

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

ATTACHMENT O.1-ADVANCE LETTER TO STATE

**MATHEMATICA**  
**Policy Research**

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DATE

<<Name>>, <<Title>>  
<<State Agency>>  
<<Address>>  
<<City, State Zip>>

Dear <<Name>>:

As you know, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), has contracted with Mathematica Policy Research and its subcontractors, Westat, Inc. and Decision Information Resources, to conduct a national study of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). The study is examining participation, eligibility, and certification in the NSLP and the SBP. A key objective of the study is to derive estimates of the amounts and sources of erroneous reimbursements due to certification error (administrative errors and household misreporting) and meal counting and claiming errors. Under the 2002 Improper Payments Information Act, all Federal agencies that administer large programs are required to report these findings to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

Within the next couple of months Mathematica will complete work collecting data from the study's nationally representative samples of school districts and schools and students within those sampled districts. These data will be used to estimate erroneous payments for school year (SY) 2012-2013. These findings will be reported to OMB later this year.

Mathematica is also developing and validating models that FNS will use in the future to produce annual estimates of certification errors and amounts of erroneous payments in the NSLP and SBP to meet federal reporting requirements to Congress. These models will be based on administrative records data and other easily obtainable existing data sources such as the Common Core Data, Census data and the FNS-742 data maintained by USDA.

Mathematica will be contacting you soon to ask you to provide meal program data for SY 2012-2013 for each sampled school district in your state or territory. Mathematica will request information on the number of reimbursable lunches and breakfasts served, the number of schools and enrolled students by Provision 2 and 3 status, and the number of students and schools or combinations of schools that are participating in the Community Eligibility Option (CEO). Mathematica will also coordinate matching student records collected from CEO schools in the study with existing State records. It is Mathematica's preference to obtain these data in electronic format.

Should you have any questions about the study please contact Mathematica's study director, Laura Castner, at (202) 484-3282 or e-mail her at [lcaster@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto:lcaster@mathematica-mpr.com). The USDA contact for the study is Renee Arroyo-Lee Sing (USDA, FNS, Office of Analysis, Nutrition, and Evaluation). Ms. Arroyo-Lee Sing's telephone number is (703) 305-2126 or she can be reached by e-mail at [renee.arroyo-leesing@fns.usda.gov](mailto:renee.arroyo-leesing@fns.usda.gov)

Thank you in advance for your help and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Director, Child Nutrition Division

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 collection is 0584-0530. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 3-5 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, searching existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collected.

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