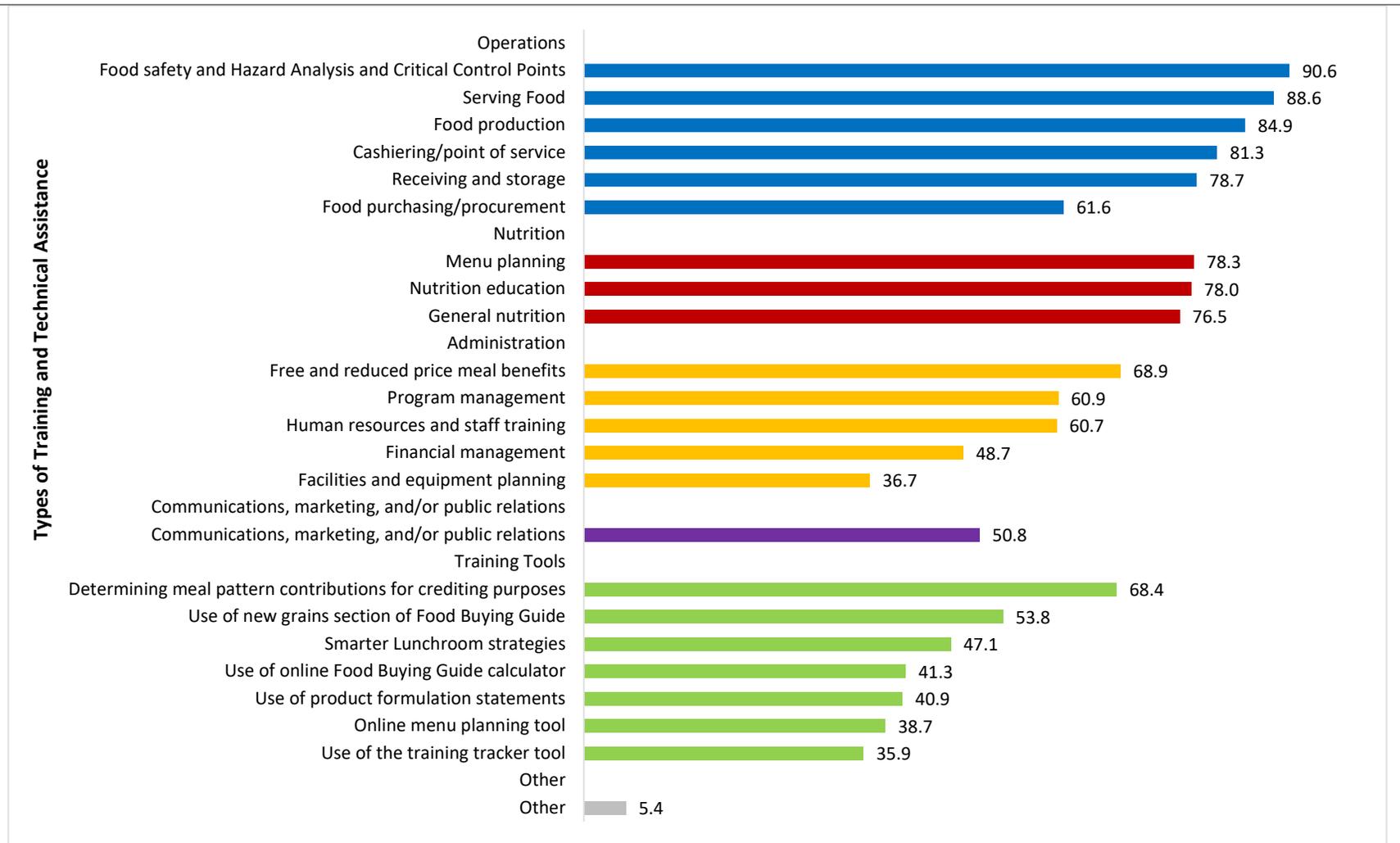
⁶ Employees who work <20 hours a week and are involved in routine non-managerial operations of school nutrition programs.

Note: 1,885 SFAs provided information for this table, which represents 13,738 SFAs in the population. This table includes SFAs that tracked or intended to conduct a review of CE and training activities for school nutrition staff before the end of SY 2015–16. Estimates for SFA managers, school nutrition program staff, and part-time school nutrition program staff exclude SFAs that did not have that type of staff.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, survey questions 7.9 and 7.10.

SFAs were asked to report on the specific subtopic areas in which their school nutrition personnel received training and TA (Figure 6-4). Within the topic of operations, most school nutrition personnel received training in all subtopics (from 62 percent in food purchasing/procurement to 91 percent in food safety and hazard analysis and critical control points). Within the topic of nutrition, three-quarters of school nutrition personnel received training in all subtopics (77 percent in general education and 78 percent in menu planning and nutrition education). Within the topic of administration, about half of school nutrition personnel received training in all subtopics (from 37 percent in facilities and equipment planning to 69 percent in F/RP meal benefits). Half of school nutrition personnel (51 percent) received training in communications and marketing, and almost half received training in some other tools (from 36 percent in the use of the training tracking tool to 68 percent in determining meal pattern contributions for crediting purposes).

Figure 6-4—Percentage of SFAs whose school nutrition personnel received training and TA in specific subtopics, SY 2015–16



Note: 1,969 SFAs provided information for this figure, which represents 14,690 SFAs in the population. This figure includes SFAs that reported school nutrition personnel received training or TA on at least one topic listed.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, question 7.1.1.

Organizations Responsible for Administering Training and Technical Assistance

Based on the training and technical assistance subtopics listed in Figure 6-4, SFAs were asked to report which type of organization provided each training (Table 6-7). SFA personnel (in-house) and SA staff most often provided training and TA for all the subtopics—SFA (in-house) personnel provided half of all SFAs with training, and SA staff provided 40 percent of all SFAs with training, although there was variation by training subtopic. The percentage of SFAs that received training from other organizations varied by training topic; typically, other organizations provided trainings to less than 20 percent of SFAs.

Table 6-7—Organizations that provided training and TA on various topics to SFAs, SY 2015–16

	FNS	ICN ¹	Professional Associations or Organizations	SFA Personnel (in-house)	State Agency	Commercial Vendors	Local Agencies and Partners	Other
Topics of Training and Technical Assistance	Percent of SFAs Receiving Training from Organization							
Nutrition								
Menu planning (<i>n</i> = 1,571)	13.5	17.3	21.1	50.9	49.5	14.3	15.0	11.5
Nutrition education (<i>n</i> = 1,539)	13.2	16.7	21.1	47.3	46.1	9.6	14.8	10.4
General nutrition (<i>n</i> = 1,515)	12.5	14.7	20.3	48.4	43.5	9.7	14.0	9.3
Operations								
Food production (<i>n</i> = 1,746)	10.5	13.2	16.5	56.7	41.2	10.7	10.8	8.6
Serving food (<i>n</i> = 1,789)	9.1	11.1	15.7	62.2	37.0	9.0	12.9	8.7
Cashiering/POS (<i>n</i> = 1,701)	6.5	3.9	11.4	67.7	22.7	14.3	7.2	8.8
Food purchasing/procurement (<i>n</i> = 1,245)	10.8	13.2	15.7	38.1	52.1	13.7	11.4	9.6
Receiving and storage (<i>n</i> = 1,597)	9.5	11.1	13.6	61.5	33.0	10.8	12.8	9.8
Food safety and hazard analysis and critical control points (<i>n</i> = 1,832)	9.5	13.7	19.3	54.5	36.5	9.4	19.0	10.8
Administration								
F/RP meal benefits (<i>n</i> = 1,370)	11.3	5.7	10.4	47.9	58.9	2.7	8.3	7.1
Program management (<i>n</i> = 1,224)	10.4	13.4	18.9	42.0	53.3	4.1	8.2	9.1
Financial management (<i>n</i> = 1,019)	9.5	14.8	18.3	41.8	52.6	3.8	7.9	10.2
Human resources and staff training (<i>n</i> = 1,253)	7.4	7.9	17.1	64.5	30.2	4.6	12.3	11.7
Facilities and equipment planning (<i>n</i> = 725)	7.1	7.9	15.5	57.5	27.6	18.9	10.6	10.3
Communications and Marketing								
Communications, marketing, and/or public relations (<i>n</i> = 1,096)	8.1	10.3	22.5	56.1	40.1	12.8	12.1	9.8
Training Tools								
Use of new Grains section of Food Buying Guide (<i>n</i> = 1,048)	13.7	11.0	12.7	38.2	58.4	8.1	10.4	8.4
Use of Online Food Buying Guide Calculator (<i>n</i> = 821)	9.1	7.3	10.2	35.4	30.6	7.8	10.4	9.1
Use of Product Formulation Statements (<i>n</i> = 855)	9.9	9.1	9.6	38.5	48.8	8.3	9.5	9.1
Determining meal pattern contributions for crediting purposes (<i>n</i> = 1,428)	8.2	5.9	10.2	36.5	48.0	11.4	8.1	9.0
Online menu planning tool (<i>n</i> = 750)	15.3	11.6	14.2	39.3	57.9	10.4	10.1	10.1
Use of the Training Tracking Tool (<i>n</i> = 737)	12.2	7.9	13.5	33.8	42.6	12.6	8.9	12.8
Smarter Lunchrooms strategies (<i>n</i> = 1,000)	10.4	6.9	12.0	30.2	44.7	3.5	7.6	12.4
Other (<i>n</i> = 120)	8.2	12.5	16.0	31.9	27.2	6.7	13.2	23.3

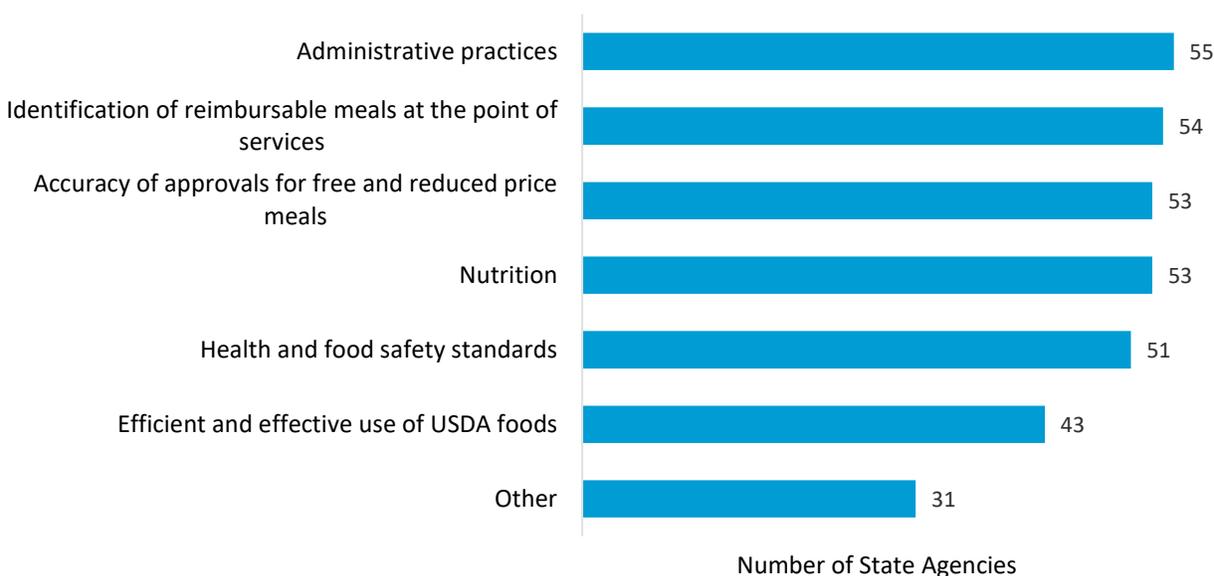
¹ ICN at the University of Mississippi, formerly the National Food Service Management Institute.

Note: Multiple responses were allowed. *ns* in parentheses indicate the unweighted count of SFAs that received training on that topic. This table includes SFAs that reported that school nutrition personnel received training or TA on at least one topic listed.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, question 7.1.3.

All SAs reported that they provided training and TA on various topics to SFAs. SAs were asked to report which types they provided (Figure 6-5). All SAs reported that they provided training in administrative practices, and almost all reported that they provided training in identification of reimbursable meals at POS (54 States, or 98 percent), nutrition and accuracy of approvals for F/RP meals (53 States, or 96 percent), and health and food safety standards (51 States, or 93 percent). More than three-quarters of the SAs (43 States, or 78 percent) reported that they provided training on the efficient and effective use of USDA Foods. More than half of the SAs (31 States, or 56 percent) reported that they provided training in other topics (see Appendix D Table D-8 for a list of other topics).

Figure 6-5—Training and TA that SAs provided to SFAs, SY 2015–16



¹ Multiple responses were allowed. Response options are presented as stated from the survey.

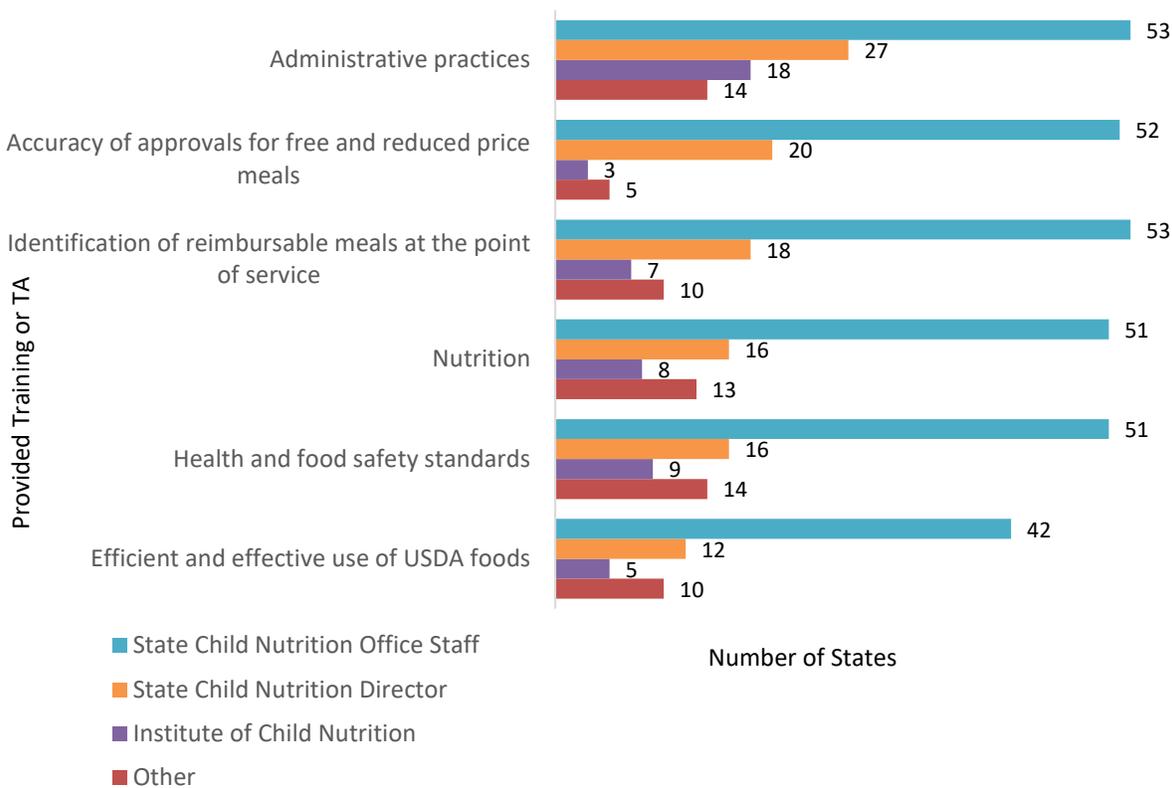
² Administrative practices include training in application, certification, verification, meal counting, and meal claiming procedures.

³ For the full list of “Other” responses, see Appendix D.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2015–16, question 2.2.

SAs were asked to report which SA personnel provided the training and technical assistance topics listed in Figure 6-5 above (Figure 6-6). State CN office staff provided almost all SFAs with the various trainings and TA. The State CN director provided SFAs with about one-third of all training topics.

Figure 6-6—Providers of training and TA to SFA personnel, SY 2015–16



¹ Multiple responses were allowed.

² Administrative practices include training in application, certification, verification, meal counting, and meal claiming procedures.

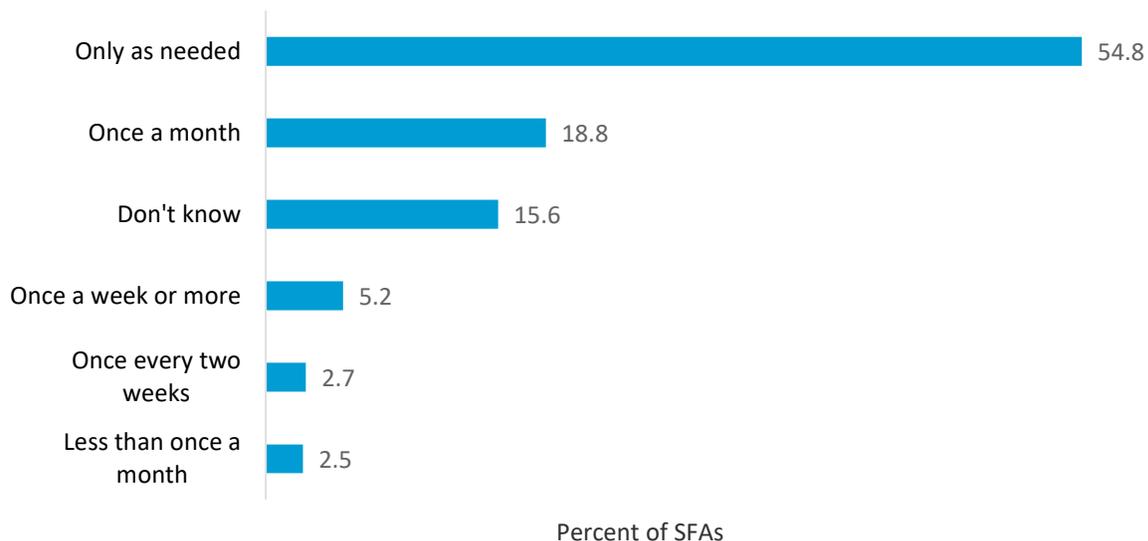
³ ICN was formerly the National Food Service Management Institute.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 2.1, 2.2, and 2.2a–g.

Team Up Mentors

SFAs that participated in Team Up training in 2015 were asked how frequently they communicated with their Team Up mentors (Figure 6-7). More than half of SFAs (55 percent) that participated in Team Up reported communicating with their Team Up mentors only as needed; the second most frequent response (19 percent) was that SFAs communicated once a month with their Team Up mentors.

Figure 6-7—Average frequency of SFA communication with Team Up mentors, SY 2015–16



Note: 223 SFAs provided information for this figure, which represents 1,674 SFAs in the population. This figure includes SFAs that participated in the ICN's Team Up training in 2015. "No contact" was not included as a survey response option.
Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, survey questions 7.2 and 7.3.

These SFAs were asked to report their perceptions of Team Up mentors by rating their agreement on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) (Table 6-8). SFAs reported more positive perceptions of mentors when the SFA communicated with mentors once a month or more (mean ratings ranging from 4.2 to 4.4), and less positive perceptions if they communicated with mentors less often than once a month (mean rating ranging from 3.5 to 3.6) or at an unknown frequency (mean rating ranging from 2.4 to 2.6).

Table 6-8—Among SFAs that participated in a Team Up training, SFA perceptions of Team Up mentors, SY 2015–16

	Rating ¹			
	Mean	Median	Mode	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
SFA relationship with Team Up mentor				1,674 (223)
We feel supported by our mentor.	3.6	4	4	1,565 (206)
Our mentor acts as a sounding board and reacts to ideas for our SFA.	3.5	4	3	1,558 (205)
Our mentor helps our SFA brainstorm ideas.	3.6	4	3	1,565 (206)
Our mentor shares knowledge and experience with our SFA.	3.7	4	5	1,558 (205)
SFAs that communicated with mentors once a month or more²				448 (53)
We feel supported by our mentor.	4.2	4	4	435 (51)
Our mentor acts as a sounding board and reacts to ideas for our SFA.	4.2	4	4	435 (51)
Our mentor helps our SFA brainstorm ideas.	4.2	4	5	435 (51)
Our mentor shares knowledge and experience with our SFA.	4.4	4	5	435 (51)
SFAs that communicated with mentors less than once a month³				
We feel supported by our mentor.	3.5	4	3	945 (127)
Our mentor acts as a sounding board and reacts to ideas for our SFA.	3.5	3	3	938 (126)
Our mentor helps our SFA brainstorm ideas.	3.5	3	3	945 (127)
Our mentor shares knowledge and experience with our SFA.	3.6	4	5	945 (127)
SFAs that communicated with mentors with unknown frequency				
We feel supported by our mentor.	2.4	3	1	185 (28)
Our mentor acts as a sounding board and reacts to ideas for our SFA.	2.4	3	1	185 (28)
Our mentor helps our SFA brainstorm ideas.	2.5	3	1	185 (28)
Our mentor shares knowledge and experience with our SFA.	2.6	3	1 and 3	179 (27)

¹ Ratings were assigned on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = “strongly disagree” and 5 = “strongly agree.”

² Response options included “once a week or more,” “once every 2 weeks,” and “once a month or more.”

³ Response options included “less than once a month,” “every 2 months,” and “only as needed.”

Note: 223 SFAs provided information for this table, which represents 1,674 SFAs in the population. This table includes SFAs that participated in the ICN’s Team Up training in 2015.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, survey questions 7.2, 7.3, and 7.4.

6.3 Hiring Standards

Section 7.3 reports the percentages of SFA directors and State CN directors that met the regulatory hiring standards for directors hired on or after July 1, 2015. For more detailed information about the hiring standards, see the background section in the beginning of this chapter.

6.3.1 Results

The data presented in Section 7.3 address the following research question:

- Which hiring standards are being used in hiring SFA directors and SA directors?
 - SFAs were asked to report whether their SFA directors met the hiring standards for required education, years of experience, and prior minimum training (based on whether they were hired before, on, or after July 1, 2015, when the new professional standards went into effect). SAs were asked to report their standards or anticipated future standards of new SFA directors to meet the minimum hiring standards, based on SFA size. SAs were asked to report the challenges that States with and without charter schools faced in meeting the new SFA director hiring standards. Lastly, SAs were asked if their State CN directors met the new hiring standards, based on the education and skills and experience standards. Table 6-9, Table 6-10, Table 6-11, Table 6-12, Table 6-13, and Figure 6-8 show these findings.

SFA Directors Meeting the Hiring Standards

New SFA directors hired on or after July 1, 2015 must meet the new professional hiring standards. The standards, which vary based on SFA size, consist of minimum education (Table 6-9), or a combination of education and years of experience (Table 6-10), along with 8 hours of food safety training completed no more than 5 years prior to start date or within 30 days of start date. Overall, 41 percent of new directors of small SFAs, 76 percent of new directors of medium SFAs, and 95 percent of new directors of large/very large SFAs met the new hiring standards specified (data not shown).

Education Levels

Education levels were slightly higher among SFA directors hired on or after July 1, 2015 compared to those hired before July 1, 2015, regardless of SFA size (Table 6-9). All directors of small SFAs hired on or after July 1, 2015 had a high school diploma or GED (part of the minimum education standard for small SFAs), and almost all (94 percent) of directors of large/very large SFAs hired on or after that date had an associate's degree or higher (part of the minimum education standard for large/very large SFAs). However, only 61 percent of directors of medium SFAs hired on or after July 1, 2015 had an associate's degree or higher (part of the minimum education standards for medium SFAs).

Table 6-9—Education credentials of SFA directors hired before and after July 1, 2015, by SFA size, SY 2015–16

	Small SFAs (1–2,499 Students)		Medium SFAs (2,500–9,999 Students)		Large/Very Large SFAs (≥10,000 Students)	
	SFAs with Directors Hired...		SFAs with Directors Hired...		SFAs with Directors Hired...	
	Before July 1, 2015	On or after July 1, 2015	Before July 1, 2015	On or after July 1, 2015	Before July 1, 2015	On or after July 1, 2015
	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)					
	5,332 (432)	1,608 (127)	4,197 (758)	1,070 (190)	1,358 (275)	225 (46)
Highest level of schooling completed	Percent		Percent		Percent	
Master's degree or higher	17.5	23.0	14.6	19.8	22.1	19.8
Bachelor's degree	16.5	17.2	29.0	28.1	51.1	67.3
Associate's degree	11.2	13.1	14.5	13.0	7.6	6.5
Some college	22.9	24.5	25.2	18.6	11.9	6.5
High school diploma or GED	31.7	21.7	16.7	19.5	6.4	0.0
Less than high school	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
No response	0.0	0.6	0.0	1.0	1.0	0.0

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 13.1 and 13.2.

