

State (Year 1&2) Follow-up Email for On-Site Recruitment

Dear [State Child Nutrition Director],

Thank you for participating in the **Evaluation of the Community Eligibility (CE) Option**. As you may know, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture has contracted with Abt Associates to conduct this evaluation.

The information that you have already provided to us has been very valuable. Using the data about your local education agencies (LEAs) that you have provided, we have selected the sample of LEAs that we would like to recruit to take part in the evaluation. We are contacting you today to ask for your help in recruiting these LEAs. Our immediate recruitment efforts will be focused on those LEAs that have been selected for the on-site data collection portion of our evaluation. Attached is a list of these LEAs.

These LEAs and up to three schools within each LEA have been selected for the on-site data collection. The list includes LEAs that are participating in it for SY 2012/13 and LEAs that are not. The LEAs and schools were carefully sampled so that they are comparable, and therefore will allow us to examine the impacts of the CE Option.

In the LEAs on the list labeled “Menu Survey”, cafeteria managers at the three sampled schools will be asked to participate in a one-week menu survey of NSLP and SBP meals offered, a review of meal counting and claiming procedures, and facilitating an observation of meals taken by students and cashier transactions.

For all LEAs on the list, the on-site data collection will involve in-person interviews with the LEA Foodservice director, school cafeteria managers, and (where needed) school administrators about administrative costs. LEAs will also be asked to facilitate a Certification Record Abstraction for 114 to 150 certification records per LEA, spread over up to 3 sampled schools.

We will also ask the LEA Foodservice Directors to complete a Web-based survey on Participation, Enrollment, Attendance and Revenue (PEAR). This survey will collect data from four school years, SY 2009/10 through SY 2012/13. LEAs will be offered the options of completing the web survey or the paper version of the survey. As indicated in our previous letter to you, we hope that your State can provide some of the data that we need, so that we can substantially reduce the burden on the LEAs.

Finally, the LEA Foodservice Directors will be asked to complete a 24- to 30-minute implementation Web survey focusing on experiences and opinions of the CE Option. Additional LEAs, not included on the attached list, will be identified at a later date and recruited to complete this implementation survey. Some of these additional LEAs will also be asked to complete the PEAR survey.

We need your help in making this a successful study. We hope that you can help us by contacting the selected LEAs to encourage them to participate. Attached is a sample letter that you may use for that

purpose, if desired. In addition, we hope that you can help us secure necessary approvals from the school principals and district superintendents, if necessary.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in this important study. In the meantime, if you have any questions regarding the project, feel free to call me at (855) 759-5752 or via email at CommunityEligibility@abtassoc.com. You may also call John Endahl, the FNS Project Officer, at (703) 305-2127 or via email at john.endahl@fns.usda.gov.

Sincerely,

Patty Connor
Project Director
Abt Associates