Years of Prior Experience

The number of years of prior experience of SFA directors hired before versus on or after July 1, 2015 were similar. Directors of small SFAs had the fewest years of prior experience, and directors of large/very large SFAs had the most. Of the directors of small SFAs hired on or after July 1, 2015, 54 percent had at least 1 year of experience (required for those hired with a bachelor's degree in an any academic major or an associate's degree in a specified major), which was similar to those hired before that date (56 percent; see Table 6-10). Forty percent of the directors of small SFAs hired on or after July 1, 2015 had 3 or more years of experience (required for those hired with only a high school diploma or GED), which was a lower percentage than those hired before that date (48 percent). About two-thirds (66 percent) of the directors of mid-size SFAs hired on or after July 1, 2015 had at least 2 years of experience (required for those hired with a bachelor's degree in any major or with an associate's degree in a specified major); this was similar to those hired before that date (65 percent). Of the directors of large/very large SFAs hired on or after July 1, 2015, 65 percent had at least 5 years of experience (required for those hired with a bachelor's degree in any major), which is a lower percentage than those hired before that date (69 percent).

Table 6-10—Years of experience of SFA directors hired before and after July 1, 2015, by SFA size, SY 2015–16

	Small SFAs (1–2,499 Students)		Medium SFAs (2,500–9,999 Students)		Large/Very Large SFAs (≥10,000 Students)	
	SFAs with Directors Hired...		SFAs with Directors Hired...		SFAs with Directors Hired...	
	Before July 1, 2015	On or after July 1, 2015	Before July 1, 2015	On or after July 1, 2015	Before July 1, 2015	On or after July 1, 2015
	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)					
	5,332 (432)	1,608 (127)	4,197 (758)	1,070 (190)	1,358 (275)	225 (46)
	Percent		Percent		Percent	
Years of Experience in School Nutrition Programs Prior to Hiring						
<1	41.0	39.5	30.8	21.9	18.7	13.0
1	3.4	7.9	3.0	5.3	2.1	4.4
2	4.6	6.7	3.7	3.4	1.8	2.1
3	5.2	3.5	4.1	4.3	2.6	4.5
4	2.9	1.6	3.2	3.6	3.7	4.2
5 or more	40.0	34.5	53.7	54.4	69.0	65.2
No response	3.0	6.3	1.6	7.2	2.1	6.5

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 13.1 and 13.6.

Prior Food Safety Training for New SFA Directors

Overall, two-thirds (66 percent) of all SFA directors hired on or after July 1, 2015 had completed the required minimum of 8 hours of food safety training. Most SAs (45 States, or 82 percent) required new SFA directors to have completed at least 8 hours of food safety training not more than 5 years prior to, or within 30 days of, their start date (data not shown).

6.3.2 State Requirements of SFAs to Meet the New Hiring Standards

SAs were asked to report if they required new SFA directors to meet all the hiring standards (Figure 6-8). Most SAs (41 States, or 75 percent) required all new SFA directors to meet the hiring standards: 44 SAs (80 percent) required new SFA directors of small SFAs; 45 SAs (82 percent) required new SFA directors of medium SFAs; and 42 SAs (76 percent) required new SFA directors of large/very large SFAs to meet the new professional hiring standards.

Figure 6-8—SAs requiring new SFA directors to meet professional hiring standards, SY 2015–16



Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 2.7, 2.8, 2.10, and 2.12.

Specifically, State CN directors were asked about their existing and anticipated standards for new SFA directors to meet the minimum and preferred education hiring standards based on SFA size (Table 6-11 and Table 6-12). Almost all SAs required new SFA directors to meet the minimum education standards at the time of hiring, for all SFA sizes (93 percent of small SFAs, 96 percent of medium SFAs, and 94 percent of large/very large SFAs). For small and medium SFAs, less than one-third required or anticipated requiring their new SFA directors to work toward an associate's degree (28 percent of small SFAs) or bachelor's degree (31 percent of medium SFAs), if they did not have one when hired (Table 6-11).

Table 6-11—State standards and anticipated future standards of new SFA directors to meet minimum and preferred education hiring standards in small and medium SFAs, as reported by State CN directors, SY 2015–16

State Standards for New SFA Directors at the Time of Hiring	Number of SAs
Small SFAs	55
Must meet Minimum Education Standard	^a 50
Required to work towards attaining an associate’s degree, if hired without an associate’s degree	^a 10
Anticipate future requirement to work towards attaining an associate’s degree, if hired without an associate’s degree	4
Medium SFAs	55
Must meet Minimum Education Standard	53
Required to work towards attaining a bachelor’s degree, if hired without a bachelor’s degree	13
Anticipate future requirement to work towards an attaining a bachelor’s degree, if hired without a bachelor’s degree	3
^a 1 State did not respond.	
Note: Small SFAs are those with 2,499 or fewer students; medium SFAs have 2,500–9,999 students. See chapter text for further discussion of State minimum and preferred hiring standards.	
Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 2.8, 2.9, 2.9a, 2.10, 2.11, and 2.11a.	

Most SAs (94 percent) required that new SFA directors in large/very large SFAs meet the minimum education standard at the time of hiring (Table 6-12). About one-third (15 States, or 32 percent) of SAs required or anticipated requiring new SFA directors in large/very large SFAs to have at least 3 university credit hours in both food service management and nutritional sciences. Four SAs (8 percent) required or anticipated requiring new large/very large SFA directors to have a master’s degree, and 18 SAs (39 percent) required or anticipated requiring such new SFA directors to have at least 1 year of school nutrition management experience.

Table 6-12—SA requirements of new SFA directors to meet minimum and preferred education hiring standards in large/very large SFAs, as reported by State CN directors, SY 2015–16

SA Requirements for New SFA Directors in Large/Very Large SFAs at the Time of Hiring	Number of SAs
Must meet Minimum Education Standard	^a 48
Must have at least 1 year of school nutrition management experience	^a 13
Anticipate requiring at least 1 year of school nutrition management experience	5
Must have at least 3 university credit hours in food service management and at least 3 university credit hours in nutritional sciences	^a 12
Anticipate requiring at least 3 university credit hours in food service management and at least 3 university credit hours in nutritional sciences	3
Must have a master's degree or willingness to work towards a master's degree	^b 2
Anticipate requiring a master's degree or willingness to work towards a master's degree	2

^a 4 States did not respond.
^b 6 States did not respond.

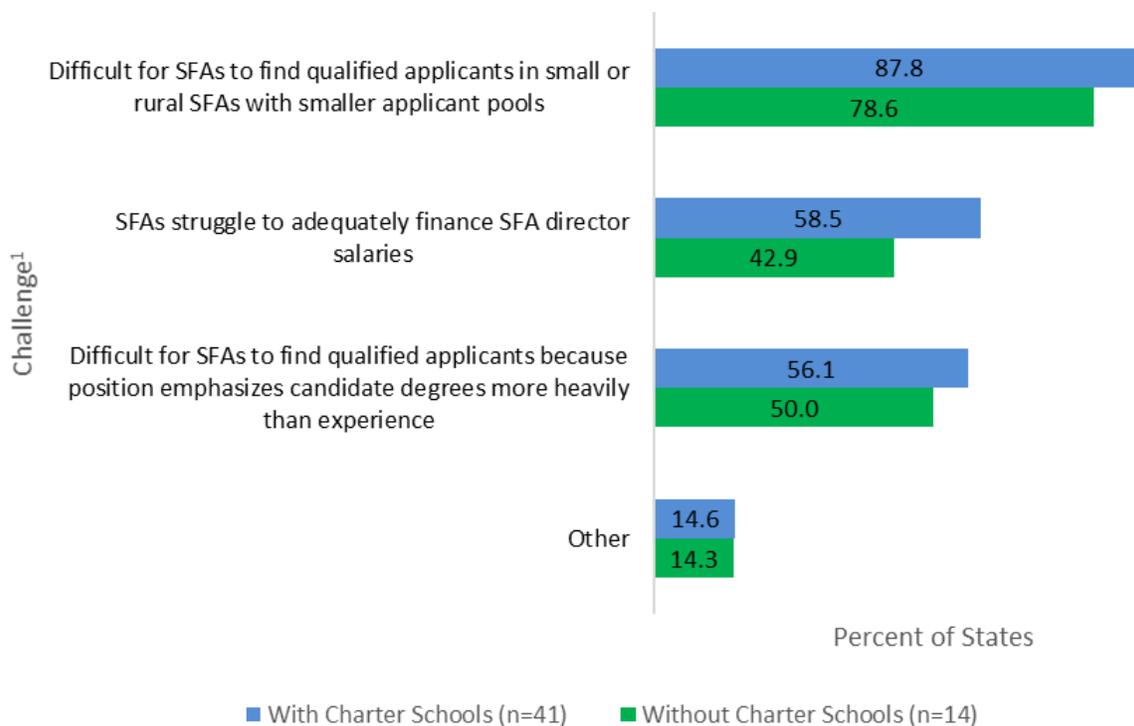
Note: Large/very large SFAs have 10,000 or more students. See chapter text for further discussion of State minimum and preferred hiring standards.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 2.12, 2.13, and 2.13a.

6.3.3 Challenges Meeting the New Hiring Standards in States with and without Charter Schools

SAs were asked about challenges that SFAs reported in meeting the new SFA director hiring standards. Responses are compared in SAs with and without charter schools (Figure 6-9). More than half of all SAs reported that SFAs experienced challenges in meeting the new SFA director hiring standards. For the 41 SAs with charter schools, most (36 States, or 88 percent) agreed that it was difficult to find qualified applicants in small or rural SFAs that have smaller applicant pools. More than half of the SAs with charter schools (24 States, or 59 percent) agreed that SFAs struggled to adequately finance SFA director salaries. More than half of SAs with charter schools (23 States, or 56 percent) agreed with a statement that it was difficult for SFAs to find qualified applicants because the position emphasized candidates' degrees more heavily than experience. The proportion of SAs without charter schools that reported each challenge was smaller compared to the proportion of SAs with charter schools, although the pattern of findings was similar.

Figure 6-9—State Agencies reporting SFA challenges in meeting the new SFA director hiring standards, by State Agencies with and without charter schools, SY 2015–16



¹ Examples of other challenges include “The new requirements push schools to hire food service management companies” and “It is difficult to find and retain qualified employees in positions with less than a 40-hour work week.”

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2015–16, survey questions 1.4, 1.5, and 2.14.

6.3.4 Hiring Standards for New State CN Directors

New State CN directors must meet education, knowledge and experience, and skills and abilities requirements as part of the new hiring standards. SAs reported the percentage of State CN directors who met the education level and years of relevant experience standards (data not shown). Most directors (87 percent) had a bachelor’s degree or higher. Three-quarters (78 percent) had an academic major specified in the Professional Standards regulations (see the Background section of this chapter for a list of accepted majors), and about one-third (31 percent) had 5 or more years of relevant experience prior to being hired. The survey did not ask about skills and abilities, as these are subjective.

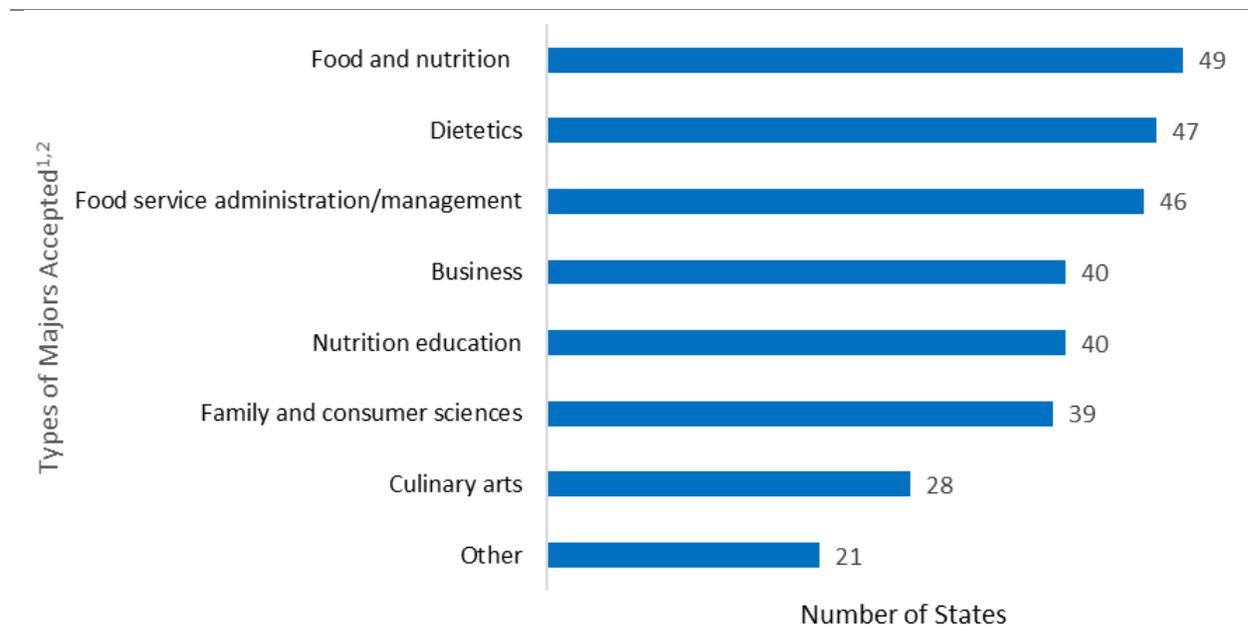
To assess the percentage of SAs whose education hiring requirements met the regulatory hiring standards, SAs were asked if they required their State CN directors to have a bachelor’s degree and an academic major that met the education specified in the hiring standards (Table 6-13; Figure 6-10). Almost all State CN directors (54 States, or 98 percent) were required to have a bachelor’s degree or higher (Table 7-14), and the majority of SAs accepted most of the academic majors listed in the regulations (Figure 6-10). The most frequently accepted college majors were food and nutrition (49 States, or 91 percent), dietetics (47 States, or 87 percent), and food service administration/management (46 States, or 85 percent).

Table 6-13—Current minimum education standard for State CN director position, SY 2015–16

	Number of State Agencies
Current Minimum Education Standard	
High school (or GED)	1
Some college, no degree	0
Associate’s degree	0
Bachelor’s degree	42
Graduate degree	12

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2015–16, survey question 3.6.

Figure 6-10—Among State Agencies with education standards, accepted college majors that meet the education specified in the hiring standards for the State CN director positions, SY 2015–16



¹ Multiple responses were allowed. Response options are presented as stated from the survey.

² Other accepted majors include public administration, public health, social work, or teaching/education.

Note: This figure includes 54 SAs with a minimum education requirement of a bachelor’s degree or graduate degree.

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2015–16, survey questions 3.6 and 3.7.

7 Policies to Improve Nutrition

7.1 Introduction

The CN-OPS-II SY 2015–16 SFA Director Survey collected information about SFAs' experiences with new policies and strategies developed to improve nutrition in schools. Chapter 8 reports the findings from SFA directors regarding two topics addressed by recently changed regulations: food and beverage marketing policies and use of Smarter Lunchrooms strategies.

7.2 Background

7.2.1 Food and Beverage Marketing

All SFAs that participate in NSLP are required to have a local school wellness policy. This requirement was established in the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004⁷⁶ and strengthened in HRFKA.⁷⁷ Each Local Education Agency (LEA) is required to develop its own local school wellness policy, which must include goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other student wellness activities, as well as nutrition guidelines for all foods available on each school campus that promote student health and aim to reduce childhood obesity.

In February 2014, USDA FNS published a proposed rule⁷⁸ to update and expand upon the local school wellness policy requirements. LEAs were encouraged to follow the February 2014 proposed rule until the final rule was published in July 2016.⁷⁹ The final rule requires LEAs to update their existing school wellness policies during SY 2016–17. These requirements include:⁸⁰

- **Standards and nutrition guidelines** for all foods and beverages sold on school campuses during the school day that are consistent with Federal regulations for school meal nutrition standards, and with the Smart Snacks in School⁸¹ nutrition standards.
 - Smart Snacks in School, a new regulation that took effect in SY 2014–15, requires that all competitive foods⁸² sold to children at schools meet specific nutrition standards. It encompasses school meal programs and à la carte items sold in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores, and other locations during the school day. The Smart Snacks requirements set limits on calories, sodium, fats, and sugar for beverages, snacks, and entrées, and vary by student age (elementary, middle, and high schools). The CN-OPS-II SFA Director Survey questions asked if any SFAs had policies that restricted marketing to only foods and beverages permitted to be sold on the school campus per the Smart Snacks standards.

⁷⁶ Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004. Pub. L. 108-265. 118 Stat. 729 (2004).

⁷⁷ Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. Pub L 112-296. 124 Stat. 3183 (2010).

⁷⁸ 7 CFR §§ 210–220. Vol. 79, No. 38. Wednesday, February 26, 2014.

⁷⁹ 7 CFR §§ 210–220. Vol. 81, No. 146. Friday, July 29, 2016.

⁸⁰ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2016). *Local school wellness policy implementation under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010: Summary of the final rule*. Retrieved from https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/tn/LWPsummary_finalrule.pdf

⁸¹ For additional information, see the FNS Smart Snacks in Schools website at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks>

⁸² A “competitive food” is defined by 7 CFR § 210.11 and §220.12 as any food item that is sold in competition to the reimbursable school meal.

- **Standards for all foods and beverages** available (but not sold) on school campuses during the day, including foods for classroom parties, snacks brought in by parents, and foods given as incentives.
- **Policies for food and beverage marketing** that allow marketing and advertising of only those foods and beverages that meet the competitive foods standards (see bullet point about Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards above).
 - The new food and beverage marketing regulations aim to address the prevalent marketing of unhealthy food and beverages to children in schools, which can influence children’s food choices.⁸³ According to a study conducted by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and published in 2014, 70 percent of elementary and middle school students, and almost 90 percent of high school students, are exposed to food and beverage marketing at school.⁸⁴ The new regulation sets a minimum standard: if an LEA allows food and beverage marketing at school, then any food and beverages being marketed must comply with the competitive foods standards. As mentioned above, all competitive foods must meet the nutrition standards; therefore, food and beverages being marketed must meet the nutrition standards as well. LEAs have the authority and discretion to make these marketing standards more stringent or to ban food and beverage marketing in schools altogether.

The SY 2015–16 SFA Director Survey assessed the number of school districts that had food and beverage marketing policies and, if they did, which types of foods or beverages these policies restricted and whether any impacts on SFA revenues were anticipated.

7.2.2 Smarter Lunchrooms

Derived from research in behavioral economics, the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement is an initiative that encourages schools to implement evidence-based, low- or no-cost strategies aimed at “nudging” children to make healthier choices when selecting foods for lunch.⁸⁵ The Smarter Lunchrooms initiative supports NSLP in promoting healthy food choice selection and student participation. Smarter Lunchrooms strategies focus on ways to increase fruit, vegetable, and milk consumption; increase sales of reimbursable meals; and improve the lunchroom environment. Specific strategies include “Focus on Fruit,” “Vary the Vegetables,” “Highlight the Salad,” “Move More White Milk,” “Boost Reimbursable Meals,” “Lunchroom Atmosphere,” “Student Involvement,” and “School Community Involvement.”⁸⁶ Examples of Smarter Lunchrooms strategies include relocating fruit to more eye-catching locations, renaming vegetables with appealing names, and prompting students to select and enjoy healthy foods. The Smarter Lunchrooms Scorecard⁸⁷ gives a full list of examples of the specific strategies.

⁸³ 7 CFR §§ 210–220.

⁸⁴ Terry-McElrath, Y. M., Turner, L., Sandoval, A., Johnston, L. D., & Chaloupka, F. J. (2014). Commercialism in U.S. elementary and secondary school nutrition environments: Trends from 2007 to 2012. *JAMA Pediatrics*, 168(3), 234–242.

⁸⁵ For more information, see <http://smarterlunchrooms.org/>

⁸⁶ The strategy names and categories have changed slightly since the CN-OPS-II survey was administered.

⁸⁷ Smarter Lunchrooms Movement. (2017). *Smarter Lunchrooms scorecard*. Retrieved from http://www.smarterlunchrooms.org/sites/default/files/documents/SLM-Scorecard2.0_4.pdf

7.3 Results

The research questions that motivated the creation of the related SFA Director Survey questions are listed below.

- Who has the responsibility for allowing or restricting food and beverage marketing in schools?
 - SFAs were asked to report whether they allowed or prohibited food and beverage marketing on school campus, and who was responsible for setting these policies. SFAs were compared by their demographic makeup based on their marketing policies; Table 7-1 and Table 7-2 show the results of this analysis.
- What types of foods and beverages are marketed in schools?
 - SFAs that indicated that they did not prohibit or restrict food and beverage marketing were asked to report which types of foods and beverages were marketed. Table 7-3 presents these results.
- What is the role of marketing in SFA finances?
 - SFAs that allowed food and beverage marketing were asked to report their perceived financial profits from such marketing. Figure 7-1 shows the results from this question.
- How extensive (the use of any practices) and intensive (in terms of numbers of practices used) is the implementation of Smarter Lunchrooms activities? Which practices are most widely used?
 - The prevalence of the use of Smarter Lunchrooms strategies is reported in Table 7-4. SFAs that were aware of the Smarter Lunchrooms strategies were asked to report which strategies they implemented. Table 7-5 presents the findings of this analysis.

7.3.1 Food and Beverage Marketing Policies

Various characteristics of SFAs (enrollment size, urbanicity, percent of students approved for F/RP meals, and region) were used to compare SFAs that allowed marketing to SFAs that prohibited food and beverage marketing in schools (see Table 7-1). Small SFAs were most likely to prohibit marketing (40 percent) and very large SFAs were least likely to prohibit it (16 percent). SFAs that allowed marketing were more likely to have 50–59 percent of students certified for F/RP lunches (or “medium percent of students approved for F/RP meals”; 70 percent) and were most prevalent in the Southeast (75 percent).

Table 7-1—Percentage of SFAs where marketing of food and beverages was prohibited or allowed, by SFA characteristics in SY 2015–16

SFA size ¹	Marketing Prohibited	Marketing Allowed	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
a. Small (1–999 students)	40.2	^{b,c,d} 57.8	6,091 (500)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	27.2	70.6	5,080 (915)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	22.8	76.0	1,555 (315)
d. Very large (≥25,000 students)	16.4	^b 83.6	285 (67)
Urbanicity			
e. City	41.6	56.7	1,462 (199)
f. Suburban	29.3	68.3	2,981 (507)
g. Town	31.7	66.3	2,355 (410)
h. Rural	31.4	66.9	5,722 (646)
Percent of Students Approved for F/RP Meals¹			
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	33.6	65.1	3,867 (560)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	27.7	^k 70.4	3,826 (530)
k. High (≥60 percent F/RP)	35.2	62.4	5,317 (707)
Region¹			
l. Mid-Atlantic	24.9	72.8	1,293 (199)
m. Midwest	33.3	65.3	3,246 (454)
n. Mountain Plains	26.8	71.9	2,014 (243)
o. Northeast	33.3	63.3	1,607 (215)
p. Southeast	24.5	^{q,r} 74.5	1,124 (208)
q. Southwest	39.7	58.5	1,898 (227)
r. Western	39.6	57.8	1,828 (251)
Total	32.5	65.6	13,010 (1,797)

¹ For marketing allowed, an overall statistically significant difference by SFA characteristic ($p < 0.05$) was observed.

Notes: Includes policies that restricted marketing to only food/beverages sold on the school campus, another type of marketing policy, or no marketing policy. Subcategory rows do not always add up to 100 percent, due to rounding and to some SFAs that answered that they did not know. Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate statistically significant differences (Bonferroni p -value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the letter. 517 SFAs reported that they prohibited marketing in SY 2015–16, which represents 4,232 SFAs in the population. 1,247 SFAs reported that they allowed marketing in SY 2015–16, which represents 8,530 SFAs in the population.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, and 8.4.

SFAs were asked which agencies were primarily responsible for setting food and beverage marketing policies in schools in SY 2015–16 (see Table 7-2). SFAs most frequently reported (46 percent) that their SFA was primarily responsible for setting food and beverage marketing policies in schools. About one-quarter of SFAs (24 percent) did not have policies in place.

Table 7-2—Agency primarily responsible for setting food and beverage marketing policies in schools in SY 2015–16

Responsible Agency	Percent of SFAs
My SFA	45.8
Other departments in my SFA	9.2
Individual schools	5.6
Other	14.9
Board of Education	4.9
School administration	4.5
Food service management company	1.4
A combination of people/groups	1.2
No policies in place	23.5
No response	1.0

Note: Food and beverage marketing commonly includes logos, brand names, spokes-characters (e.g., cartoons), or product names featured to promote the sale of a food or beverage product. 1,984 SFAs provided information for this table, which represents 14,824 in the population.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, question 8.1.

SFAs that had a less restrictive marketing policy (i.e., those that did not have a policy that restricted marketing to food/beverages sold on school campuses per Smart Snacks in School or more stringent standards), or had no policy, were asked to report the types of products or brands marketed in their elementary, middle, high, and “other” schools (Table 7-3). In general, less than half of all SFAs reported marketing of any specific product or brand. Marketing of specific foods, beverages, or brands was most frequently reported in SFAs with high schools (5 percent to 53 percent for each subtype), followed closely by middle schools (4 percent to 46 percent for each subtype), while SFAs with “other” schools least frequently had marketing of foods, beverages, and brands (3 percent to 16 percent for each subtype). Overall, marketing of water and milk-based products was more frequent than marketing for any other product or brand.

For food marketing, snacks and bread/grain products were marketed most often (see Table 7-3). For beverage marketing, water and milk-based beverages were marketed most frequently, and soft drinks were least likely to be marketed. For food and beverage brands, “umbrella” brands were marketed considerably more frequently than fast food or other restaurant brands. School meals and fruits and vegetables were among other types of products marketed.

Table 7-3—Among SFAs that did not prohibit or restrict food and beverage marketing,¹ types of foods, beverages, and brands marketed in schools in SY 2015–16

	SFAs with Elementary Schools	SFAs with Middle Schools	SFAs with High Schools	SFAs with Other Schools
	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)			
	1,326 (201)	1,417 (230)	1,575 (256)	490 (68)
Type of product or brand marketed ^{2,3}	Percent of SFAs			
Foods				
Frozen desserts	21.6	23.8	28.3	9.2
Bread/grain products	35.3	31.7	36.2	13.8
Snacks (chips, energy bars, etc.)	22.2	33.6	39.3	11.8
Candy	1.8	3.9	5.1	2.3
Beverages				
Soft drinks	2.5	6.4	16.7	2.9
Sports drinks	5.2	14.1	35.1	6.0
Water	37.2	45.7	52.9	16.3
Milk-based beverages	44.5	37.5	41.7	12.2
Other beverages	8.3	12.5	18.4	4.1
Brands				
“Umbrella” brands that produce a variety of products (e.g., General Mills, Nestlé, Dannon)	22.9	24.0	27.0	10.7
Fast food/other restaurant brands	4.0	4.4	6.0	2.6
Other	6.7	6.4	6.8	4.9

¹ This table excludes SFAs that prohibit all food and beverage marketing and SFAs whose policies restrict food and beverage marketing to only foods/beverages sold on the school campus per Smart Snacks in School or more stringent standards. The table includes SFAs with other types of marketing policies or no marketing policy. The universe of marketed products included foods and beverages available outside of school meals.

² Multiple responses were allowed.

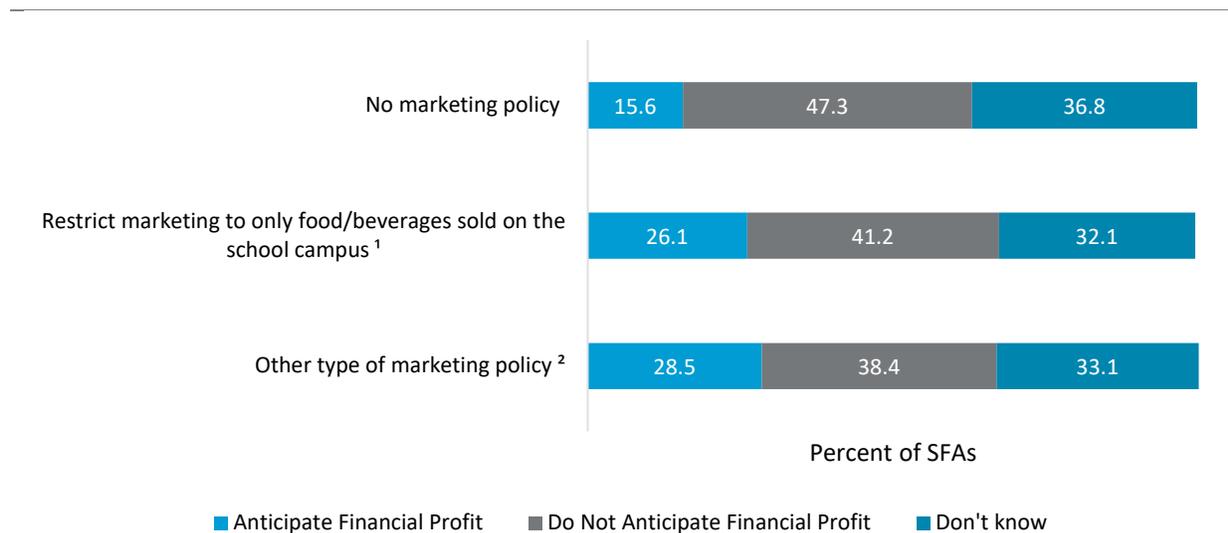
³ Response options are presented as stated from the survey.

Note: Elementary schools were defined as schools composed of any span of grades from kindergarten through 6th grade; middle (or junior high) schools as schools that had no grade lower than 6 and no grade higher than 9; high schools as schools that had no grade lower than 9 and continued through 12th grade; and “other” schools were defined as schools that do not meet the elementary, middle or junior high, or high school definition.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 8.1, 8.3, and 8.4.

SFAs that allowed food and beverage marketing were asked, based on the types of marketing policies they reported, whether they anticipated financial profits from the marketing. Approximately 24 percent of SFAs had no marketing policy (Table 7-2). Of these, nearly half anticipated no profits (Figure 7-1). However, a lower percentage of SFAs with no marketing policy reported that they anticipate profits (16 percent) compared to SFAs that restricted marketing to only foods/beverages sold on the school campus (26 percent), or SFAs whose policies allowed broader marketing (29 percent). About one-third of all SFAs that allowed food and beverage marketing did not know if they would profit financially.

Figure 7-1—Among SFAs that allow food and beverage marketing, SFAs' perceptions of anticipated financial profits from food and beverage marketing, by type of marketing policy in SY 2015–16



¹ Per Smart Snacks in School or more stringent standards.

² SFAs that allowed marketing of foods and beverages beyond what is permitted to be sold on campus (per Smart Snacks in School standards).

Note: This figure is based on information from 1,243 SFAs, which represent 8,486 SFAs in the population that allow food and beverage marketing and indicated whether they anticipated financial profits from marketing.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 8.1, 8.3, 8.4, and 8.5.

7.3.2 Smarter Lunchrooms Strategies

The majority of SFAs had at least one school implementing at least one Smarter Lunchroom strategy in SY 2015–16 (see Table 7-4 and the Background section of this chapter for more details about the Smarter Lunchrooms strategies). Two-thirds of SFAs were implementing at least one strategy in Promoting Vegetables and Salad (66 percent). Slightly less than two-thirds of SFAs were implementing at least one strategy in Focusing on Fruit and Creating School Synergies (both 65 percent), Moving More White Milk (64 percent), and Entrée of the Day and Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals (both 60 percent).

Table 7-4— SFAs implementing at least one Smarter Lunchroom strategy by category in SY 2015–16

Smarter Lunchrooms Strategy Category	Percent of SFAs
Promoting Vegetables & Salad	65.5
Focusing on Fruit	64.5
Creating School Synergies ¹	64.6
Moving More White Milk	64.0
Entrée of the Day	59.8
Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals	59.7

¹ Creating School Synergies is a Smarter Lunchrooms strategy that aims to improve the lunchroom environment by improving signs and communications, the lunchroom atmosphere, and à la carte options, as well as increasing student involvement and school recognition. This strategy is now broken into the following Smarter Lunchrooms strategies: “Lunchroom Atmosphere,” “Student Involvement,” and “School Community Involvement.”

Note: 1,984 SFAs provided information for this table, which represents 14,824 SFAs in the population.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, survey questions 11.1–11.7.

SFAs that were aware of the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement (67 percent) were asked to report the proportion of schools implementing each Smarter Lunchrooms strategy. SFAs reported that on average, most schools were implementing at least one Smarter Lunchroom strategy in each category (Mean range of 83 to 92 percent of schools; Table 7-5).

Questions remaining for future research are: how and in what combinations specific Smarter Lunchrooms strategies are implemented; how frequently strategies are applied; how skillfully they are used; and the perceived effectiveness of the strategies.

Table 7-5—Among SFAs implementing Smarter Lunchroom strategies, the mean and median reported proportion of schools within the SFA implementing at least one strategy, by category in SY 2015–16

Smarter Lunchrooms Strategy Category	Mean Proportion of Implementing Schools¹	Median Proportion of Implementing Schools¹
Promoting Vegetables & Salad	92.3	99.4
Focusing on Fruit	92.1	99.4
Creating School Synergies ¹	91.2	99.4
Moving More White Milk	90.8	99.4
Entrée of the Day	83.3	99.3
Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals	83.1	98.7

¹ Estimates are based on the proportion of implementing schools reported by SFAs.

² Creating School Synergies is a Smarter Lunchrooms strategy that aims to improve the lunchroom environment by improving signs and communications, the lunchroom atmosphere, and à la carte options, as well as increasing student involvement and school recognition. This strategy is now broken into the following Smarter Lunchrooms strategies: “Lunchroom Atmosphere,” “Student Involvement,” and “School Community Involvement.”

Note: 1,461 SFAs provided information for this table, which represents 9,892 SFAs in the population. This table only includes the 67 percent of SFAs that were aware of the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement and implemented at least one strategy in at least one category listed.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, survey questions 11.1–11.7.

8 School Food Service Equipment

8.1 Background

From the beginning of NSLP in 1946 through the early 1980s, the Federal Government made substantial short-term funds available to schools for kitchen equipment. After more than two decades when no such funding was provided, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) authorized a one-time appropriation of \$100 million for equipment assistance to SFAs participating in NSLP in FY 2009.⁸⁸ In late 2009, USDA received a one-time appropriation of \$25 million through the FY 2010 Agriculture Appropriations Act for NSLP Equipment Assistance Grants. Like the ARRA-funded grants, the FY 2010 NSLP Equipment Assistance Grants targeted those SFAs with 50 percent or more of students approved for F/RP meals. They also targeted SFAs that had not received an ARRA grant for NSLP equipment assistance.⁸⁹

The FY 2013 Agriculture Appropriations Act authorized \$9.7 million for FY 2013 NSLP Equipment Assistance Grants,⁹⁰ while the FY 2015 Agriculture Appropriations Act appropriated \$25 million for equipment purchase assistance grants. Funds were intended for purchase of equipment that eligible SFAs could use to meet the updated meal patterns, which called for more fruits and vegetables in school meals, improved food safety, and expanded access.⁹¹

The awards were intended to assist eligible SFAs to purchase equipment that met at least one of the following criteria:⁹²

- Equipment that lent itself to improving the quality of school food service meals that met the dietary guidelines (e.g., purchasing an equipment alternative to a deep fryer)
- Equipment that improved the safety of food served in the school meal programs (e.g., cold/hot holding equipment, dishwashing equipment, refrigerators, milk coolers, freezers, blast chillers)
- Equipment that improved the overall energy efficiency of the school food service operations (e.g., purchase of an energy-efficient walk-in freezer to replace an outdated, energy-demanding freezer)
- Equipment that allowed SFAs to support expanded participation in a school meals program (e.g., equipment for serving meals in a nontraditional setting or for better utilization of cafeteria space)

⁸⁸ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2009, March 9). *Memo SP 18-2009: 2009 equipment assistance grants for school food authorities*. Retrieved from <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/cn/SP18-2009os.pdf>

⁸⁹ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2010, January 14). *Memo SP 14-2010: FY2010 National School Lunch Program (NSLP) equipment assistance grants for school food authorities*. Retrieved from <https://childnutrition.ncpublicschools.gov/regulations-policies/usda-policy-memos/2010/sp-14-2010.pdf>

⁹⁰ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2013, December 18). *Memo SP 14-2014: National School Lunch Program (NSLP) equipment assistance grants—fiscal years (FY) 2010 and 2013*. Retrieved from <https://childnutrition.ncpublicschools.gov/regulations-policies/usda-policy-memos/2014/sp-14-2014.pdf>

⁹¹ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2015, March 6). *Memo SP 26-2015: Fiscal Year 2015 National School Lunch Program equipment assistance grants for school food authorities*. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cn/SP26-2015os.pdf>

⁹² (U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, 2009).

USDA FNS sought a geographic balance (in addition to the criteria noted above), selecting 16 SAs with the greatest need for equipment assistance to receive equipment grants. These States (and one Territory) were Arkansas, California, the District of Columbia, Guam, Illinois, Maine, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and Washington.⁹³

To better understand what equipment was purchased using the grant funds, in this data collection, FNS wanted to determine:

- Whether SFAs are using food service equipment grants
- What equipment is being purchased with food service equipment grants

Equipment needs vary among schools and districts because operational needs, school menus, and the types of foods purchased vary. For example, a school nutrition program that uses more convenience foods might need fewer mixers and more microwaves for food preparation. Pieces of equipment also need to be versatile in use, e.g., a combination oven-steamer which can be used as an oven or a steamer. This gives schools the opportunity to serve healthy alternatives, like steamed vegetables or baked potatoes, as opposed to less healthy options like deep-fried foods. Although equipment prices have declined over the years, these machines are still too expensive for some SFAs, and assistance from the food equipment grants is very valuable.

To understand the equipment replacement needs, FNS requested an examination of:

- What food service equipment needs replacement?

Equipment grants support the ability of kitchens to serve quality meals, while also improving efficiency and safety. Functioning holding equipment and refrigeration are key to the safety, quality, shelf life, and sensory perception of the food served in school nutrition operations. Refrigerators and freezers are among the most expensive pieces of equipment purchased in school nutrition kitchens. They are considered “main use” items of equipment and represent one of the most durable tools. The equipment chosen will therefore affect kitchen operations for many years.⁹⁴

8.1.1 Capitalization Threshold

Equipment purchased by an SFA can be considered a capital asset; it is an investment that provides value to the district over a long period of time. Both Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance and generally accepted accounting principles identify equipment as a capital asset. For the Equipment Assistance grants, OMB guidance and USDA regulations define “equipment” as any item of nonexpendable personal property with a useful life of more than 1 year, and an acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the Federal per-unit *capitalization threshold* of \$5,000, or a lower threshold set by State- or local-level regulations.⁹⁵ A capitalization threshold is a financial reporting tool where anything at or above the value assigned to the threshold is considered a capital asset; it would otherwise be treated as a simple expense.⁹⁶ Considering equipment a capital asset is important because assets

⁹³ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, 2013).

⁹⁴ National Food Service Management Institute. (2009). *Equipment purchasing and facility design for school nutrition programs*. Retrieved from <http://nfsmi.org/documentlibraryfiles/PDF/20090312115009.pdf>

⁹⁵ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2017). *State Agency prior approval process for school food authority (SFA) equipment purchases*. Retrieved from <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/cn/SP31-2014os.pdf>

⁹⁶ Accounting Tools. (2017). *Capitalization policy*. Retrieved from <http://www.accountingtools.com/capitalization-policy>

require more administrative paperwork for inventory and accounting purposes. To understand the limitations of the \$5,000 capitalization thresholds, FNS wanted to know:

- What is the feasibility of lower State and local thresholds on equipment purchases?
- Is the equipment purchasing threshold appropriate or outdated for the nature of program operations?

As shown in the results below, FNS may wish to consider offering more TA to educate food service staff about capitalization thresholds and the effects they have on the school food service programs. This is a complex issue and further research is needed to understand whether having more flexibility to invest in smaller items (i.e., those costing less than \$5,000; examples could include large holding baskets for fruit displays, cafeteria signage) could help SFAs to not only provide meals more efficiently, but also in a more appealing way.

The largest SFAs reported the highest equipment replacement needs; subsequently, more very large SFAs reported receiving the equipment grants. SFAs overwhelmingly reported needs for equipment replacement in three categories: walk-in refrigerators or freezers; serving equipment; and oven, skillets, and broilers. These three equipment categories were also reported as the top three items purchased using the funds awarded under the equipment grant.

8.2 Results

The remainder of Chapter 9 presents national estimates based on SFA responses to the CN-OPS-II Year 1 survey. These estimates aim to provide an overall picture of how the funds are being used; whether the funds are adequate for meeting the needs of SFAs, and for meeting the longer-term health goals of FNS; and whether the capitalization thresholds are adequate for tracking assets. Data presented in Chapter 9 address the following research questions:

- What food service equipment needs replacement?
 - SFAs were asked if any schools in their SFA had food service equipment that needed replacement for SY 2015–16 (Table 8-1 and Table 8-2).
- Are SFAs using food service equipment grants? What equipment is being purchased with food service equipment grants?
 - SFAs were asked if they received an equipment assistance grant in SY 2014–15 under the FY 2014 Agriculture Appropriations Act. SFAs that indicated they received the grant were asked to select the specific equipment types the SFA purchased or planned to purchase using the grant funds (Table 8-3).
- What is the feasibility of lower State or local thresholds on equipment purchases?
 - SFAs were asked if the per-unit capitalization threshold was lower than the Federal requirement for SY 2015–16 (Table 8-4).
- Is the equipment purchase threshold appropriate or outdated for program operations?
 - Further exploration is needed to determine whether having more flexibility to invest in smaller items (less than \$5,000) could help SFAs not only provide meals more efficiently, but also in a more appealing way.

About 59 percent of SFAs reported they had food service equipment replacement needs (see Table 8-1). Among very large SFAs, 92 percent reported they needed food service equipment replaced. This is significantly larger than among small SFAs (45 percent) and medium SFAs (69 percent). Suburban SFAs

(66 percent) reported significantly higher food service equipment replacement needs than urban/city SFAs (51 percent). SFAs in the Southeast region (74 percent) also reported significantly greater needs for food service equipment replacement than those in the Mid-Atlantic (55 percent), Midwest (57 percent), Mountain Plains (51 percent), and Western (54 percent) regions.

Table 8-1—Percentage of SFAs that stated food service equipment replacements were needed for SY 2015–16, by SFA characteristics

	Percent of SFAs	Weighted <i>n</i> (Unweighted <i>n</i>)
All SFAs	59.4	14,750 (1,973)
SFA Size¹		
a. Small (1–999 students)	45.4	7,403 (597)
b. Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	^a 69.1	5,402 (971)
c. Large (5,000–24,999 students)	^{a,b} 84.4	1,638 (332)
d. Very large (≥25,000 students)	^{a,b} 91.6	308 (73)
Urbanicity¹		
e. City	^f 51.0	1,740 (223)
f. Suburban	66.2	3,260 (545)
g. Town	65.5	2,509 (435)
h. Rural	57.4	6,647 (726)
Percent of Students Approved for F/RP Meals		
i. Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	57.4	4,270 (600)
j. Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	60.5	4,289 (586)
k. High (≥60 percent F/RP)	59.9	6,191 (787)
Region¹		
l. Mid-Atlantic	54.6	1,424 (215)
m. Midwest	57.2	3,746 (504)
n. Mountain Plains	^o 50.8	2,275 (267)
o. Northeast	69.8	1,668 (223)
p. Southeast	^{l,m,n,r} 73.5	1,207 (220)
q. Southwest	64.3	2,240 (256)
r. Western	54.4	2,190 (288)

¹An overall statistically significant difference by SFA characteristic ($p < 0.05$) was observed.

Note: Subgroup estimates with letter superscripts indicate a significant difference (Bonferroni p -value < 0.05) in pair-wise tests between that subgroup and the subgroup denoted by the letter.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, question 9.1.

Those SFAs that needed equipment replaced were asked to report all the food service equipment that needed to be replaced. Refrigerators or freezers (62 percent) were most frequently reported as needing

replacement (see Table 8-2). More than half of the SFAs also reported needing serving equipment (51 percent) and ovens, skillets, and broilers (50 percent) replaced. These results align with USDA's emphasis on more fresh, healthy, and visually appealing foods. These three pieces of equipment can improve daily meal preparation. By using ovens, kitchens use fewer fatty oils by not deep frying, and the appropriate serving equipment can help kitchen staff be more efficient in serving and delivering meals from cook tops to plates. Finally, by replacing old refrigerators or freezers, the food can be better stored, keeping it fresh and maintaining the nutritional value longer. Replacing kitchen equipment can also provide energy efficiencies and save costs.

Table 8-2—Among SFAs that need equipment replaced, percentage that need to replace specific food service equipment in SY 2015–16

Food Service Equipment Needing Replacement^{1,2}	Percent of SFAs
Refrigerators or freezers	61.6
Serving equipment	50.5
Oven, skillets, broilers	50.1
Smallware (i.e., utensils, trays, or tableware)	44.8
Serving counters or carts	40.5
Steam equipment	36.8
Dishwashers	35.2
Food preparation equipment	33.3
Cleaning equipment	20.0
Other	7.5

¹ Multiple responses were allowed.

² Response options are presented as stated from the survey.

Note: 1,314 SFAs provided information for this table, which represents 8,757 SFAs in the population.

Source: SFA Director Survey, SY 2015–16, questions 9.1 and 9.2.

Among SFAs that received an equipment assistance grant, about half had used, or were planning to use, the funds to purchase ovens, skillets, and broilers (see Table 8-3).

Table 8-3—Among SFAs that received an equipment assistance grant in SY 2014–15, food service equipment that was or will be purchased with the grant

Food Service Equipment that Was or Will Be Purchased with the Grant^{1,2}	Percent of SFAs
Ovens, skillets, broilers	50.6
Refrigerators or freezers	39.1
Serving equipment ³	36.2
Steam equipment	27.8
Food preparation equipment	24.2
Serving counters or carts	19.3
Dishwashers	15.3
Other	7.2
Smallware (i.e., utensils, trays, or tableware)	4.9
Cleaning equipment ⁴	1.5
No response	3.3

¹ Multiple responses were allowed.
² Response options are presented as stated from the survey.
³ Serving equipment included cold or hot food tables, warming cabinets, display cases, etc.
⁴ Cleaning equipment included pot, pan, and utensil washers; food waste disposers and pulpers; trash compactors; and recycling equipment.
Note: 229 SFAs indicated they had received an equipment assistance grant, which represents 1,505 SFAs in the population.
Source: SFA Director Survey, SY 2015–16, questions 9.3 and 9.4.

An estimated 8,757 SFAs reported that they needed food service equipment replaced. Among those SFAs, approximately 30 percent had per-unit capitalization thresholds of at least \$5,000 in SY 2015–16, while 8 percent had thresholds below the Federal requirement (see Table 8-4). Strikingly, 60 percent of SFAs reported that they did not know their per-unit capitalization threshold. This indicates a teaching opportunity to better track and monitor food service assets.

Table 8-4—Percent of SFAs reporting per-unit capitalization threshold lower than the Federal Requirement, among SFAs that need equipment replaced in SY 2015–16

Per-Unit Capitalization Threshold is Lower than the Federal Requirement of \$5,000	Percent of SFAs
Yes	7.6
No	30.4
Don't know	60.0
No response	2.0

Note: 1,314 SFAs provided information for this table, which represents 8,757 SFAs in the population.
Source: SFA Director Survey, SY 2015–16, questions 9.1 and 9.5.

9 Concluding Remarks

CN-OPS-II is a multiyear study designed to collect data on CN programs in SY 2015–16 through SY 2018–19 from SA CN directors and SFA directors using web surveys. The surveys employ a modular design wherein some modules are repeated each year, facilitating longitudinal analysis, while other modules are offered in just one year to gain insight on a topic for a specific point in time. Several modules contain questions in common with the earlier SN-OPS, enabling comparisons of some national estimates over periods of time, beginning in SY 2011–12. As this is the first year of CN-OPS-II, this report presented cross-sectional estimates for SY 2015–16 and a retrospective look at trends for some variables based on data from SY 2011–12 through SY 2015–16.

CN-OPS-II has been designed to collect data from the largest and most representative sample possible, to provide USDA with the most robust conclusions regarding the operations of its CN programs. The design was intended to ensure that SFAs of all sizes and types had an avenue to describe their operations, including emerging needs and challenges. To capture the most accurate data, survey links could be shared across multiple staff and/or divisions within an organization; the entire survey did not have to be completed by the person who received the initial survey invitation, further expanding the reach of the study. The study design of CN-OPS-II integrates all types of SFAs' and SAs' contributions of information related to the administration of their individual CN programs, and CN-OPS-II results complement findings from other school nutrition studies.

As with all survey-based research, the limitations of CN-OPS-II should be taken into consideration while interpreting findings. First, it is possible that a respondent bias towards providing a socially desirable survey response could exist. However, this is not likely to present a major concern in CN-OPS-II because the surveys were conducted by an external, non-Federal organization, and no punitive actions were tied to responses provided by either respondent type.

Second, surveys rarely achieve 100 percent response rates; all SAs were selected for the study and all responded. Although less than 100 percent, the SFA response rate of 81.8 percent was still very good for a web-based survey. SFAs were selected based on characteristics including size, percent of students approved for F/RP meals, urbanicity, and FNS region. These selection criteria provided a nationally representative sample, and specifically allowed for small SFAs and those in rural regions to have a “voice.” However, variations in characteristics between SFAs that responded and those that did not could potentially have introduced bias. CN-OPS-II addressed this by nonresponse analysis and appropriate adjustments to the sample weights (Appendix C).

Results from the CN-OPS-II surveys provide an in-depth assessment of USDA's CN programs. This information is crucial to understand the successful aspects of the programs, as well as where there are opportunities for improvement. As legislation is enacted and policies change, CN-OPS-II quantifies the operational implications of such changes at a national level. Additionally, it provides new insight on issues that may need further review or investigation by FNS.

Appendix A. State Child Nutrition (CN) Director Survey

OMB Number: 0584-0607

Expiration Date: 4/30/2019

Child Nutrition Program Operations Study-II CNOPS

State Child Nutrition Director
Survey 2015-2016

FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY

Please complete the survey at:

<http://www.2mresearch.com/cnops2state>

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 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 confidence; 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 participation 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 (1 hour) 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. John Endahl or Dr. Devin Wallace-Williams

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, simply close out of your browser.** Your answers will be saved, but you must remember to click the "Save & Continue" button to save the response to the current question before closing your browser.
- 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.
- **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 need a colleague to complete a section of the survey, you should provide them with the same login credentials.** They do not need separate login credentials.
- 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 support@2mresearch.com or call **1-866-465-7738 (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.

Date: |_|_|/|_|_|/|_|_|_|_|
Month Day Year

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: (|_|_|_|_|) - |_|_|_|_| - |_|_|_|_|_| (|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|)
Area Code Number Extension

Email Address: _____

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: (|_|_|_|_|) - |_|_|_|_| - |_|_|_|_|_| (|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|)
Area Code Number Extension

Email Address: _____

1. FOOD SERVICE ADMINISTRATION

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.

1.1. 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?

MARK ALL THAT APPLY

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

The next few questions are about schools in your State currently operating under Provision 2, Provision 3, and the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) in 2015-2016 school year.

1.2. For each of the following provisions, enter the total number of schools currently operating under each provision, and the number of schools operating the NSLP and/or SBP under each provision.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

	PROVISION 2	PROVISION 3
a. Number of schools operating both NSLP and SBP	_ _ _	_ _ _
b. Number of schools operating NSLP only.....	_ _ _	_ _ _
c. Number of schools operating SBP only	_ _ _	_ _ _
TOTAL	FILLS WITH SUM OF A-C	FILLS WITH SUM OF A-C

1.3.1. How many schools are currently operating under the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)?

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

|_|_|_| SCHOOLS OPERATING UNDER CEP

SKIP IF 1.3.1 = 0

1.3.2. Next, we would like to know how long schools in your State have been using CEP. Of the [FILL 1.3.1 VALUE] CEP schools, how many have operated 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 in your State.

1.4. Does your State have any charter schools?

1 Yes

2 No SKIP TO 1.7

1.5. How many charter schools are currently operating in your State?

|_|_|_| CHARTER SCHOOLS

1.6. How many of these charter schools are participating in the NSLP and SBP programs?

	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS
a. Charter schools operating <u>NSLP only</u>	_ _ _
b. Charter schools operating <u>SBP only</u>	_ _ _
c. Charter schools operating both NSLP and SBP.....	_ _ _

1.7. Does your State have any residential child care institutions (RCCIs)?

NW 1 Yes

2 No SKIP TO 2.1

1.8. How many RCCIs are currently operating in your State? Please include RCCIs with and without schools on location.

NEW |_|_|_| RCCIs



2. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

This section is about the Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Programs personnel that went into effect on July 1, 2015. Questions pertain to the 2015-2016 school year unless specified otherwise.

2.1 Did your State Agency provide 18 or more hours of various training topics to SFA personnel for the 2015-2016 school year? The training topics for SFA personnel include, but are not limited to: administrative practices, accuracy of approvals for free and reduced priced meals, identification of reimbursable meals at the point of service, nutrition, health and food safety standards, and the efficient and effective use of USDA foods.

- 1 Yes SKIP TO 2.2
- 2 No

2.1a. Does your State Agency anticipate providing 18 hours of training to SFAs by the end of the 2015-2016 school year?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

2.2 For each of the following topic areas, did your State Agency provide any training or technical assistance to SFAs for the 2015-2016 school year requirements?

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	YES	NO
a. Administrative practices (this includes training in application, certification, verification, meal counting and meal claiming procedures).....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Accuracy of approvals for free and reduced price meals	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. Identification of reimbursable meals at the point of service.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Nutrition.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
e. Health and food safety standards.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
f. Efficient and effective use of USDA foods.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
g. Other (Specify)..... _____	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>

2.2a-g Who within the State Agency was responsible for providing training or technical assistance for SFA personnel for [FILL 2.2A-G IF =YES] during the 2015-2016 school year?

- 1 State Child Nutrition Director
- 2 State Child Nutrition Office staff
- 3 Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) (formerly the National Foodservice Management Institute)
- 4 Other (Specify) _____

2.3 This question is about feedback you may have received from SFAs on the continuing education and training activities required under the new professional standards. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=none and 5=all, what proportion of SFA feedback would you estimate is in agreement with the following statements?

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	1 (NONE)	2	3	4	5 (ALL)	NO SFA FEEDBACK RECEIVED
a. Activities are a good use of time, even given other work priorities.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	na <input type="checkbox"/>
b. There are enough opportunities to engage in these activities.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	na <input type="checkbox"/>
c. The activities do not pose a financial burden.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	na <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Completing required training activities is feasible for part time staff	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	na <input type="checkbox"/>
e. It is clear which training topics are relevant to school nutrition employees' jobs.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	na <input type="checkbox"/>
f. It is clear what types of training can be counted towards training requirements	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	na <input type="checkbox"/>
g. Employees have adequate internet access to complete training activities	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	na <input type="checkbox"/>
h. SFAs have enough manpower to <u>monitor</u> training activities	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	na <input type="checkbox"/>
i. SFAs have enough manpower to <u>document</u> training activities	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	na <input type="checkbox"/>
j. Other (<i>Specify</i>)..... _____	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	na <input type="checkbox"/>

2.4 Did you (the State Child Nutrition director) complete 15 or more hours of continuing education or training in core areas, such as nutrition, operations, administration, communications, or marketing?

- 1 Yes SKIP TO 2.5
- 2 No

2.4a. Do you anticipate completing at least 15 hours of continuing education/training in core areas by the end of the 2015-2016 school year?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

2.5.1. What differences, if any, has your State experienced with respect to challenges in meeting the training requirements in SFAs with RCCIs? Please respond separately for small, mid-size, and large LEAs.

SFAS WITH RCCIS	
a. Small LEAs (2,499 or less students)	1 <input type="checkbox"/> No difference in meeting training requirements in SFAs with RCCIs 2 <input type="checkbox"/> More difficult to meet training requirements in SFAs with RCCIs 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Easier to meet training requirements in SFAs with RCCIs 4 <input type="checkbox"/> NA / no SFAs with RCCIs
b. Mid-size LEAs (2,500-9,999 students)	1 <input type="checkbox"/> No difference in meeting training requirements in SFAs with RCCIs 2 <input type="checkbox"/> More difficult to meet training requirements in SFAs with RCCIs 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Easier to meet training requirements in SFAs with RCCIs 4 <input type="checkbox"/> NA / no SFAs with RCCIs
c. Large LEAs (10,000 or more students)	1 <input type="checkbox"/> No difference in meeting training requirements in SFAs with RCCIs 2 <input type="checkbox"/> More difficult to meet training requirements in SFAs with RCCIs 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Easier to meet training requirements in SFAs with RCCIs 4 <input type="checkbox"/> NA / no SFAs with RCCIs

2.5.2. What differences, if any, has your State experienced with respect to challenges in meeting the training requirements in SFAs with charter schools? Please respond separately for small, mid-size, and large LEAs.

SFAS WITH CHARTER SCHOOLS	
a. Small LEAs (2,499 or less students)	1 <input type="checkbox"/> No difference in meeting training requirements in SFAs with charter schools 2 <input type="checkbox"/> More difficult to meet training requirements in SFAs with charter schools 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Easier to meet training requirements in SFAs with charter schools 4 <input type="checkbox"/> NA / no SFAs with charter schools
b. Mid-size LEAs (2,500-9,999 students)	1 <input type="checkbox"/> No difference in meeting training requirements in SFAs with charter schools 2 <input type="checkbox"/> More difficult to meet training requirements in SFAs with charter schools 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Easier to meet training requirements in SFAs with charter schools 4 <input type="checkbox"/> NA / no SFAs with charter schools
c. Large LEAs (10,000 or more students)	1 <input type="checkbox"/> No difference in meeting training requirements in SFAs with charter schools 2 <input type="checkbox"/> More difficult to meet training requirements in SFAs with charter schools 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Easier to meet training requirements in SFAs with charter schools 4 <input type="checkbox"/> NA / no SFAs with charter schools

2.6 For each of following methods of documenting the continuing education and training activities your State Agency staff completed, please indicate your current or expected use of the method by the end of the 2015-2016 school year.

	CURRENTLY USING	NOT CURRENTLY USING BUT EXPECT TO USE BY THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR	NOT CURRENTLY USING AND DO NOT EXPECT TO USE BY THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR
a. The FNS Professional Standards Training Tracking Tool	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Another computer-based tracking tool (besides the FNS Professional Standards Training Tracking Tool)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. College transcripts or diplomas	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Food safety certifications or other training certificates	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
e. Training attendance sign-in sheets	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
f. Training agendas	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
g. Other method (<i>Specify</i>)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>

For the following questions, please think about the qualifications listed in job descriptions used to hire new SFA directors in your State.

2.7. Does your State require that new SFA directors have at least 8 hours of food safety training completed not more than 5 years prior or within 30 days of employee’s start date?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

2.8. In small LEAs (2,499 or less students), do new SFA directors need to meet at least one of the credential requirements below in order to be hired?

- Bachelor's degree with an academic major or concentration in food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business or a related field.
- Bachelor's degree in any academic major/area of concentration *and either* a State-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors or at least 1 year of relevant school nutrition program experience.
- Associate’s degree with academic major or concentration in food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related field; *and* at least one year of relevant school nutrition programs experience.
- High school diploma (or GED) *and* 3 years of relevant experience in school nutrition programs.

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

2.9. Does your State currently require that new SFA directors in small LEAs who are hired without an associate's degree work towards attaining an associate's degree upon hiring?

- 1 Yes SKIP TO 2.10
2 No

2.9a. Do you anticipate having this requirement in the future?

- 1 Yes
2 No

2.10. In mid-sized LEAs (2,500-9,999 students) do new SFA directors need to meet at least one of the credential requirements below in order to be hired?

- Bachelor's degree with an academic major or concentration in food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business or a related field.
- Bachelor's degree in any academic major/area of concentration *and* a State-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors.
- Bachelor's degree in any academic major *and* at least 2 years of relevant school nutrition program experience.
- Associate's degree with academic major/concentration in food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business or a related field *and* at least 2 years of relevant school nutrition program experience.

- 1 Yes
2 No

2.11. Does your State currently require that new SFA directors in mid-sized LEAs who are hired without a bachelor's degree work towards attaining a bachelor's degree upon hiring?

- 1 Yes SKIP TO 2.12
2 No

2.11a. Do you anticipate having this requirement in the future?

- 1 Yes
2 No

2.12. In large LEAs (10,000 or more students) do new SFA directors need to meet at least one of the credential requirements below in order to be hired?

- Bachelor's degree with an academic major or concentration in food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business or a related field.
- Bachelor's degree in any academic major/area of concentration *and* a State-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors.
- Bachelor's degree in any academic major *and* at least 5 years of experience in management of school nutrition programs.

1 Yes

2 No

2.13 Does your State currently require that new SFA directors in large LEAs (10,000 or more students) meet the following requirements at the time of hiring?

Current requirement?

	YES	NO
a. At least 3 credit hours at the university level in food service management?	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. At least 3 credit hours at the university level in nutritional sciences?	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. A master's degree or willingness to work towards a master's degree?	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. At least one year of school nutrition management experience?	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>

2.13a Does your State anticipate having the following requirement(s) for new SFA directors in large LEAs (10,000 or more students) at the time of hiring in the future?

PROGRAMMER LOGIC: IF 2.13 = YES OR MISSING THEN DO NOT ASK

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	YES	NO
a. At least 3 credit hours at the university level in food service management?	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. At least 3 credit hours at the university level in nutritional sciences?	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. A master's degree or willingness to work towards a master's degree?	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. At least one year of school nutrition management experience?	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>

The next questions ask about the challenges your State Agency may have heard about in meeting the hiring requirements for new SFA directors.

2.14. Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	AGREE	DISAGREE	NO SFA OR LEA FEEDBACK RECEIVED
a. It is difficult to find qualified applicants because the position emphasizes candidate degrees more heavily than experience	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	na <input type="checkbox"/>
b. It is difficult to find qualified applicants in small or rural SFAs with smaller applicant pools.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	na <input type="checkbox"/>
c. SFAs are struggling to adequately finance SFA director salaries.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	na <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Other (<i>specify</i>)..... _____	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	na <input type="checkbox"/>

3. 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.

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

MARK ALL THAT APPLY

- 1 I am the State director of school nutrition programs
- 2 I am the State director of food distribution programs
- 3 Other (*Specify*) _____
- 4 I am not the Child Nutrition Director for my State

(*Specify position*) _____

3.2. What was the start date for your position as the State Child Nutrition Director?

Please choose the month and year of your start date below.

|_|_| / |_|_|_|_| MONTH/YEAR

3.3. 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.

|_|_| YEAR(S) |_|_| MONTH(S)

3.4. What is the highest level of education you completed?

- 1 Less than high school SKIP TO 3.6
- 2 High school (or GED) SKIP TO 3.6
- 3 Some college, no degree SKIP TO 3.6
- 4 Associate's degree
- 5 Bachelor's degree
- 6 Master's degree
- 7 Graduate credits beyond a Master's degree
- 8 Doctorate

3.5. What was your major in college?

MARK ALL THAT APPLY

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

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

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

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

MARK ALL THAT APPLY

- 1 Food and Nutrition
- 2 Food Service Administration/Management
- 3 Family and Consumer Sciences
- 4 Dietetics
- 5 Culinary Arts
- 6 Nutrition education
- 7 Business
- 8 Other (*Specify*) _____
- 9 Other (*Specify*) _____
- 10 Other (*Specify*) _____

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 support@2mresearch.com or call toll-free at 866.465.7738.



Appendix B. School Food Authority (SFA) Director Survey



Child Nutrition Program Operations Study II

CNOPS

School Food Authority (SFA) Director
Survey 2015-2016

FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY

Please complete the survey at:

<http://www.2mresearch.com/cnops2sfa>

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 confidence; 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 participation 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. John Endahl or Dr. Devin Wallace-Williams

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, simply close out of your browser.** Your answers will be saved, but you must remember to click the "Save & Continue" button to save the response to the current question before closing your browser.
- 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.
- Depending on the staffing structure of your SFA, you may need input from other colleagues to respond to some questions in the survey. **If you need a colleague to complete a section of the survey, you should provide them with the same login credentials.** They do not need separate login credentials.
- **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 support@2mresearch.com or call **1-866-465-7738 (toll-free).**

Back (Button)

Begin your Survey (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.

Date: |_|_| / |_|_| / |_|_|_|_|
Month Day Year

School District Name(s): _____

Please fill in the contact information for the SFA Director below:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: (|_|_|_|) - |_|_|_| - |_|_|_|_| (|_|_|_|_|_|)|
Area Code Number Extension

Email Address: _____

If you are not the SFA Director please provide your name and contact information below:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: |_|_|_|_| - |_|_|_|_| - |_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|
Area Code Number Extension

Email Address: _____



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) Afterschool At-risk Supper Program, and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

For the next two questions, please record your responses separately for:

- **Elementary schools** (schools composed of any span of grades from kindergarten through 6th grade),
- **Middle or junior high schools**(schools that have no grade lower than 6 and no grade higher than 9), and
- **High schools** (schools that have no grade lower than 9 and continue through 12th grade).

If any school does not meet the elementary, middle or junior high, or high school definition, include it in the “other schools” column and describe it briefly on the next page under question 1.1f.

1.1 Please answer the following questions for the 2015-2016 school year.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	MIDDLE OR JUNIOR HIGHS	HIGH SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOLS	TOTAL
a. What is the total number of <u>schools</u> in your SFA?	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	FILLS WITH SUM
b. How many <u>schools</u> in your SFA are participating in both the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)?	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	FILLS WITH SUM
c. How many <u>schools</u> in your SFA are participating in SBP only ? ..	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	FILLS WITH SUM
d. How many <u>schools</u> in your SFA are participating in NSLP only ?	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	FILLS WITH SUM
e. How many <u>schools</u> in your SFA are NOT participating in either SBP or NSLP?.....	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	FILLS WITH SUM

1.1f. Please identify the grade spans (lowest and highest grades) for each “other school” included in the previous question.

1.2 Please answer the following questions for the 2014-2015 school year.

Record your responses separately for:

- **Elementary schools** (schools composed of any span of grades from kindergarten through 6th grade),
- **Middle or junior high schools** (schools that have no grade lower than 6 and no grade higher than 9), and
- **High schools** (schools that have no grade lower than 9 and continue through 12th grade).

If any school does not meet the elementary, middle or junior high, or high school definition, include it in the “other schools” column and describe it briefly on the next page under question 1.2f.

1.2.1. If the number of schools participating (overall and in each program) for the 2014-2015 school year are the same as the 2015-2016 school year, click the box below and go to question 1.3.

Participating schools are the same in both school years

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	MIDDLE OR JUNIOR HIGHS	HIGH SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOLS	TOTAL
a. What was the total number of <u>schools</u> in your SFA?	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	FILLS WITH SUM
b. How many <u>schools</u> in your SFA participated in both the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)?	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	FILLS WITH SUM
c. How many <u>schools</u> in your SFA participated in SBP only ?	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	FILLS WITH SUM
d. How many <u>schools</u> in your SFA participated in NSLP only ?	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	FILLS WITH SUM
e. How many <u>schools</u> in your SFA did NOT participate in either SBP or NSLP?	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	FILLS WITH SUM

1.2f. Please identify the grade spans (lowest and highest grades) for each “other school” included in the previous question.

The following questions deal with participation in the CACFP Afterschool At-Risk Supper Program during the 2015-2016 school year.

1.3 Do any schools in your SFA participate in the CACFP Afterschool At-Risk Supper Program?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No SKIP TO 1.5

1.4 How many schools in your SFA currently participate as sponsors or sites in the CACFP Afterschool At-Risk Supper Program?

Please do not count schools that are expected to participate as sponsors or sites 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 a School Food Authority.

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.

1.4.1 If your SFA is the only CACFP sponsor, please click the box below and enter 0 for the number of schools that participate as sponsors.

- SFA is the only CACFP sponsor

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

- a. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.1a] elementary schools, how many participate as sponsors or sites?.....
- b. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.1a] middle or junior high schools, how many participate as sponsors or sites?
- c. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.1a] high schools, how many participate as sponsors or sites?.....
- d. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.1a] other schools, how many participate as sponsors or sites?.....

NUMBER OF SPONSORS	NUMBER OF SITES

1.5 Do any schools in your SFA not currently participating in the CACFP Afterschool At-Risk Supper Program intend to participate next year (school year 2016-2017)?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No SKIP TO 1.7
- d Don't know SKIP TO 1.7

1.6 Approximately how many additional schools plan to participate next year?

|_|_|_| SCHOOLS

1.7 Is your SFA or are any individual schools in your SFA using strategies to build awareness of the availability of the CACFP Afterschool At-Risk Supper Program among eligible student nonparticipants?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No SKIP TO 1.10
- 3 Don't know SKIP TO 1.10

1.8 What strategies are being used to build awareness of the CACFP Afterschool At-Risk Supper Program specifically among eligible student nonparticipants in your schools?

MARK ALL THAT APPLY

- 1 Mass Mailings
- 2 Newsletters
- 3 Social Media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube)
- 4 Public Service Announcements
- 5 Texting Campaign
- 6 USDA Materials (Flyers, Bookmarks, and Postcards)
- 7 FNS Mapping Tools
- 8 National Hunger Hotline
- 9 Advertising at Family-Friendly Events
- 10 Presentations to Faith-based Organizations
- 11 Community Meetings
- 12 Partnering with Local Agencies
- 13 Other (*Specify*) _____
- 14 None

1.9 Please select the strategies used in your SFA to promote the CACFP Afterschool At-Risk Supper Program to the local community at large.

MARK ALL THAT APPLY

- 1 USDA Materials (Flyers, Bookmarks, and Postcards)
- 2 Advertising at Family-Friendly Events
- 3 Social Media
- 4 Public Service Announcements
- 5 Partnering with Local Agencies
- 6 Presentations to Faith-based Organizations
- 7 Other (*Specify*) _____
- 8 None



The following questions deal with participation in the Summer Food Service Program during the summer of 2015.

1.10 Did any schools in your SFA participate in the 2015 Summer Food Service Program?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No SKIP TO 1.12

1.11 How many schools in your SFA participated as sponsors or sites in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) during the summer of 2015?

A sponsor is an organization that has entered into an agreement with their administering State agencies to assume administrative and financial responsibilities for SFSP 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 a School Food Authority.

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

1.11.1. If your SFA is the only SFSP sponsor, please click the button below and enter 0 for the number of schools that participate as SFSP sponsors.

SFA is the only SFSP sponsor

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

- a. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.1a] elementary schools, how many participated as sponsors or sites?.....
- b. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.1a] middle or junior high schools, how many participated as sponsors or sites?.....
- c. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.1a] high schools, how many participated as sponsors or sites?.....
- d. Of the [WEB PREFILL # FROM 1.1a] other schools, how many participated as sponsors or sites?.....

NUMBER OF SPONSORS	NUMBER OF SITES
_ _ _	_ _ _
_ _ _	_ _ _
_ _ _	_ _ _
_ _ _	_ _ _

1.12 Do any schools in your SFA that did not participate in the Summer Food Service Program in the summer of 2015 intend to participate in the program this summer (in 2016)?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No SKIP TO 1.14
- d Don't know SKIP TO 1.14

1.13 Approximately how many additional schools plan to participate this summer?

|_|_|_| SCHOOLS

1.14 Is your SFA or are any individual schools in your SFA using strategies to build awareness of the availability of Summer Food Service Program among eligible student nonparticipants?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No SKIP TO 1.16
- 3 Don't know SKIP TO 1.16

1.15 What strategies are being used to build awareness of the Summer Food Service Program specifically among eligible student nonparticipants in your schools?

MARK ALL THAT APPLY

- 1 Mass Mailings
- 2 Newsletters
- 3 Social Media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube)
- 4 Public Service Announcements
- 5 Texting Campaign
- 6 USDA Materials (Flyers, Bookmarks, and Postcards)
- 7 FNS Mapping Tools
- 8 National Hunger Hotline
- 9 Advertising at Family-Friendly Events
- 10 Presentations to Faith-based Organizations
- 11 Community Meetings
- 12 Partnering with Local Agencies
- 13 FNS Summer Meal Site Finder
- 14 Other (*Specify*) _____
- 15 None

1.16 Please select the strategies used in your SFA to promote the Summer Food Service Program to the local community at large.

MARK ALL THAT APPLY

- 1 USDA Materials (Flyers, Bookmarks, and Postcards)
- 2 Advertising at Family-Friendly Events
- 3 Social Media
- 4 Public Service Announcements
- 5 Partnering with Local Agencies
- 6 Presentations to Faith-based Organizations
- 7 Other (*Specify*) _____
- 8 None

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 school food authority (SFA) during the 2015-2016 and 2014-2015 school years.

Please record your responses separately for:

- **Elementary schools:** (schools composed of any span of grades from kindergarten through 6th grade),
- **Middle or junior high schools:** (schools that have no grade lower than 6 and no grade higher than 9), and
- **High schools** (schools that have no grade lower than 9 and continue through 12th grade).

If any school does not meet the elementary, middle or junior high, or high school definition, please include it in the “other schools” column.

2.1. Please answer below for the 2015-2016 school year.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	MIDDLE OR JUNIOR HIGHS	HIGH SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOLS
a. As of October 31, what was the total number of students enrolled in your SFA?*	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _
b. How many of the total enrolled students do not have access to SBP?*	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _
c. How many of the total enrolled students do not have access to NSLP?*	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _
d. How many of the total enrolled students were approved to receive free meals?	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _
e. How many of the total enrolled students were approved to receive reduced price meals?	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _
f. What was the total number of students in attendance in October 2015?	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _
g. What was the total number of days that meals were served in October 2015?***	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _

- * The total student enrollment should include prekindergarten and kindergarten students who attend school half 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 there were differences in the number of serving days among schools of the same type, provide the average number of serving days for each school type.

2.2. Please answer below for the 2014-2015 school year.

Record your responses separately for:

- **Elementary schools** (schools composed of any span of grades from kindergarten through 6th grade),
- **Middle or junior high schools** (schools that have no grade lower than 6 and no grade higher than 9), and
- **High schools** (schools that have no grade lower than 9 and continue through 12th grade).

If any school does not meet the elementary, middle or junior high, or high school definition, please include it in the “other schools” column.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	MIDDLE OR JUNIOR HIGHS	HIGH SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOLS
a. As of October 31, what was the total number of students enrolled in your SFA?*	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _
b. How many of the total enrolled students do not have access to SBP?*	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _
c. How many of the total enrolled students do not have access to NSLP?*	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _
d. How many of the total enrolled students were approved to receive free meals?	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _
e. How many of the total enrolled students were approved to receive reduced price meals?	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _
f. What was the total number of students in attendance in October 2014?	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _
g. What was the total number of days that meals were served in October 2014?***	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _

* The total student enrollment should include prekindergarten and kindergarten students who attend school half 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 there were differences in the number of serving days among schools of the same type, provide the average number of serving days for each school type.

The following questions are about the number of schools meals claimed as full price, reduced price, or free during 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years under Provisions 1,2, 3, and the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). The definitions for the mentioned provisions are provided below:

- Provision 1—Reducing certification to once every two years
- Provision 2—Reducing certification to once every four years, with claiming based on derived percentages
- Provision 3—Reducing certification to once every four years, with claiming based on prior funding levels
- Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)—Eliminating household applications in high poverty local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools, with claiming based on direct certification percentages

Please record the number of student lunches and student breakfasts served, indicating whether they were full price, reduced price, or free. If your SFA operates under Provisions 1, 2, or 3 of the NSLP regulations or CEP, then you may indicate the number of meals claimed in each category. Provide this information for 2015-2016 and 2014-15 school year using October as the reference month.

2.3. Enter the number of student breakfasts that were claimed as full price, reduced price, and free breakfasts by school type for the 2015-2016 school year, using October 2015 as the reference month:

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

STUDENT BREAKFASTS	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	MIDDLE OR JUNIOR HIGHS	HIGH SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOLS
a. What was the total number of full price 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?.....	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _

2.4. Enter the number of student lunches that were claimed as full price, reduced price, and free lunches by school type for the 2015-2016 school year, using October 2015 as the reference month:

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

STUDENT LUNCHES	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	MIDDLE OR JUNIOR HIGHS	HIGH SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOLS
a. What was the total number of full price 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?	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _

2.5. Enter the number of student breakfasts that were claimed as full price, reduced price, and free breakfasts by school type for the 2014-2015 school year, using October 2014 as the reference month:

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

STUDENT BREAKFASTS	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	MIDDLE OR JUNIOR HIGHS	HIGH SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOLS
a. What was the total number of full price 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?.....	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _

2.6. Enter the number of student lunches that were claimed as full price, reduced price, and free lunches by school type for the 2014-2015 school year, using October 2014 as the reference month:

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

STUDENT LUNCHES	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	MIDDLE OR JUNIOR HIGHS	HIGH SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOLS
a. What was the total number of full price 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 the meal prices for the 2015-2016 and 2014-2015 school years. When prompted, please record your responses separately for:

- **Elementary schools** (schools composed of any span of grades from kindergarten through 6th grade),
- **Middle or junior high schools** (schools that have no grade lower than 6 and no grade higher than 9), and
- **High schools** (schools that have no grade lower than 9 and continue through 12th grade).

If any school does not meet the elementary, middle or junior High, or high School definition, please include them in the “other schools” column.

3.1. What prices did you charge for full price, reduced price, and adult breakfasts in your SFA at the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year?

If students are not charged for breakfast (for example, schools are operating under Provision 2, Provision 3, or Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), or another funding source covers the meal costs), breakfast is not served at the school type, or your SFA does not have the type of school, please check the appropriate box. If applicable, please still report the prices charged for adult breakfasts.

BREAKFAST PRICES	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	MIDDLE OR JUNIOR HIGHS	HIGH SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOLS
a. Full price breakfast.....	\$ __ . __ __	\$ __ . __ __	\$ __ . __ __	\$ __ . __ __
b. Reduced price breakfast	\$ __ . __ __	\$ __ . __ __	\$ __ . __ __	\$ __ . __ __
c. Breakfast is served at no cost to students at this type of school	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	0 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Adult breakfast	\$ __ . __ __	\$ __ . __ __	\$ __ . __ __	\$ __ . __ __
e. Do not serve breakfast at this type of school	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
f. Do not have this type of school	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>

3.2. What prices did you charge for full price, reduced price, and adult breakfasts in your SFA at the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year?

Record your responses separately for:

- **Elementary schools** (schools composed of any span of grades from kindergarten through 6th grade),
- **Middle or junior high schools** (schools that have no grade lower than 6 and no grade higher than 9), and
- **High schools** (schools that have no grade lower than 9 and continue through 12th grade).

If any school does not meet the elementary, middle or junior high, or high school definition, please include them in the “other schools” column.

3.2.1. If all breakfast prices for the 2014-2015 school year are the same as the 2015-2016 school year, click the box below and go to question 3.3.

Breakfast prices are the same in both school years

BREAKFAST PRICES	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	MIDDLE OR JUNIOR HIGHS	HIGH SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOLS
a. Full price breakfast.....	\$ __ . __ __	\$ __ . __ __	\$ __ . __ __	\$ __ . __ __
b. Reduced price breakfast	\$ __ . __ __	\$ __ . __ __	\$ __ . __ __	\$ __ . __ __
c. Breakfast was served at no cost to students at this type of school	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	0 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Adult breakfast	\$ __ . __ __	\$ __ . __ __	\$ __ . __ __	\$ __ . __ __
e. Do not serve breakfast at this type of school	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
f. Did not have this type of school	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>

4. FOOD SERVICE OPERATIONS

The following questions are about school meal provisions for the **2015-2016** school year. These include:

- **Provision 2**—Reducing certification to once every four years, with claiming based on derived percentages
- **Provision 3**—Reducing certification to once every four years, with claiming based on prior funding levels
- **Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)**—Eliminating household applications in high poverty local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools, with claiming based on direct certification percentages

4.1. Is your SFA implementing CEP district-wide in all schools?

- 1 Yes SKIP TO 4.3
 0 No

4.2. How many schools are operating under the following provisions for NSLP and SBP?

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

SPECIAL PROVISION OPTION	NSLP ONLY	SBP ONLY	BOTH NSLP AND SBP
a. Provision 2	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _
b. Provision 3	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _
c. CEP			_ _ _

IF ANSWER TO 4.1c = 0, THEN DO NOT ASK 4.2c.

4.3. We would like to know how long schools have been using each provision. Enter the number of schools that have operated continuously under each provision for the specified length of time. Please count schools in one column only.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

SPECIAL PROVISION OPTION	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS
a. Provision 2	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _
b. Provision 3	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _
	LESS THAN 1 YEAR		1 YEAR	2 OR MORE YEARS	
c. CEP	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _

IF 4.1c>1 THEN R SHOULD RECEIVE 4.3 AND 4.4. IF 4.0= YES OR 4.1c = 0 or 1 THEN RESPONDENT SHOULD SKIP 4.3. and 4.4.

4.4. Did any schools in your SFA group together to participate in CEP?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No SKIP TO 4.5

4.5. How did schools in your SFA group together to participate in CEP?

- 1 All schools in SFA grouped together
- 2 Some, but not all schools grouped together

SKIP 4.5 AND 4.6 IF 4.0=YES

4.6. Does your SFA have any schools eligible for CEP that are not currently participating in this provision during the 2015-2016 school year?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No SKIP TO 5.1

4.7. Did CEP-eligible schools elect to not participate in CEP because participation would not be financially worthwhile, or it would impose financial risk?

- 1 Yes (please briefly describe why)

- 2 No

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 the 2015-2016 school year.

5.1. How many students enrolled in your SFA were directly certified as of October 31, 2015?

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

|_|_|_| , |_|_|_| STUDENTS

5.2. How many additional students were directly certified after October 31, 2015 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.

- 1 State SKIP TO 5.5
- 2 SFA
- 3 SFA does not directly certify students SKIP TO 5.5

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

MARK ALL THAT APPLY

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

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 the 2015-2016 school year?

- 1 Web-based or computer-based application
- 2 Computer-read or scannable paper application SKIP TO 5.7
- 3 Manually-entered paper application SKIP TO 5.7
- 4 No parents in the SFA submit applications for school meals SKIP TO 6.1

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

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	YES	NO
a. Meal claiming system	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Point-of-sale system	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. Student records	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Direct certification	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
e. Other (<i>Specify</i>)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>

5.7 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)?

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

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

* 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.

5.8 How did you verify applications for the 2015-2016 school year?

- 1 In a single batch at the beginning of the school year
- 2 On a rolling basis as they were approved
- 3 In multiple batches
- 4 Other (*Specify*) _____

5.9. Did your SFA accept emailed submissions of verification documentation from parents?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

5.10. Did your SFA follow up with households that did not respond to initial requests for verification documentation?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

5.11. Did your SFA perform verification for cause (that is, verify questionable applications in addition to verifying the sample selected at random)?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No SKIP TO Q 5.15

5.12. How many questionable household applications were verified for cause?

|_|_|_| , |_|_|_| APPLICATIONS

5.13.1. The next two questions are about the number of household applications selected for verification or verification for cause and any resulting changes in eligibility status. In responding, 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.

Of the questionable household applications were selected for verification or verified for cause, how many 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.

5.13.2. How many questionable household applications selected for verification or verification 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.

Note: In responding, 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.

	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?.....	____ ____ ____ ____	____ ____ ____ ____

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

MARK ONE PER ROW

	YES	NO
a. Non responders from previous school year(s).....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Applications with zero income listed in current and previous year(s).....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. Error prone (close to income guidelines) applications.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. School district employee application	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
e. Multiple application submissions with different information in order to qualify for increased benefits.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
f. Other (<i>Specify</i>)..... _____	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>

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

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

6. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This section is about non-program food revenue and your nonprofit food service account. Questions pertain to the **2015-2016** school year unless specified otherwise.

- 6.1. As you may know, schools are required to accrue all revenue from the sale of non-program foods in a nonprofit school food service account and track this revenue separately from school meal program revenue.

Non-program foods are foods other than reimbursable meal items that are sold in a school at any time or location on the school campus and are purchased using funds from the non-profit school food service account. Examples include a la carte items, adult meals, items purchased for fundraisers, vending machines, school stores, and items purchased for catering and vended meals.

To what extent do schools in your SFA track the accrual of revenue from the sale of non-program food sales?

- 1 All or most schools track all non-program food sales
- 2 All or most schools track some non-program food sales, such as those sold under the food service department
- 3 All or most schools do not track non-program food sales
- 4 Only my SFA (not schools) tracks non-program food sales

- 6.2. Does your SFA monitor costs paid out of nonprofit school foodservice accounts (or if SFA manages school finances centrally, a nonprofit SFA foodservice account)?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No SKIP TO 6.6

- 6.3. What challenges, if any, does your SFA experience in monitoring costs paid out of nonprofit foodservice accounts?

MARK ALL THAT APPLY

- 1 Some/all schools do not have nonprofit food service accounts
- 2 I/my staff lack training or guidance in these types of accounting policies or procedures
- 3 Other financial management needs take priority
- 4 It takes too much time
- 5 No process in place to monitor or collect school documentation
- 6 Other (*Specify*) _____
- 7 No challenges
- 8 I am not responsible for oversight or monitoring of nonprofit foodservice accounts

6.4. You may have heard about USDA’s Non-program Foods Revenue Tool. What best describes your SFA’s knowledge and use of this tool to determine non-program food revenue amounts?

- 1 I don't know what the tool is
- 2 I know the tool is available, but our SFA doesn't use it
- 3 Some schools in our SFA use the tool
- 4 All schools in our SFA use the tool

6.5. Who is the primary decision maker about how your SFA's nonprofit school food service account is managed, particularly with respect to the costs that are charged to the account?

- 1 School superintendent
- 2 District business manager
- 3 SFA director
- 4 Other (*Specify*) _____

The following questions are about alternative meals provided and recouping credits.

6.6 What is normally done if a child who is not receiving a free meal cannot pay for a meal?

- 1 Serve the child the reimbursable meal
- 2 Serve the child an alternate meal
- 3 Do not serve the child a meal
- 4 Other (*Specify*) _____

6.7 Does your SFA keep track of the amount of money owed as a result of unpaid school meals?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No SKIP TO 6.10

6.8 For the 2014-2015 school year, what was the total amount of money owed to your SFA as a result of unpaid school meals?

|_|_|_|, |_|_|_| DOLLARS

6.9 How much of this money has been recovered?

|_|_|_|, |_|_|_| DOLLARS

6.10 What steps does your SFA take to recover money for unpaid student meals?

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	YES	NO
a. Send bill to parents	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Provide the student with alternate meals until the debt is paid.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. Use a debt collection agency	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Try to retroactively approve the student for free or reduced price meals.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
e. Administrative actions (e.g., withhold grades)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
f. No effort made	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
g. Other (<i>Specify</i>)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>

7. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

The next few questions ask about your SFA's training and technical assistance during the 2015-2016 school year.

7.1.1 In what topic areas did any of your school nutrition staff receive training or technical assistance?

Topic Area	Did staff receive training or technical assistance?	
	MARK ONE PER ROW	
	YES	NO
a. Menu planning	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Nutrition education.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. General nutrition	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Food production.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
e. Serving food	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
f. Cashiering/point-of-service.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
g. Food purchasing/ procurement.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
h. Receiving and storage.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
i. Food safety and HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
j. Free and reduced price meal benefits	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
k. Program management.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
l. Financial management	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
m. Human resources and staff training.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
n. Facilities and equipment planning	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
o. Communications, marketing, and/or public relations.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
p. Use of new Grains section of Food Buying Guide.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
q. Use of Online Food Buying Guide Calculator.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
r. Use of Product Formulation Statements.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
s. Determining meal pattern contributions for crediting purposes	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
t. Online menu planning tool.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
u. Use of the training tracker tool.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
v. Smarter Lunchroom strategies	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
w. Other (<i>Specify</i>)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>

7.1.2 How useful was the training or technical assistance?

Please rate your answer on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = Not at all useful and 5 = Very useful.

PROGRAMMER LOGIC: IF 7.1.1a-x = YES, THEN FILL IN THE GRID ITEM BELOW

If YES, how useful was the training or technical assistance?

Topic Area	NOT AT ALL USEFUL				VERY USEFUL
	1	2	3	4	5
a. Menu planning	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Nutrition education.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. General nutrition	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Food production.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
e. Serving food	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
f. Cashiering/point-of-service.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
g. Food purchasing/ procurement.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
h. Receiving and storage.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
i. Food safety and HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points).....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
j. Free and reduced price meal benefits.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
k. Program management.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
l. Financial management	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
m. Human resources and staff training.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
n. Facilities and equipment planning	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
o. Communications, marketing, and/or public relations.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
p. Use of new Grains section of Food Buying Guide.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
q. Use of Online Food Buying Guide Calculator.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
r. Use of Product Formulation Statements.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
s. Determining meal pattern contributions for crediting purposes.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
t. Online menu planning tool.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
u. Use of the training tracker tool.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
v. Smarter Lunchroom strategies	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>

w. Other (Specify)

1 2 3 4 5

7.1.3. Who provided the training or technical assistance for [FILL WITH TOPIC AREA A-X]?

PROGRAMMER LOGIC: IF 7.1.1a-x = YES, THEN FILL IN THE GRID ITEM BELOW

Topic Area	Who provided the training or technical assistance? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY
a. Menu planning	1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
b. Nutrition education.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
c. General nutrition	1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____

Topic Area	<p style="text-align: center;">Who provided the training or technical assistance? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY</p>
<p>d. Food production.....</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Specify</i>) _____</p>
<p>e. Serving food.....</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Specify</i>) _____</p>
<p>f. Cashiering/point-of-service....</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Specify</i>) _____</p>
<p>g. Food purchasing/ procurement.....</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Specify</i>) _____</p>

Topic Area	<p align="center">Who provided the training or technical assistance? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY</p>
<p>h. Receiving and storage</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Specify</i>) _____</p>
<p>i. Food safety and HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points)</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Specify</i>) _____</p>
<p>j. Free and reduced price meal benefits</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Specify</i>) _____</p>
<p>k. Program management</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Specify</i>) _____</p>

Topic Area	Who provided the training or technical assistance? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY
i. Financial management	1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
m. Human resources and staff training	1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
n. Facilities and equipment planning	1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
o. Communications, marketing, and/or public relations	1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____

Topic Area	<p align="center">Who provided the training or technical assistance? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY</p>
<p>p. Use of new Grains section of Food Buying Guide.....</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____</p>
<p>q. Use of Online Food Buying Guide Calculator.....</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____</p>
<p>r. Use of Product Formulation Statements.....</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____</p>
<p>s. Determining meal pattern contributions for crediting purposes.....</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____</p>

Topic Area	Who provided the training or technical assistance? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY
t. Online menu planning tool....	1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
u. Use of the training tracker tool	1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
v. Smarter Lunchroom strategies	1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
w. Other (Specify)..... _____	1 <input type="checkbox"/> FNS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) (Formerly <u>National Food Service Management Institute</u>) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Professional associations or organizations 4 <input type="checkbox"/> SFA staff (in-house) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> State Child Nutrition Agency 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial vendors 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Local agencies and partners

7.2 Did your SFA participate in the Institute of Child Nutrition’s Team Up For School Nutrition Success training in 2015?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No SKIP TO 7.5

7.3 On average, how frequently does your SFA communicate with your Team Up mentor?

- 1 Once a week or more
- 2 Once every two weeks
- 3 Once a month
- 4 Less than once a month
- 5 Only as needed
- d Don't know

7.4 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your SFA's Team Up mentor?

Please rate your answer on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW				
	STRONGLY DISAGREE				STRONGLY AGREE
	1	2	3	4	5
a. We feel supported by our mentor	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Our mentor acts as a sounding board and reacts to ideas for our SFA.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. Our mentor helps our SFA brainstorm ideas.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Our mentor shares knowledge and experience with our SFA.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>

The rest of this section is about the Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Programs Personnel that went into effect on July 1, 2015. Questions pertain to the 2015-2016 school year unless specified otherwise.

7.5. Since the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year, has your SFA kept track of the types of continuing education and training activities that school nutrition staff have completed?

- 1 Yes SKIP TO 7.6
- 2 No

7.5.1. Do you plan on conducting a review before the end of the 2015-2016 school year to document the continuing education and training activities your school nutrition staff have completed?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No SKIP TO 8.1

7.6. For each of the following methods of documenting the continuing education and training activities your school nutrition staff completed, please indicate your current or expected use of the method by the end of the 2015-2016 school year.

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	CURRENTLY USING	NOT CURRENTLY USING BUT EXPECT TO USE BY THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR	NOT CURRENTLY USING AND DO NOT EXPECT TO USE BY THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR
a. The FNS Professional Standards Training Tracking Tool.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Another computer-based tracking tool (besides the FNS Professional Standards Training Tracking Tool).....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. College transcripts or diplomas	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Food safety certifications or other training certificates.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
e. Training attendance sign-in sheets.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
f. Training agendas	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
g. Other method: (<i>Specify</i>)..... _____	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>

7.7. The next questions ask you about the challenges your SFA may have experienced with documenting staff completion of continuing education and training activities. Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	AGREE	DISAGREE
a. My SFA doesn't have enough manpower to <u>monitor</u> the activities	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. My SFA doesn't have a procedure or mechanism in place to document completion of training activities	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. SFA staff don't understand what to document	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Documenting poses a financial burden on my SFA	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
e. SFA staff have other more pressing work priorities.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
f. Other (<i>Specify</i>)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>

IF YOU ANSWERED 7.6a = 1 THEN GO TO 7.8, OTHERWISE GO TO 7.9

7.8. The next questions are about the FNS Professional Standards Training Tracking Tool.

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	AGREE	DISAGREE
a. The tool is user-friendly.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. The tool makes tracking staff training easy.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. I had enough training, technical assistance, or other resources to use the tool effectively.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. The tool's reports help our SFA meet reporting requirements for administrative review.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>

7.9. For each type of school nutrition staff, indicate the number currently employed at your SFA, the number that have already met the training requirements this school year, and the number expected to meet the training requirements by the end of the 2015-2016 school year. The yearly minimum training/continuing education requirement for the 2015-2016 school year is 6 hours for SFA managers and 4 hours for other school nutrition program staff. Please include all staff hired since the beginning of the school year.

IF NONE, PLEASE ENTER 0.

- a. **SFA managers** (staff who are directly responsible for the management of the day-to-day operations of school nutrition programs)
- b. **School nutrition program staff** (staff who are involved in routine non-managerial operations of school nutrition programs and work 20+ hours a week)
- c. **Part-time school nutrition program staff** (individuals who work less than 20 hours a week and are involved in routine non-managerial operations of school nutrition programs)

	NUMBER OF STAFF EMPLOYED	NUMBER OF STAFF ALREADY MEETING THE TRAINING REQUIREMENT	NUMBER OF STAFF EXPECTED TO MEET THE TRAINING REQUIREMENT BY THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR
a. SFA managers	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _
b. School nutrition program staff	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _
c. Part-time school nutrition program staff	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _

7.10. Please specify the number of staff (SFA managers, school nutrition staff, and part-time school nutrition staff) that received any training on the following topics for the 2015-2016 school year training requirement. Then indicate whether the SFA director received training on each topic by checking the box.

IF YOU ANSWERED “0” FOR THE NUMBER OF STAFF EMPLOYED IN 7.9A, B, OR C THEN SKIP TO THE NEXT STAFF TYPE COLUMN.

	# OF SFA MANAGERS	# OF SCHOOL NUTRITION STAFF (20 OR MORE HOURS A WEEK)	# OF PART-TIME SCHOOL NUTRITION STAFF (LESS THAN 20 HOURS PER WEEK)	SFA DIRECTOR
a. Nutrition (Menu planning, nutrition education, general nutrition)	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Operations (food production, serving food, cashiering/point-of-service, food purchasing/procurement, receiving and storage, food safety and HACCP).....	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. Administration (free and reduced price meal benefits, program management, financial management, human resources and staff training, facilities and equipment planning).....	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Communications, marketing, and/or public relations	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
e. Other (<i>Specify</i>)	_ _ _	_ _ _	_ _ _	1 <input type="checkbox"/>

8. FOOD AND BEVERAGE MARKETING

This section is about food and beverage marketing in your SFA during the 2015-2016 school year. Food and beverage marketing commonly includes logos, brand names, spokes-characters (i.e. cartoon), or product names featured to promote the sale of a food or beverage product.

Examples of food and beverage marketing in schools include property displaying brand names (e.g. signs, scoreboards, lunch trays, sports equipment), school discount or fundraising nights at restaurants, food label redemption programs, incentive programs that provide food as rewards, coupons for food or beverages, corporate-sponsored educational materials or school events, and branded food or beverages sold for school fundraisers.

8.1. Who primarily sets food and beverage marketing policies in schools in your SFA?

- 1 My SFA
- 2 Other departments in my LEA
- 3 Individual schools
- 4 Other (*Specify*) _____
- 5 No policies in place SKIP TO 8.4

8.2. Is the marketing of all food and beverages prohibited in all schools in your SFA?

- 1 Yes SKIP TO 9.1
- 2 No

8.3. Does your State or SFA restrict food and beverage marketing to only foods/beverages permitted to be sold on the school campus (per Smart Snacks or more stringent standards)?

- 1 Yes SKIP TO 8.5
- 2 No

8.4. Which of the following foods, beverages, and brands are marketed in your SFA?

Please indicate each type of marketing separately for the following school levels:

- **Elementary schools** (schools composed of any span of grades from kindergarten through 6th grade),
- **Middle or junior high schools** (schools that have no grade lower than 6 and no grade higher than 9),
- **High schools** (schools that have no grade lower than 9 and continue through 12th grade), and
- **Otherschools** (schools that don't meet the elementary, middle or junior high, or high school definition).

	MARK ALL THAT APPLY			
	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	MIDDLE OR JUNIOR HIGHS	HIGH SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOLS
a. Frozen desserts	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Bread/grain products	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. Snacks (chips, energy bars, etc.)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Candy	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
e. Soft drinks	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
f. Sports drinks	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
g. Water	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
h. Milk-based beverages.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
i. Beverages other than soft drinks, sports drinks, water, or milk-based.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
j. "Umbrella" brands that produce a variety of products (e.g. General Mills, Nestle, Dannon) ..	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
k. Fast food/other restaurant brands	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
l. Other (<i>Specify</i>)..... _____	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>

8.5. Do you anticipate that your SFA will profit financially from food and beverage marketing during the 2015-2016 school year?

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

9. FOOD SERVICE EQUIPMENT

9.1 This question is about school food service equipment that needs replacement based on school food service operations this school year, 2015-2016. In responding, do not consider equipment that will be replaced or purchased before October 2016.

Do any schools in your SFA have food service equipment that needs replacement?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No SKIP TO 9.3

9.2 What school food service equipment needs replacement? For each marked equipment type (for example, serving equipment) specify up to five types of equipment needed (e.g. cold food tables, milk coolers).

	MARK IF EQUIPMENT NEEDS REPLACEMENT	EQUIPMENT NEEDED PLEASE SPECIFY UP TO FIVE
a. Food Preparation Equipment.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
b. Ovens, Skillets, Broilers.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
c. Steam Equipment	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
d. Refrigerators or Freezers	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
e. Dishwashers	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
f. Serving Counters or Carts	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
g. Smallware (i.e. Utensils, Trays, or Tableware).....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
h. Serving Equipment (i.e. Cold or Hot Food Tables, Warming Cabinets, Display Cases, etc.)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
i. Cleaning Equipment (i.e. Pot, Pan, and Utensil Washers; Food Waste Disposers and Pulpers; Trash Compacters and Recycling)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
j. Other (<i>Specify</i>)..... _____	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	_____

The following questions ask about foodservice equipment purchased with NSLP Equipment Assistance Grant funding available from the Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 Agriculture Appropriations Act. The grant period begins in October 2014, and SFAs must complete procurement and expenditure activities by September 30, 2016.

9.3 Did your SFA receive an equipment assistance grant in 2014-2015 school year under the FY 2014 Agriculture Appropriations Act?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No SKIP TO 9.5

9.4 What types of equipment were (or will be) purchased under this grant?

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	YES	NO
a. Food Preparation Equipment.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Ovens, Skillets, Broilers.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. Steam Equipment	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Refrigerators or Freezers	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
e. Dishwashers	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
f. Serving Counters or Carts	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
g. Smallware (i.e. Utensils, Trays, or Tableware).....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
h. Serving Equipment (i.e. Cold or Hot Food Tables, Warming Cabinets, Display Cases, etc.).....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
i. Cleaning Equipment (i.e. Pot, Pan, and Utensil Washers; Food Waste Disposers and Pulpers; Trash Compactors and Recycling).....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
j. Other (<i>Specify</i>).....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>

The next questions are about the per unit capitalization thresholds for “foodservice equipment.” It is federally required that “foodservice equipment” have a per unit capitalization threshold of \$5,000 or more and a useful life of 1 year or more. Some State and local per unit capitalization thresholds may be lower than the federal requirement.

9.5 Does your SFA have a per unit capitalization threshold that is lower than the federal requirement in 2015-2016 school year?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No SKIP TO 10.1
- d Don't know SKIP TO 10.1

9.6 What is the dollar amount of the current per unit capitalization threshold for foodservice equipment purchases at your SFA?

\$ |__| , |__|__|__| DOLLAR AMOUNT

10. MEAL COUNTING

The following questions ask about meal counting activities in the 2015-2016 school year.

10.1. How 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?

FOR EACH ROW,
MARK ONE PER POINT OF SERVICE TYPE

	CAFETERIA		NON-CAFETERIA	
	YES	NO	YES	NO
a. Coded tickets or tokens	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Coded ID cards	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. Personal Identification Numbers (PINs).....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Biometric technology (for example, fingerprint scanners)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
e. Rosters or cashier lists.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
f. Other (<i>Specify</i>)..... _____	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>

10.2. Which of the following types of training is provided to cashiers?

	TRAINING PROVIDED?	
	YES	NO
a. Method of counting meals	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Monitoring student meal selections for reimbursable meals	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. Managing cash for a la carte and adult meals	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Acceptable types of payments	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
e. Meal and food pricing	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
f. Offer versus serve	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
g. Applications for free or reduced price meals	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
h. Operating a Point of Service (POS) system	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
i. Other (<i>Specify</i>)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>

10.2.1 How often are the following types of training provided to cashiers? Please specify if it is when the cashier is hired, once each school year or more than once each school year.

PROGRAMMER LOGIC: IF 10.2a-i= YES THEN THE GRID SHOULD BE FILLED

	HOW OFTEN PROVIDED?		
	WHEN CASHIER IS HIRED	ONCE EACH SCHOOL YEAR	MORE THAN ONCE EACH SCHOOL YEAR
a. Method of counting meals	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Monitoring student meal selections for reimbursable meals	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. Managing cash for a la carte and adult meals	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Acceptable types of payments	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
e. Meal and food pricing	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
f. Offer versus serve	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
g. Applications for free or reduced price meals	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
h. Operating a Point of Service (POS) system	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
i. Other (<i>Specify</i>)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>

10.2.2. In Question 10.2 you said that you do not provide the following types of training to cashiers. Would these types of training be *useful* to school cashiers given their responsibilities?

PROGRAMMER LOGIC: IF 10.2a-i= NO THEN THE GRID SHOULD BE FILLED

	WOULD THIS TYPE OF TRAINING BE USEFUL TO SCHOOL CASHIERS, GIVEN THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES?	
	YES	NO
a. Method of counting meals	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Monitoring student meal selections for reimbursable meals	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. Managing cash for a la carte and adult meals	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Acceptable types of payments	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
e. Meal and food pricing	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
f. Offer versus serve	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
g. Applications for free or reduced price meals	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
h. Operating a Point of Service (POS) system	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
i. Other (<i>Specify</i>)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>

WOULD THIS TYPE OF TRAINING BE USEFUL TO SCHOOL CASHIERS, GIVEN THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES?	
YES	NO

10.3. Does your SFA conduct on-site monitoring of cashiers?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No SKIP TO 10.5

10.4. How often is on-site monitoring conducted?

- 1 Less than once a year
- 2 Once a year
- 3 Twice a year
- 4 Three or more times a year

10.5. Do any schools in your SFA use the following point of service methods for school breakfast or lunch?

FOR EACH ROW, MARK ONE PER MEAL

	BREAKFAST		LUNCH	
	YES	NO	YES	NO
a. Pre-packaged meal (for example, Grab 'n go, bagged meals)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Vending machine dispensed meal	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. Meal delivery to the classroom	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Kiosk or cart	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
e. Other (<i>Specify</i>)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>

11. SMARTER LUNCHROOMS

- 11.1. **Smarter Lunchrooms use simple, low-cost and no-cost changes to the lunchroom environment to get students to take and eat more healthful foods. Examples of Smarter Lunchrooms strategies include relocating fruit to a more eye-catching location, renaming vegetables with appealing names, and prompting students to select and enjoy healthy foods.**

Are you aware of the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement?

- 1 Yes
 2 No SKIP TO 12.1

- 11.2. **This next question focuses on Smarter Lunchroom strategies designed to increase fruit consumption.**

Approximately what percentage of your (PREFILL # FROM 1.1a TOTAL) schools is implementing at least one of the "Focusing on Fruit" strategies? (see below for examples of strategies)

|_|_|_| PERCENT OF SCHOOLS

"Focusing on Fruit" strategies:

- At least two types of fruit are available daily
- Sliced or cut fruit is available daily
- Fruit options are not browning, bruised or otherwise damaged
- Daily fruit options are given creative, age-appropriate names
- Fruit is available at all points of sale (deli-line, snack windows, a la carte lines etc.)
- Daily fruit options are available in at least two different locations on each service line
- At least one daily fruit option is available near all registers
- Whole fruit options are displayed in attractive bowls or baskets (instead of chaffing/hotel pans)
- A mixed variety of whole fruits are displayed together
- Daily fruit options are easily seen by students of average height for your school
- Daily fruit options are bundled into all grab and go meals available to students
- Daily fruit options are written legibly on menu boards in all service and dining areas

11.3. This next question focuses on Smarter Lunchroom strategies designed to increase vegetable consumption.

Approximately what percentage of your (PREFILL # FROM 1.1a TOTAL) schools is implementing at least one of the "Promoting Vegetables & Salad" strategies? (see below for examples of strategies)

|_|_|_| PERCENT OF SCHOOLS

"Promoting Vegetables & Salad " strategies:

- At least two types of vegetables are available daily
- Vegetables are not wilted, browning, or otherwise damaged
- At least one vegetable option is available in all foodservice areas
- Individual salads or a salad bar is available to all students
- The salad bar is highly visible and located in a high traffic area
- Self-serve salad bar utensils are at the appropriate portion size or larger for all fruits and vegetable offered
- Self-serve salad bar utensils are smaller for croutons, dressing and other non-produce items
- Daily vegetable options are available in at least two different locations on each service line
- Daily vegetable options are easily seen by students of average height for your school
- A daily vegetable option is bundled into grab and go meals available to students
- A default vegetable choice is established by pre-plating a vegetable on some of the trays
- Available vegetable options have been given creative or descriptive names
- All vegetable names are printed/written on name-cards or product IDs and displayed next to each vegetable option daily
- All vegetable names are written and legible on menu boards
- All vegetable names are included on the published monthly school lunch menu

11.4. This next question focuses on Smarter Lunchroom strategies to increase consumption of white milk.

Approximately what percentage of your (PREFILL # FROM 1.1a TOTAL) schools is implementing at least one of "Moving More White Milk" strategies? (see below for examples of strategies)

____|____|____| PERCENT OF SCHOOLS

"Moving More White Milk" strategies:

- All beverage coolers have white milk available
- White milk is placed in front of other beverages in all coolers
- White milk crates are placed so that they are the first beverage option seen in all designated milk coolers
- White milk is available at all points of sale (deli-line, snack windows, a la carte lines etc.)
- White milk represents at least 1/3 of all visible milk in the lunchroom
- White milk is easily seen by students of average height for your school
- White milk is bundled into all grab and go meals available to students as the default beverage
- White milk is promoted on menu boards legibly
- White milk is replenished so all displays appear "full" continually throughout meal service and after each lunch period

11.5. This next question focuses on Smarter Lunchroom strategies to increase consumption of the entrée of the day.

Approximately what percentage of your (PREFILL # FROM 1.1a TOTAL) schools is implementing at least one of the "Entrée of the Day" strategies? (see below for examples of strategies)

____|____|____| PERCENT OF SCHOOLS

"Entrée of the Day" strategies:

- A daily entrée option has been identified to promote as a "targeted entrée" in each service area and for each designated line (deli-line, snack windows, a la carte lines etc.)
- Daily targeted entrée options are highlighted on posters or signs
- Daily targeted entrée is easily seen by students of average height for your school
- Daily targeted entrées have been provided creative or descriptive names
- All targeted entrée names are printed/written on name-cards or product IDs and displayed next to each respective entrée daily
- All targeted entrée names are written and legible on menu boards
- All targeted entrée names are included on the published monthly school lunch menu
- All targeted entrees are replenished so as to appear "full" throughout meal service

11.6. This next question focuses on Smarter Lunchroom strategies to increase the sales of reimbursable meals.

Approximately what percentage of your (PREFILL # FROM 1.1a TOTAL) schools is implementing at least one of the "Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals" strategies? (see below for examples of strategies)

____|____|____| PERCENT OF SCHOOLS

"Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals" strategies:

- A reimbursable meal can be created in any service area available to students (salad bars, snack windows, speed lines, speed windows, dedicated service lines etc.)"
- Reimbursable "Combo Meal" pairings are available and promoted daily
- A reimbursable meal has been bundled into a grab and go meal available to students
- Grab and go reimbursable meals are available at a convenience line/speed window
- The convenience line offers only reimbursable grab and go meals with low-fat non-flavored milk fruit and/or vegetable
- Grab and go reimbursable meals are easily seen by students of average height for your school
- The school offers universal free lunch
- A reimbursable combo meal pairing is available daily using alternative entrees (salad bar, fruit & yogurt parfait etc.)
- Reimbursable "Combo Meal" pairings have been provided creative or descriptive, age-appropriate names (i.e., The Hungry Kid Meal, The Athlete's Meal, Bobcat Meal, etc.)
- Reimbursable "Combo Meal" pairing names are written/printed on name-cards, labels, or product IDs and displayed next to each respective meal daily
- All reimbursable "Combo Meal" names are written and legible on menu boards
- All reimbursable "Combo Meal" names are included on the published monthly school lunch menu
- Reimbursable "Combo Meal" pairings are promoted on signs or posters
- The named reimbursable "Combo Meal" is promoted during the school's morning announcements
- Students have the option to pre-order their lunch in the morning or earlier
- The cafeteria accepts cash as a form of payment

11.7. This next question focuses on Smarter Lunchroom strategies to improve the lunchroom environment.

Approximately what percentage of your (PREFILL # FROM 1.1a TOTAL) schools is implementing at least one of the "Creating School Synergies" strategies? (see below for examples of strategies)

____|____|____| PERCENT OF SCHOOLS

"Creating School Synergies" strategies:

SIGNING, PRIMING, AND COMMUNICATION

- Posters displaying healthful foods are visible and readable within all service and dining areas
- Signage/posters/floor decals are available to direct students toward all service areas
- Signs promoting the lunchroom and featured menu items are placed in other areas of the school such as the main office, library or gymnasium
- Menu boards featuring today's meal components are visible and readable within all service and dining areas
- A dedicated space/menu board is visible and readable from 5 feet away within the service or dining area where students can see tomorrow's menu items
- Dining space is branded to reflect student body or school (i.e., school lunchroom is named for school mascot or local hero/celebrity)
- All promotional signs and posters are rotated, updated or changed at least quarterly
- All creative and descriptive names are rotated, updated or changed at least quarterly
- A monthly menu is available and provided to all student families, teachers and administrators
- A monthly menu is visible and readable within the school building
- A weekly "Nutritional Report Card" is provided to parents detailing what their student has purchased during the previous week

LUNCHROOM ATMOSPHERE

- Trash on floors, in, or near garbage cans is removed between each lunch period
- Cleaning supplies and utensils are returned to a cleaning closet or are not visible during service and dining
- Compost/recycling/tray return and garbage cans are tidied between lunch periods
- Compost/recycling/tray return and garbage cans are at least 5 feet away from dining students
- Dining and service areas are clear of any non-functional equipment or tables during service
- Sneeze guards in all service areas are clean
- Obstacles and barriers to enter service and dining areas have been removed (i.e. garbage cans, mop buckets, cones, lost & found, etc.)
- Clutter is removed from service and dining areas promptly (i.e., empty boxes, supply shipments, empty crates, pans, lost & found, etc.)
- Students artwork is displayed in the service and/or dining areas
- All lights in the dining and service areas are currently functional and on
- Trays and cutlery are within arm's reach to the students of average height for your school
- Lunchroom equipment is decorated with decals/magnets/signage, etc. wherever possible
- Teachers and administrators dine in the lunchroom with students

- Cafeteria monitors have good rapport with students and lunchroom staff
- The dining space is used for other learning activities beyond meal service (i.e., home economics, culinary nutrition education activities, school activities etc.)
- Staff is encouraged to model healthful eating behaviors to students (i.e., dining in the lunchroom with students, encouraging students to try new foods etc.)
- Staff smiles and greets students upon entering the service line continually throughout meal service
- Students who do not have a full reimbursable meal are politely prompted to select and consume a fruit or vegetable option by staff

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

- Student groups are involved in the development of creative and descriptive names for menu items
- Student groups are involved in creation of artwork promoting menu items
- Student groups are involved in modeling healthful eating behaviors to others (i.e., mentors, high school students eating in the middle school lunchroom occasionally, etc.)
- Student surveys are used to inform menu development, dining space décor and promotional ideas
- Students, teachers and/or administrators announce daily meal deals or targeted items in daily announcements

RECOGNITION & SUPPORT OF SCHOOL FOOD

- The school participates in other food program promotions such as: Farm to School, Chefs Move to Schools, Fuel Up to Play 60, Share our Strength, etc.)
- The school has applied or been selected for the Healthier US School Challenge
- A local celebrity (mayor, sports hero, media personality) is invited to share lunch with students 3 to 4 times a year

A LA CARTE

- Students must ask to purchase a la carte items from staff members
- Students must use cash to purchase a la carte items which are not reimbursable
- Half portions are available for at least two dessert options

11.8. Is there anything you would like FNS to know about how Smarter Lunchroom strategy implementation is going in your schools? (Please describe)

12. REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

This section asks about revenues and expenditures at your SFA in school years 2014-2015 and 2013-2014.

12.1. Please record all income that was received by your SFA’s food service program. If you did not have income from a category, please enter a 0 (zero) for that category. If a category includes revenues from another category, list the other categories included by item code in the last column. For example, if income from full price and reduced price meals served to students cannot be separated, record the total student meal payments in row a, write “b” in the last column, and check NA for row b. If a category is not applicable, please check the NA box.

Enter responses for the 2014-2015 school year here.

12.1.1 \$ | | | | | , | | | | | . | | | | | TOTAL INCOME

	INCOME	N/A	LIST OTHER CATEGORIES INCLUDED
INCOME FROM LOCAL SOURCES			
a. Full price meals served to students	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
b. Reduced price meals served to students	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
c. Adult meals	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
d. A la carte sales	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
e. Subsidy from the school district	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
f. Subsidies from local nonprofits or local government	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
INCOME FROM STATE SOURCES			
g. State meal reimbursements for free meals	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
h. State meal reimbursements for reduced-price meals	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
INCOME FROM FEDERAL SOURCES			
i. Federal meal reimbursements for free meals	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
j. Federal meal reimbursements for reduced price meals	\$, .		_____
k. Federal meal reimbursements for full price meals	\$, .		_____
l. Federal income from other child nutrition programs (e.g., FFVP, SMP)	\$, .		_____
m. Other federal income	\$, .		_____
OTHER SOURCES OF INCOME			
n. _____	\$, .		
o. _____	\$, .		
p. _____	\$, .		

12.3. The next set of questions ask about whether your SFA or state provided a subsidy for breakfasts or lunches and how that subsidy was provided. Do not count NSLP or SBP reimbursements.

Enter responses for the 2014-2015 school year here.

		Did you receive a subsidy?		
		YES	NO	NOT APPLICABLE
SFA				
a.	Breakfast.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
b.	Lunch	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
STATE				
c.	Breakfast.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
d.	Lunch	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>

12.3.1a-d. How was the subsidy for [FILL WITH SFA/STATE BREAKFAST/LUNCH] provided?

PROGRAMMER LOGIC: If 12.3 = YES THEN ASKS 12.3a-d

		How was the subsidy provided? MARK ONE ONLY	
SFA			
a.	Breakfast.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Per-meal 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Annual lump sum 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Supplemental to cover specific costs 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Based on a percentage of low-income students 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Specify</i>) _____	
b.	Lunch	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Per-meal 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Annual lump sum 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Supplemental to cover specific costs 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Based on a percentage of low-income students 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Specify</i>) _____	
STATE			
c.	Breakfast.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Per-meal 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Annual lump sum 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Supplemental to cover specific costs 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Based on a percentage of low-income students 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Specify</i>) _____	
d.	Lunch	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Per-meal 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Annual lump sum 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Supplemental to cover specific costs 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Based on a percentage of low-income students 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Specify</i>) _____	

12.4 The next set of questions ask about whether your SFA or state provided a subsidy for breakfasts or lunches and how that subsidy was provided. Do not count NSLP or SBP reimbursements.

Enter responses for the 2013-2014 school year here.

	Did you receive a subsidy?		
	YES	NO	NOT APPLICABLE
SFA			
a. Breakfast.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Lunch	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
STATE			
c. Breakfast.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Lunch	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>

12.4.1a-d. How was the subsidy for [FILL WITH SFA/STATE BREAKFAST/LUNCH] provided?

PROGRAMMER LOGIC: If 12.4 = YES THEN ASKS 12.4a-d

	How was the subsidy provided? MARK ONE ONLY
	SFA
a. Breakfast.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Per-meal 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Annual lump sum 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Supplemental to cover specific costs 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Based on a percentage of low-income students 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Specify</i>) _____
b. Lunch	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Per-meal 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Annual lump sum 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Supplemental to cover specific costs 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Based on a percentage of low-income students 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Specify</i>) _____
STATE	
c. Breakfast.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Per-meal 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Annual lump sum 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Supplemental to cover specific costs 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Based on a percentage of low-income students 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Specify</i>) _____
d. Lunch	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Per-meal 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Annual lump sum 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Supplemental to cover specific costs 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Based on a percentage of low-income students 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Specify</i>) _____

12.5. Please enter all expenditures for your SFA's food service program. If you did not have an expense for a category, please enter a 0 (zero) for that category. If a category includes expenses from another category, list the other categories included by item code in the last column. If a category is not applicable, please check the NA box.

Enter responses for the 2014-2015 here.

12.5.1 \$ | | | | |, | | | | |. | | | | | TOTAL EXPENDITURES

EXPENDITURE CATEGORIES	EXPENDITURES (\$)	N/A	LIST OTHER CATEGORIES INCLUDED
a. Salaries	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
b. Fringe benefits	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
c. Purchased foods	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
c.1. Purchased foods for reimbursable meals.....	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
c.2. Purchased foods for non-reimbursable meals (e.g., a la carte, adult meals, etc.).....	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
d. Capital expenditures	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
e. Supplies	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
f. Storage and transportation	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
g. Contracted services	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
h. Payment for an overclaim as a result of a state or federal audit	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
i. Overhead/indirect costs	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
j. Other (<i>Specify</i>).....	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
k. Other (<i>Specify</i>).....	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
l. Other (<i>Specify</i>).....	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
m. Other (<i>Specify</i>).....	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____

12.6. Please enter all expenditures for your SFA's food service program. If you did not have an expense for a category, please enter a 0 (zero) for that category. If a category includes expenses from another category, list the other categories included by item code in the last column. If a category is not applicable, please check the NA box.

Enter responses for the 2013-2014 here.

12.6.1 \$ | | | | | , | | | | | . | | | | | TOTAL EXPENDITURES

EXPENDITURE CATEGORIES	EXPENDITURES (\$)	N/A	LIST OTHER CATEGORIES INCLUDED
a. Salaries	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
b. Fringe benefits	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
c. Purchased foods	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
c.1. Purchased foods for reimbursable meals.....	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
c.2. Purchased foods for non-reimbursable meals (e.g., a la carte, adult meals, etc.).....	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
d. Capital expenditures	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
e. Supplies	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
f. Storage and transportation	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
g. Contracted services	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
h. Payment for an overclaim as a result of a state or federal audit	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
i. Overhead/indirect costs	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
j. Other (<i>Specify</i>).....	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
k. Other (<i>Specify</i>).....	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
l. Other (<i>Specify</i>).....	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
m. Other (<i>Specify</i>).....	\$, .	na <input type="checkbox"/>	_____

13. SFA DIRECTOR BACKGROUND

These next questions ask about the background of the current SFA director. If you are responding on behalf of the SFA director, please obtain the information from the SFA director and enter it here.

13.1. When were you hired into your current position as SFA director?

Please enter the month and year of your start date below.

____|____| MONTH ____|____|____| YEAR

13.2. What is the highest grade or year of schooling you completed?

- 1 Less than high school SKIP TO 13.5
- 2 High school (or GED) SKIP TO 13.5
- 3 Some college, no degree SKIP TO 13.4
- 4 Associate's degree
- 5 Bachelor's degree
- 6 Master's degree
- 7 Graduate credits beyond a Master's degree
- 8 Doctorate

13.3. Is your degree in foods and nutrition, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, food service management, dietetics, culinary arts, business or a related field?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

13.4. Prior to being hired in your current position as SFA director did you complete at least 3 credit hours at the university level in the following subjects?

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	YES	NO
a. Food service management.....	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Nutritional sciences	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>

13.5. If hired on or after July 1, 2015, did you complete 8 hours or more of food safety training in the 5 years leading up to your SFA director position start date, or within 30 days of your start date?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

13.6. How many years of relevant experience in school nutrition programs (this includes previous work in the NSLP and SBP, as well as, experience in other school-based child nutrition programs), did you have before you started your current position?

____|____| YEAR(S)

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 support@2mresearch.com or call toll-free at 866.465.7738.



Appendix C. Child Nutrition Program Operations Study (CN-OPS-II) Year 1 Sample Design, Data Collection, and Statistical Considerations

Overview

The second Child Nutrition Program Operations Study (CN-OPS-II) collects data via the State Child Nutrition (CN) Director Survey and the School Food Authority (SFA) Director Survey. For Year 1 of CN-OPS-II, a census of all 55 State Agencies (SAs) with CN operations was administered the CN Director Survey, and all responded. A nationally representative sample of 2,496 SFAs was administered the SFA Director Survey, and 1,984 SFAs provided valid responses, yielding a response rate of just over 81 percent after removing some ineligible and exempt cases. This Appendix provides a detailed account of the Year 1 sample design, selection, and data collection; an analysis of response rates; a description of sample weight construction; and discussion of other statistical considerations. The Year 1 design is part of a larger, 4-year design (discussed in more detail in C.1.3) which ensures SFAs not sampled with certainty are only asked to respond to the survey once during the 4-year period.

C.1 Sample Design and Sample Selection

Two samples were selected for Year 1 of data collection. For the CN Director Survey, a census of all 55 SAs was conducted. The 55 SAs include all 50 U.S. States, 4 U.S. Territories, and the District of Columbia. For the SFA Director Survey, a stratified probability proportional-to-size (PPS) sample of SFAs was selected.⁹⁷

C.1.1 SFA Target Universe

The target universe for the Year 1 survey included all SFAs operating in public school districts in the United States and outlying Territories that were required to submit Form FNS-742, or the SFA Verification Collection Report Summary Data, to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) in school year (SY) 2014–15.⁹⁸ 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 only in residential child care institutions (RCCIs) that did not have daytime students; SFAs that did not have students who were certified for free or reduced price (F/RP) lunches; SFAs in some outlying Territories that were not required to complete Form FNS-742; and private schools that participated in NSLP.

C.1.2 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 over 19,000 SFAs in the 2014–15 FNS-742 database. However, only approximately 15,000 SFAs that operated in public school districts were included in the sampling frame. The unit of analysis for the study was the SFA. SFAs usually coincided with a local education agency (LEA), as defined in the Local Education Agency Universe Survey File of the U.S. Department of Education's Common Core of Data (CCD), which is maintained by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). In some cases, however, SFAs operate 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 CCD universe file. Those that did not match remained in the sampling frame with an indicator denoting that they do not have associated CCD data. Table C-1 provides a distribution of eligible SFAs in the sampling frame. Approximately three-fourths of the SFAs had less than 60 percent of their students certified for

⁹⁷ See Section II.C. of the report for stratification details.

⁹⁸ The FNS-742 SFA Verification Collection Report Summary Data form was approved under OMB# 0584-0026 7 CFR § 245, Determining Eligibility for Free & Reduced Price Meals, expiration date 4/30/2016.

F/RP lunch. Similarly, approximately three-fourths of SFAs are in the smallest enrollment size stratum (less than 2,500 students).

Table C-1—SFAs in the 2014–15 FNS-742 universe file (sampling frame), by enrollment size and percent of students certified for F/RP lunch

Enrollment Size	Percent Approved for F/RP Meals ^a	Number of SFAs
0–2,499	<60 percent	7,810
	≥60 percent	3,186
2,500–4,999	<60 percent	1,472
	≥60 percent	421
5,000–9,999	<60 percent	793
	≥60 percent	260
10,000– 99,999	<60 percent	625
	≥60 percent	256
100,000–299,999	All	24
≥300,000	All	7
All SFAs	Total	14,854

^a Calculated from number of students with access to NSLP/SBP as reported in 2014–15 FNS 742.

C.1.3 Stratification and Sample Selection

A stratified, multiyear sample design was used to select SFAs for data collection, as summarized in Table C-2. To reduce burden, the sample design limits the number of SFAs required to complete the study in multiple years. It also produces sample sizes sufficient to meet the precision requirements outlined in the performance work statement for subgroups defined by urbanicity, SFA size, and FNS region membership.

The sampling frame of 14,854 SFAs was stratified into 10 explicit strata, consisting of a combination of SFA size (number of students enrolled) and estimated percentage of students approved for F/RP meals (high = 60 percent or more of students approved for F/RP meals; low = 0–59 percent of students approved for F/RP meals). Each of the 10 strata was implicitly stratified by sorting SFAs by FNS region (defined by the SFA’s location in one of the seven FNS regional offices) and by urbanicity status (defined by the SFA’s location in one of the four urbanicity classifications according to the CCD) prior to sampling, to ensure the sample selected was balanced on these additional factors.

In strata 3–10, all 3,858 SFAs were selected to participate in the 4-year study in at least one of the years. In the strata with smaller-size SFAs (stratum 1 and 2), which contained numerous SFAs, subsets of the SFAs were selected using PPS sampling procedures. Since the analytical objectives of CN-OPS-II included the production of SFA-level and student-weighted SFA estimates, the sampling procedures were designed to strike a compromise between these 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 the number of students in the SFAs best supports student-weighted SFA unit analyses. To balance these two objectives, for stratum 1 and stratum 2, the SFA

samples were selected using PPS procedures, where the MOS was the square root of the number of students in each SFA.⁹⁹

Precision and power calculations confirmed that a responding sample of 1,750 allocated among the stratum as shown in Table C-2 would meet the statistical requirements of the study. Therefore, assuming an 80 percent response rate, the final primary sample allocation was 2,187 SFAs each year. The research team decided to include a reserve sample in case the response rate fell significantly below 80 percent. In each year, the reserve sample totaled 309 units, enough to facilitate 1,750 responses even if the response rate in the primary sample dipped to 70 percent. In stratum 9, the 24 SFAs were randomly divided into two groups of 12; the first group will be asked to complete the survey in 2 of the 4 years and the second group in the other 2 years. The 7 largest SFAs in stratum 10 were sampled with certainty and will be asked to participate in all 4 years. Using the remaining strata, an overall sample was selected to support 7,000 responses across the 4-year period, and this sample was divided into 4 random subsamples¹⁰⁰ to assign cases to one of the lists for Years 1 through 4. This ensures that SFAs in strata 1–8 are only asked to respond to the survey once during the 4-year period. In Years 2, 3, and 4, the sample lists will be updated in response to changes to the SFA population using new, updated FNS-742/CCD sampling frames, and the newly sampled entities will be randomly assigned to the remaining years to ensure complete coverage of the current population each year.

To prepare each of the yearly samples for field interviewing, the SFAs were randomly split into two groups. That is, the 2,187 SFAs selected for each year were assigned to the primary sample to obtain the desired number of interviews per the sample allocation plan, assuming an 80 percent response rate. The remaining cases in each stratum (309 overall) were assigned to the reserve sample (Table C-2).

⁹⁹ See Chapter 3, Section 3.5.2., Domain estimates, in Valliant, R., Dever, J. A., & Kreuter, F. (2013). *Practical tools for designing and weighting survey samples*. New York: Springer-Verlag New York.

¹⁰⁰ The yearly allocation was conducted by selecting a random stratified sample of one-fourth the size of the total sample selected from the full 4-year sample, eliminating that sample from the overall list, and repeating the process two more times to create four subsamples, which were then randomly assigned a year assignment of Year 1 to Year 4. Each of the four samples was then compared in terms of the rate of SFAs in each urbanicity and FNS region category, overall and within strata. The results demonstrated that the four yearly samples were basically identical as desired in terms of their profile on these characteristics.

Table C-2—Stratification and sample allocation plan based on overall sample of 1,750 completed SFAs per year (7,000 across the 4 study years)

Strata	SFA Size (Students)	Students Approved for F/RP Meals	Population		Sampling			
			SFAs	Students	SFA Sample Selected to Support All 4 Years	Sample of SFAs to Release Each Year to Reach Completes at 80% Response Rate	Expected SFA Completes Each Year	Reserve Sample
Number	Range	Proportion of Students Certified for F/RP Lunch ^a						
1	0–2,499	High	3,186	2,062,994	1,567	343	274	49
2		Low	7,810	6,587,739	4,514	988	790	141
3	2,500–4,999	High	421	1,457,686	421	92	74	13
4		Low	1,472	5,214,147	1,472	322	258	46
5	5,000–9,999	High	260	1,818,285	260	57	46	8
6		Low	793	5,514,825	793	173	139	25
7	10,000–99,999	High	256	5,940,334	256	56	45	8
8		Low	625	14,508,774	625	137	109	19
9	100,000–299,999	All	24	3,534,678	24 ^b	12	10	0
10	≥300,000	All	7	4,330,908	7 ^c	7	6	0
Total			14,854	50,970,370	9,939	2,187	1,750	309

^a The “high” category contains those SFAs with ≥60 percent of students identified as approved for F/RP lunch, and “low” as <60 percent of students approved.

^b Half of the SFAs in stratum 9 will be asked to complete the survey in 2 of the 4 years.

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

C.2 Data Collection

The Year 1 data collection period started in the second week of May 2016. Because many school districts close before Memorial Day, a decision was made to extend the data collection period beyond the initially proposed 12 weeks into September of 2016. The follow-up protocols (reminder emails and phone calls) were suspended from July through the first 2 weeks of August, when follow up resumed. After Labor Day, there was concern that the primary sample’s response rate would fail to reach 80 percent. SFAs in the reserve sample were therefore invited to participate on September 9, 2016 (by FedEx package) and September 13, 2016 (by email). To give the new sample sufficient time to respond, the data collection period was extended to October 21, 2016. At the close of the survey, all 2,496 units (2,187 from the primary sample and 309 from the reserve sample) had been released to create the final Year 1 sample.

C.3 Nonresponse Analysis

In most surveys, some of the sampled cases do not respond to the survey for various reasons, including refusals, ineligibility, and noncontacts (noncontacts occur when there is a failure to communicate with

the selected respondent). For the SFA Director Survey, there were three main reasons for SFA nonresponse. First, some SFAs no longer exist or are otherwise ineligible; this results from the time lag between establishing the universe of SFAs (based on SY 2014–15 for Year 1), and the start of data collection (SY 2015–16 for Year 1). Each school year, school districts close, combine with other districts, or stop participating in NSLP/SBP, making the universe difficult to identify precisely at any specific point in time. During the Year 1 data collection, some SFAs in the nonresponse group were identified when the State CN directors were asked to provide contact information for the sampled SFAs. Others self-identified by notifying the researchers that they no longer participated in NSLP/SBP, or that their school district had closed or merged with another. The research team identified the remaining ineligible SFAs by tracking down the causes of bounce-back emails and undelivered FedEx packages. For Year 1, 27 SFAs in the sample were ineligible.

A second reason that SFAs may not respond to a survey is that they face extant circumstances that prevent them from participating. These include unexpected deaths and resignations, natural disasters such as floods and environmental contamination, and administrative constraints. For example, in Year 1, one director with multiple districts was selected for participation in the study, but the administrative system did not track data by district. Noting that it would be impossible to hand tabulate the information for all districts, the director offered to hand tabulate one district, and the research team exempted the other districts. The most common reason for exemptions, however, was a personnel issue—death, illness, or unexpected transition. In Year 1, 22 SFAs were exempted from the survey for extant circumstances.

Lastly, SFAs may simply refuse to participate, or only partially complete the survey, regardless of how many times they are reminded of their responsibility to cooperate in USDA-sponsored studies. To determine the size of this group of eligible, nonresponding SFAs, the research team identified key questions in each of the 12 major sections of the survey (the 13th section, the SFA Director background section, was not used in determining nonresponse). A survey response was considered valid if the key questions were answered in at least 9 of the 12 sections.¹⁰¹ In Year 1, 463 SFAs were found to be nonresponsive. Of these, 220 never logged in to the web survey system, nor made any contact with the survey help systems. The remaining 243 had some entries in the web survey system, but not enough to satisfy the validity criterion.¹⁰²

An analysis of nonresponse was conducted to determine if the patterns of nonresponse caused the final respondent data to be distributed differently in key categories of the universe of SFAs. The research team identified the key categories (Table C-3) as (1) SFA size, as defined by the number of students served by the SFA; (2) the urbanicity/location of the SFA, as defined by the CCD urbanicity variable; (3) the SFA's poverty status, defined by the percentage of students certified for F/RP meals; and (4) FNS region. These key categories also defined the subgroups analyzed to answer the study's research questions, and the strata that helped reduce the need for SFAs to participate each year. In addition to these four categories, the research team added a categorical variable based on the number of schools in

¹⁰¹ The responses in Section 12, concerning SFA revenues and expenditures, were augmented by a follow-up request to those SFAs that left the section blank. The follow up resulted in an additional 222 responses. However, the response rate in this section remained the lowest (75 percent).

¹⁰² Therefore, the overall number of responses was 1,984 and the response rate was $(1,984 \div [2,496 - 49]) = 81.1$ percent.

the SFA because several questions on the survey require tabulations of the number of schools by type of school.

Understanding whether nonresponse was associated with these key categorical variables presented in Table C-3 is important because the sample was designed using strata and sorting variables defined by these categories. Specifically, the sample was selected from a universe of 10 strata defined by SFA size and poverty, with data sorted on urbanicity and FNS region. Because the base sample weights reflected this design, if nonresponses were systematically related to these variables, then the base sample weights could bias national and subgroup estimates. To minimize the likelihood of this bias, the base weights were adjusted to compensate for nonresponse that was significantly related to these variables.

Table C-3 shows the impact of weighting by comparing the true proportions of SFAs to the sample proportions, the weighted sample proportions using the initial theoretical weights, and the nonresponse-adjusted weights for these key categories (details on the sampling weights are described in the next section). The nonresponse analysis and adjustments to the base weights—performed using SUDAAN WTADUST procedures¹⁰³—indicated that the response rates were significantly different by SFA size, FNS region, and urbanicity, using a significance level of 0.05. In Table C-3, the last column shows that the adjusted weights bring the sample distribution closer to the population distribution compared to the theoretical weights—especially for the significant variables. Note that, for this last column, the distributions of SFA size, FNS region, and urbanicity align very closely with the population distributions. The third column illustrates the importance of the weights in making the sample data representative. The raw sample data in this third column is distributed quite differently than the population. The adjusted weights properly compensate for these differences.

¹⁰³ These procedures estimate a logistic model to determine the predicted response in each category. Then, an adjustment to the theoretical weights is made based on the inverse of the predicted response. The intent is that for cases with low predicted response rates, a response is adjusted higher to compensate for the likely nonresponses. The average adjustment was 1.26, while the smallest was 0.92 and the largest was 1.63.

Table C-3—Population, unweighted, and weighted sample distributions

	Population ^a (N = 14,854)	Population Proportion (%)	Unweighted Sample Proportion (%)	Unadjusted Weighted Sample Proportion (%)	Adjusted Weighted Sample Proportion (%)
SFA Size					
0–2,499	10,996	74.0	60.5	73.5	74.0
2,500–4,999	1,893	12.7	18.9	12.9	12.8
5,000–9,999	1,053	7.1	10.8	7.4	7.1
10,000–99,999	881	5.9	8.8	6.0	5.9
100,000– 299,999	24	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.2
≥300,000	7	0.0	0.4	0.1	0.0
Percent of Students Approved for F/RP Meals^b					
≤60%	4,119	27.7	24.9	26.7	27.8
>60 %	10,735	72.3	75.1	73.3	72.2
Urbanicity					
Urban/city	1,798	12.1	11.3	10.8	11.8
Suburban	3,287	22.1	27.7	21.8	22.1
Town	2,512	16.9	22	18.2	17.0
Rural	6,672	44.9	36.7	45.6	44.9
Missing Urbanicity	584	3.9	2.3	3.6	4.1
FNS Region					
Mid-Atlantic	1,494	10.1	11	9.8	9.7
Mountain Plains	2,295	15.5	13.5	16.5	15.3
Midwest	3,798	25.6	25.6	25.8	25.4
Northeast	1,641	11.0	11.3	10.5	11.3
Southeast	1,235	8.3	11.2	8.5	8.2
Southwest	2,239	15.1	12.9	13.8	15.1
Western	2,079	14.0	14.6	15.2	14.9
Number of Schools					
≤2	6,410	43.2	26	41.4	42.6
2<n≤8	6,329	42.6	51.4	43.4	42.8
8<n≤26	1,642	11.1	17.5	12.0	11.6
>26	473	3.2	5.1	3.2	3.1

^a FNS-742 Database and CCD 2014–2015 LEA data.

^b Percentage of students reported as certified for F/RP meals.

C.4 Sample Weights

Sample weights were required to calculate survey estimates from data collected from the SFA Director Survey to account for the complex sampling design and for nonresponse. The base weight was defined as the inverse of an SFA's probability of selection into the sample and would be the final weight if there was a 100 percent response rate to the survey. To compensate for nonresponses, the base weight was

multiplied by an adjustment factor created using a statistical procedure (performed using SUDAAN WTADUST). The nonresponse-adjusted weights ensure a balance across key subgroups of SFAs.

To estimate variances for the estimates from the survey data, the research team constructed jackknife (JKn) replicate weights. The replicate weights facilitate the estimation of standard errors on summary statistics when using sample data with complex weighting schemes like the one used in CN-OPS-II Year 1. JKn variance estimation (specifically JK1) is preferable for CN-OPS-II over the primary alternative, Taylor's Series Expansion, for three reasons. First, the replicate weights become a permanent addition to the data and make it easy for data users to obtain the *same* standard error associated with any estimate. The Taylor Series Expansion method can be implemented differently in different packages and may generate slightly different estimates in different situations. Second, the replicate weights approach was used for all three years of the Special Nutrition Program Operations Study. To the extent that users of that data will also be interested in CN-OPS-II, a similar estimation approach will ease the transition. Third, the Jackknife method will work the same for most common functions of statistics, while the Taylor Series may require customized programming for some statistics.¹⁰⁴

Specifically, 100 replicate weights were created by defining a limited number of “donor” groups within each stratum and then, iteratively, setting the weights of the observations in a donor group to zero and adjusting the remaining weights in the stratum to compensate for those that were set to zero.¹⁰⁵

C.5 Statistical Power and Precision Considerations

While it placed some additional burden on respondents to add the reserve sample to the study, the benefit is a larger sample of responding SFAs. Table C-4 and Table C-5 document this benefit. Table C-4 notes the improvement in precision by comparing the planned precision to the realized precision for an estimate of a proportion. Similarly, the last column in Table C-5 shows the gain in minimum detectable differences (MDD)¹⁰⁶ between two estimated proportions. As seen in each table, the extra cases generally improved the precision. For the “urban/city” subgroup, the actual sample had fewer observations than expected. However, the precision is still within the bounds of the study specifications (+/- 10 percentage points).

¹⁰⁴ This assessment is based on the descriptions of advantages and disadvantages of each method presented in Chapter 9 of Lohr, S. (2010). *Sampling: Design and Analysis, Second Edition*. Boston: Brooks/Cole Cengage Learning.

¹⁰⁵ With 9 non-certainty strata, the research team made 11 donor groups in 8 of the strata and 12 groups in one stratum. These ranged in size from 1 to 82. For example, stratum 2 (the smallest SFAs with ≥60 percent of students certified for F/RP meals) had 897 SFAs. A donor group of size 82 would get an adjustment of $897 \div (897 - 82)$ to compensate for the 82 cases where the weight was set to zero.

¹¹⁹ The MDD determines how large the difference between two proportions would need to be to detect it with the sample estimates.

Table C-4—Comparison of precision between the planned sample and the actual sample

	Planned Sample Size	Actual Sample Size	Expected Precision for Point in Time	Realized Precision for Point in Time	Percentage Gain in Precision
SFA Size					
Small	1,064	1,201	0.030	0.028	6.67
Medium	516	589	0.043	0.040	6.98
Large	170	194	0.075	0.070	6.67
Urbanicity					
Urban/city	239	225	0.063	0.065	-3.18
Suburban	477	549	0.045	0.042	6.67
Town	314	437	0.055	0.047	14.54
Rural	730	728	0.036	0.036	0.000
Missing Urbanicity	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Poverty					
High (≥60 percent of students certified for F/RP meals)	438	495	0.0468	0.044	5.98
Low (<60 percent of students certified for F/RP meals)	1,312	1,489	0.0271	0.025	7.75
FNS Region					
Mid-Atlantic	188	219	0.0715	0.066	7.69
Midwest	432	507	0.0472	0.044	6.78
Mountain Plains	248	267	0.0622	0.060	3.54
Northeast	198	224	0.0696	0.066	5.17
Southeast	174	222	0.0743	0.066	11.17
Southwest	249	256	0.0621	0.061	1.77
Western	252	289	0.0617	0.058	6.00
Total	1,750	1,984	0.022	0.022	0.000
Assumption: Estimating a proportion with a population value equal to 0.5.					

Table C-5—Comparison of MDD between the planned sample and the actual sample

	Planned Sample Size	Actual Sample Size	Expected MDD for Year to Year	Realized MDD for Year to Year	Percentage Gain in MDD
SFA Size					
Small	1,064	1,201	0.041	0.044	5.88
Medium	516	589	0.059	0.063	6.41
Large	170	194	0.103	0.110	6.42
Urbanicity					
Urban/city	239	225	0.095	0.092	-3.08
Suburban	477	549	0.061	0.065	6.80
Town	314	437	0.068	0.081	15.27
Rural	730	728	0.053	0.053	-0.14
Missing Urbanicity	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Poverty					
High (≥60 percent of students certified for F/RP meals)	438	495	0.064	0.068	5.95
Low (<60 percent of students certified for F/RP meals)	1,312	1,489	0.037	0.039	6.14
FNS Region					
Mid-Atlantic	188	219	0.097	0.104	7.38
Midwest	432	507	0.063	0.069	7.71
Mountain Plains	248	267	0.087	0.091	3.64
Northeast	198	224	0.096	0.102	6.01
Southeast	174	222	0.096	0.108	11.52
Southwest	249	256	0.089	0.091	1.38
Western	252	289	0.084	0.090	6.64
Total	1,750	1,984	0.032	0.032	

Assumption: Difference in two proportions with attrition equal to 97.5 percent and year-to-year correlation equal to 0.5.

Appendix D. Supplementary Tables

Figure D-1—States by Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) region and the regional distribution of the Child Nutrition Program Operations (CN-OPS-II) Year 1’s Sample of SFAs

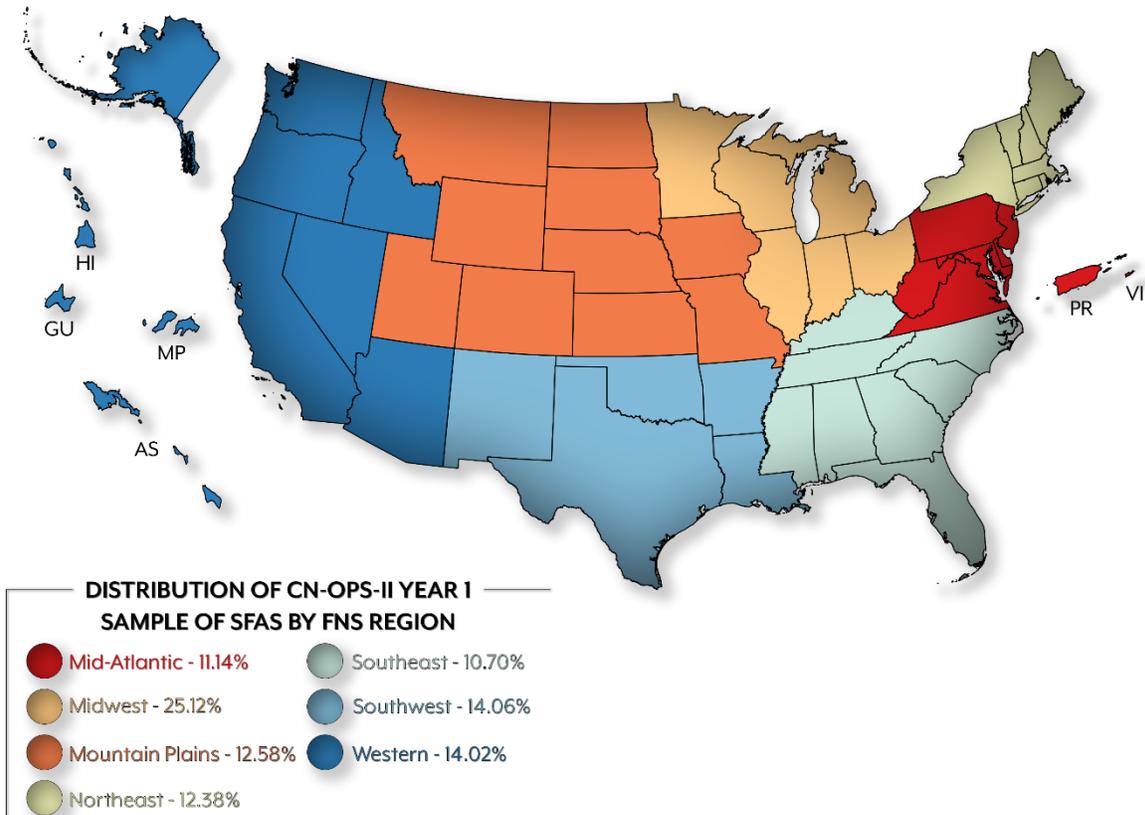


Table D-1—Among SAs with charter schools, the number of charter schools participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP), school year (SY) 2015–16

State	Total Number of Charter Schools	Both NSLP and SBP		NSLP Only		SBP Only	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Alaska	27	7	25.9	2	7.4	N/R	N/R
Alabama	0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Arkansas	45	16	35.6	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
Arizona	635	287	45.2	234	36.9	0	0.0
California	1,184	723	61.1	135	11.4	1	0.1
Colorado	214	116	54.2	53	24.8	0	0.0
Connecticut ¹	22	26	118.2	1	4.5	0	0.0
DC	112	58	51.8	0	0.0	0	0.0
Delaware	24	24	100.0	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
Florida	653	515	78.9	29	4.4	0	0.0
Georgia	100	83	83.0	15	15.0	0	0.0
Guam	N/R	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Hawaii	34	21	61.8	1	2.9	1	2.9
Iowa	3	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
Idaho	48	4	8.3	18	37.5	0	0.0
Illinois	148	43	29.1	1	0.7	0	0.0
Indiana	79	69	87.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
Kansas	11	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
Kentucky	0	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
Louisiana	129	104	80.6	1	0.8	0	0.0
Massachusetts	78	53	67.9	0	0.0	0	0.0
Maryland	53	38	71.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
Maine	6	1	16.7	1	16.7	0	0.0
Michigan	307	264	86.0	32	10.4	0	0.0
Minnesota	158	126	79.7	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
Missouri	52	37	71.2	1	1.9		
Mississippi ¹	0	2	N/R	0	0.0	0	0.0
Montana	0	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
North Carolina	151	52	34.4	7	4.6	0	0.0
North Dakota	0	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
Nebraska	0	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
New Hampshire	23	N/R	N/R	3	13.0	N/R	N/R
New Jersey	87	80	92.0	4	4.6	0	0.0

New Mexico	97	20	20.6	44	45.4	0	0.0
Nevada	38	4	10.5	1	2.6	N/R	N/R
New York	248	105	42.3	3	1.2	0	0.0
Ohio	384	280	72.9	280	72.9	280	72.9
Oklahoma	27	26	96.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
Oregon	125	55	44.0	26	20.8	1	0.8
Pennsylvania	176	132	75.0	14	8.0	0	0.0
Puerto Rico	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
Rhode Island	21	29	138.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
South Carolina	66	20	30.3	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
South Dakota	0	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
Tennessee	80	15	18.8	1	1.3	0	0.0
Texas	718	490	68.2	2	0.3	52	7.2
Utah	110	46	41.8	38	34.5	0	0.0
Virginia	7	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
Virgin Islands	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
Vermont	0	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
Washington ¹	0	8	N/R	0	N/R	0	N/R
Wisconsin	245	140	57.1	20	8.2	0	0.0
West Virginia	0	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
Wyoming	4	3	75.0	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
Total	6,729	4,122	61.3	967	14.4	335	5.0

¹ The total number of charter schools and program participation totals reported by State directors included implausible values.

Note: Questions not answered by State directors were indicated as Not Reported (N/R). The total number of charter schools reported was set equal to the total number of charter schools as reported by the National Alliance Charter Schools when the number reported in the survey exceeded that reported by the National Alliance. See National Alliance for Public Charter Schools. (n.d.). *Charter school data dashboard*. Retrieved from <http://dashboard2.publiccharters.org/National/>

Source: State CN Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 1.5 and 1.6; count of the number of charter schools for SY 2015–16 as reported by the National Alliance of Charter Schools.

Table D-2—Average price charged by SFAs for a full price breakfast, SY 2011–12 to SY 2015–16, by SFA characteristics and school type

	Elementary					Middle					High				
	'11/12	'12/13	'13/14	'14/15	'15/16	'11/12	'12/13	'13/14	'14/15	'15/16	'11/12	'12/13	'13/14	'14/15	'15/16
All SFAs	\$1.19	^a \$1.24	^b \$1.28	\$1.32	^c \$1.37	\$1.26	^a \$1.32	^b \$1.34	\$1.40	^c \$1.45	\$1.27	^a \$1.32	^b \$1.36	\$1.40	^c \$1.46
SFA Size¹															
Small (1–999 students)	\$1.17	\$1.24	\$1.29	\$1.30	\$1.35	\$1.24	\$1.34	\$1.34	\$1.42	\$1.45	\$1.22	\$1.29	\$1.34	\$1.41	\$1.44
Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	\$1.21	\$1.25	\$1.28	\$1.34	\$1.39	\$1.27	\$1.31	\$1.35	\$1.37	\$1.45	\$1.30	\$1.34	\$1.37	\$1.39	\$1.46
Large (5,000–24,999 students)	\$1.17	\$1.22	\$1.24	\$1.33	\$1.36	\$1.26	\$1.30	\$1.33	\$1.41	\$1.45	\$1.28	\$1.33	\$1.36	\$1.44	\$1.48
Very large (25,000+ students)	\$1.16	\$1.21	\$1.22	\$1.30	\$1.43	\$1.25	\$1.29	\$1.32	\$1.42	\$1.49	\$1.27	\$1.32	\$1.34	\$1.40	\$1.50
Urbanicity²															
City	\$1.31	\$1.37	\$1.34	\$1.34	\$1.48	\$1.29	\$1.47	\$1.41	\$1.52	\$1.55	\$1.32	\$1.42	\$1.38	\$1.45	\$1.51
Suburban	\$1.23	\$1.28	\$1.30	\$1.42	\$1.44	\$1.32	\$1.36	\$1.39	\$1.48	\$1.50	\$1.41	\$1.45	\$1.47	\$1.52	\$1.54
Town	\$1.21	\$1.21	\$1.28	\$1.31	\$1.38	\$1.25	\$1.27	\$1.36	\$1.37	\$1.44	\$1.26	\$1.29	\$1.36	\$1.38	\$1.44
Rural	\$1.14	\$1.21	\$1.24	\$1.27	\$1.31	\$1.23	\$1.29	\$1.30	\$1.33	\$1.41	\$1.21	\$1.26	\$1.30	\$1.35	\$1.41
Poverty Level³															
Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	\$1.28	\$1.33	\$1.38	\$1.42	\$1.48	\$1.38	\$1.46	\$1.47	\$1.48	\$1.58	\$1.42	\$1.49	\$1.53	\$1.48	\$1.60
Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	\$1.19	\$1.24	\$1.27	\$1.33	\$1.38	\$1.27	\$1.30	\$1.34	\$1.41	\$1.46	\$1.26	\$1.31	\$1.35	\$1.41	\$1.45
High (60 percent or higher F/RP)	\$1.10	\$1.18	\$1.19	\$1.26	\$1.31	\$1.13	\$1.25	\$1.23	\$1.34	\$1.37	\$1.13	\$1.22	\$1.24	\$1.36	\$1.39
Region^{4,5}															
Mid-Atlantic	na	na	na	\$1.31	\$1.32	na	na	na	\$1.45	\$1.43	na	na	na	\$1.42	\$1.42
Midwest	na	na	na	\$1.35	\$1.39	na	na	na	\$1.40	\$1.46	na	na	na	\$1.44	\$1.46
Mountain Plains	na	na	na	\$1.35	\$1.40	na	na	na	\$1.42	\$1.48	na	na	na	\$1.43	\$1.47
Northeast	na	na	na	\$1.30	\$1.38	na	na	na	\$1.43	\$1.51	na	na	na	\$1.43	\$1.55
Southeast	na	na	na	\$1.21	\$1.38	na	na	na	\$1.25	\$1.36	na	na	na	\$1.21	\$1.30
Southwest	na	na	na	\$1.19	\$1.19	na	na	na	\$1.29	\$1.29	na	na	na	\$1.23	\$1.27
Western	na	na	na	\$1.45	\$1.56	na	na	na	\$1.52	\$1.64	na	na	na	\$1.67	\$1.75

¹ The average price for a full price breakfast in elementary, middle, and high schools in SY 2013–14 differed significantly by SFA size.

² The average price for a full price breakfast in elementary, middle, and high schools in SYs 2012–13, 2013–14, 2014–15, and 2015–16 differed significantly by urbanicity in each year.

³ The average price for a full price breakfast in elementary, middle, and high schools in SYs 2012–13, 2013–14, 2014–15, and 2015–16 differed significantly by poverty level in each year.

⁴ The average price charged for a full price breakfast in elementary, middle, and high schools in SYs 2014–15 and 2015–16 differed significantly by region.

⁵ Data for the average price charged for a full price breakfast were not available for SY 2011–12 to SY 2013–14.

^a Difference between SY 2011–12 and SY 2012–13 is significant in elementary, middle, and high schools.

^b Difference between SY 2012–13 and SY 2013–14 is significant in elementary, middle, and high schools.

^c Difference between SY 2014–15 and SY 2015–16 is significant in elementary, middle, and high schools.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 3.1 and 3.2.1. See Table 8-4: Average price charged by SFAs for a full priced student breakfast, by grade level and SFA characteristics, SY 2009–10 to SY 2013–14 (Elem, Mid, High) In *Special Nutrition Program operations study (SN-OPS): SY 2013–14 report*. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ops/SNOPSyr3.pdf>

Table D-3—Average price charged by SFAs for a full price breakfast in “other” schools,¹ SY 2011–12 to SY 2015–16, by SFA characteristics

	Average Price by School Year				
	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16
All SFAs	\$1.23	^a \$1.26	^b \$1.30	\$1.38	^c \$1.41
SFA Size²					
Small (1–999 students)	\$1.24	\$1.26	\$1.32	\$1.40	\$1.42
Medium (1,000–4,999 students)	\$1.26	\$1.27	\$1.27	\$1.35	\$1.40
Large (5,000–24,999 students)	\$1.17	\$1.23	\$1.29	\$1.36	\$1.37
Very large (25,000+ students)	\$1.21	\$1.31	\$1.30	\$1.37	\$1.52
Urbanicity³					
City	\$1.46	\$1.47	\$1.36	\$1.51	\$1.62
Suburban	\$1.26	\$1.29	\$1.37	\$1.38	\$1.44
Town	\$1.24	\$1.28	\$1.30	\$1.36	\$1.42
Rural	\$1.16	\$1.22	\$1.22	\$1.32	\$1.35
Poverty Level⁴					
Low (0–29 percent F/RP)	\$1.52	\$1.52	\$1.57	\$1.44	\$1.49
Medium (30–59 percent F/RP)	\$1.20	\$1.28	\$1.27	\$1.39	\$1.41
High (60 percent or higher F/RP)	\$1.11	\$1.12	\$1.23	\$1.35	\$1.38
Region^{5,6}					
Mid-Atlantic	na	na	na	\$1.23	\$1.31
Midwest	na	na	na	\$1.36	\$1.41
Mountain Plains	na	na	na	\$1.47	\$1.50
Northeast	na	na	na	\$1.31	\$1.34
Southeast	na	na	na	\$1.23	\$1.28
Southwest	na	na	na	\$1.26	\$1.30
Western	na	na	na	\$1.62	\$1.62

¹ “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 The average price charged for breakfast in “other” schools in SY 2012–13 and SY 2013–14 differed significantly by SFA Size.

³ The average price charged for breakfast in “other” schools in SY 2013–14 differed significantly by urbanicity.

⁴ The average price charged for breakfast in “other” schools in SY 2012–13 and SY 2013–14 differed significantly by poverty level.

⁵ The average price charged for a full price breakfast in “other” schools in SY 2014–15 differed significantly by region. The average price charged for a full price breakfast in “other” schools in SY 2015–16 differed significantly by region.

⁶ Data for the average price charged for a full price breakfast was not available (na) for SY 2011–12 to SY 2013–14.

^a Difference between SY 2011–12 and SY 2012–13 is significant.

^b Difference between SY 2012–13 and SY 2013–14 is significant.

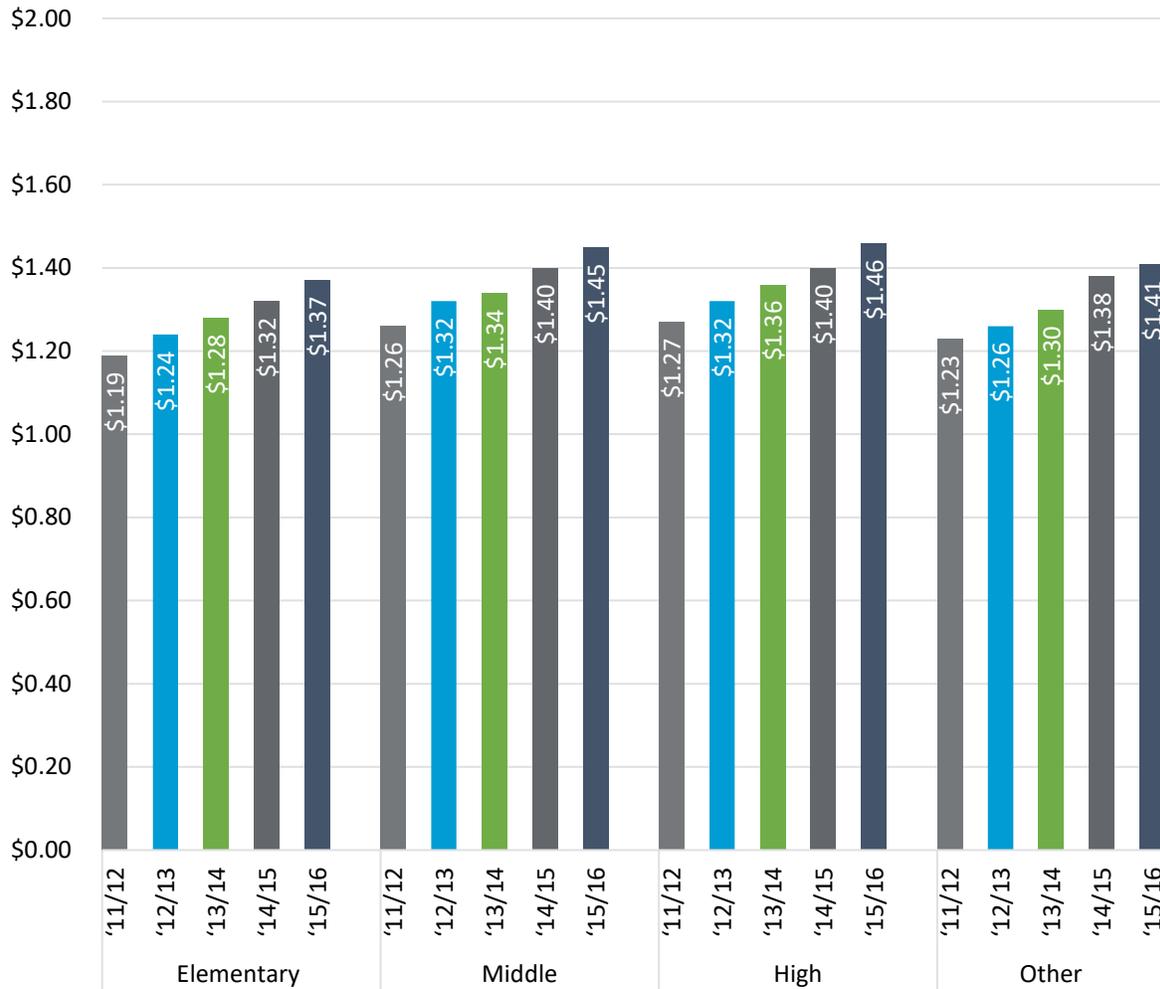
^c Difference between SY 2014–15 and SY 2015–16 is significant.

Note: Data for SY 2011–12, SY 2012–13, and SY 2013–14 adapted from SN-OPS Year 3.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 3.1 and 3.2.1. See Table 8-5: Average price charged by SFAs for a full price student breakfast in “other schools,” by SFA characteristics, SY 2009–10 to SY 2013–14 (“Other” Schools). In *Special Nutrition Program operations study (SN-OPS): SY 2013–14 report*. Retrieved from

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ops/SNOPSyr3.pdf>

Figure D-2—Average price charged by SFAs for a full price breakfast, SY 2011–12 to SY 2015–16, by school type



Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 3.1 and 3.2.1. See Table 8-4: Average price charged by SFAs for a full priced student breakfast, by grade level and SFA characteristics, SY 2009–10 to SY 2013–14 (Elementary, Middle, High). In *Special Nutrition Program operations study (SN-OPS): SY 2013–14 report*. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ops/SNOPSYr3.pdf>

Table D-4—Percentage of SFAs using various methods to track and count meals served to students in the cafeteria and at non-cafeteria POS, SY 2015–16

Method ¹	Percent of SFAs ²	
	Cafeteria	Non-Cafeteria
Coded tickets or tokens	5.0	1.1
Coded identification cards	33.6	12.3
Personal identification numbers (PINs)	78.7	43.2
Biometric technology (e.g., fingerprint scanners)	5.5	3.0
Rosters or cashier lists	54.5	51.5
Other ³	26.4	19.1
Weighted <i>n</i> (unweighted <i>n</i>)	14,619 (1,965)	6,948 (959)

¹ Multiple responses were allowed. Response options are presented as stated in the survey.
² Percentages are among those SFAs with each type of service setting.
³ SFA responses varied widely. Some examples of other methods that SFAs reported using to track and count meals include various third-party meal service software (e.g., Nutrikids, Schoolwise, Skyward, Common Goal, Meal Magic, Order Lunches, Power School, Accumeals, Food Service Solution, Etrition/Harris Computer), hand-held clickers, manual key entry, Google Drive, student name and facial recognition software, and headcount/tally at counter.
Source: SFA Director Survey, question 10.1.

Table D-5—Alternative POS methods used by SFAs for breakfast and lunch service, SY 2015–16

Alternative POS Method ¹	Percent of SFAs Offering Method	
	Breakfast	Lunch
Prepackaged meal (e.g., Grab-N-Go, bagged meals)	35.2	29.0
Meal delivery to the classroom	20.8	9.0
Kiosk or cart	14.1	7.9
Vending machine dispensed meal	1.0	1.2
Other (specify)	2.8	2.7
No response	2.0	3.4

¹ Multiple responses allowed. Response options are presented as stated in the survey.
Note: 1,984 SFAs provided a response, representing 14,824 SFAs in the population.
Source: SFA Director Survey, question 10.5.

Table D-6—Distribution of SFAs by annual revenues as a percentage of annual expenditures, SY 2013–14 and SY 2014–15

Annual Revenues as a Percentage of Annual Expenditures	SY 2013–14	SY 2014–15
	Percent of SFAs	Percent of SFAs
≤85 percent	17.9	17.3
86–90 percent	5.5	6.2
91–95 percent	10.4	11.8
96–100 percent (in break-even range, with lower revenues than expenditures)	21.1	21.9
101–105 percent (in break-even range, with higher revenues than expenditures)	21.9	18.8
106–110 percent	9.1	10.6
111–115 percent	4.8	3.6
≥116 percent	9.3	9.6
Total	100.0	100.0
Median Ratio (revenues/expenditures)	0.998	0.995

Note: Revenue and expenditure information for SY 2013–14 was provided by 1,434 SFAs, which represents 10,341 SFAs in the population. Revenue and expenditure information was provided by 1,446 SFAs information for SY 2014–15, which represents 10,436 SFAs in the population.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 12.1.1, 12.2.1, 12.5.1, and 12.6.1.

Table D-7—Percentage of SFAs that recovered money owed from unpaid school meals, among those that track the amount owed in SY 2014–15

Success of Recovery	Percent of SFAs
No money recovered	20.4
1–49 percent	23.3
50–59 percent	6.8
60–69 percent	5.1
70–79 percent	4.8
80–89 percent	5.2
90–99 percent	4.3
100 percent or more ¹	26.3
No response ²	3.7

¹ 5 SFAs reported an amount recovered greater than amount owed.

² No response for amount recovered.

Note: 1,148 SFAs that responded that they track the amount of money owed from unpaid school meals provided data for this table, representing 7,906 SFAs in the population.

Source: SFA Director Survey SY 2015–16, questions 6.7, 6.8, and 6.9.

Table D-8—Training and technical assistance that SAs provided to SFAs, “Other” category, SY 2015–16

Training and Technical Assistance in “Other” Category from Figure 6-5
Cafeteria as a classroom
Cafeteria coaching
Civil rights
Communications
Community Eligibility Provision
Community outreach—developing strategic partnerships
Contracting with food service management companies
Culinary arts/training
Electronic Systems
Farm Fresh universities
Farm to School
Financial Management
Food Distribution Program
Food preparation skills/ practical skills in meal preparation
Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program
Innovative meal service to increase participation
Leadership development
Local school wellness policies
Marketing
Meal appeal
New sponsor trainings
Offer vs. serve
Orientation for new school nutrition directors and/or managers
Personnel management
Procurement
Production records
Professional standards/development
Resource management
Salad bars
Satelliting meals throughout the school campus
School breakfast programs
School garden
School nutrition business plan development
Seamless Summer Option
Special needs
Supper Programs
Vegetarian meals
Working with commercial vendors
Writing effective proposals for grants

Source: SA Director Survey SY 2015–16, question 2.2.