

Community Eligibility Option Evaluation

State Education Agency (SEA) Survey

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Hello, my name is ___ and I’m calling from Abt Associates on behalf of the Food and Nutrition Service (of the USDA) about the Community Eligibility Option Evaluation. May I please speak with _____? Thank you for taking the time to talk briefly with me today.

A. Before we start the survey, I would like to confirm your name, title, and the State office you are affiliated with. I have... *[READ, WILL BE PRE-POPULATED]*

Name:

Title:

State Office:

B. Were you able to complete the Phone Survey Worksheet I sent you on DATE ?

YES *[IF NECESSARY: “Would you please get that now?”] → GO TO INTRODUCTION*

NO → *READ: “Some of the questions for this survey may not pertain to your area of expertise. The Phone Survey Worksheet is designed to help you gather information about State fund allocation for a variety of programs. I would like to complete this survey after you have had time to review and complete this worksheet. When would that be?” [SET CALLBACK; RESEND WORKSHEET IF NECESSARY]*

[INTRODUCTION]

Great, thank you. To refresh you on what this interview is about, one component of the Food and Nutrition Service Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 is the Community Eligibility Option. The USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service has hired Abt Associates to conduct an evaluation of this Option. The Option is implemented in 7 States this year, 4 more States will join next year, and then all States will be eligible in school year 2014-15. Under this Option, participating schools and districts are no longer required to certify the eligibility of every student for free or reduced-price meals by reviewing household applications. Instead, the school or district is reimbursed for a fixed percentage of the meals it serves based on the percentage of directly certified students, that is, students who are already certified as eligible for benefits under other Federal programs such as

SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR. In participating schools, all meals are served free of charge and the Local Education Agency [IF NECESSARY: “LEA or school district”] must use non-Federal funds to pay for the costs of these meals in excess of the Federal reimbursements. The potential benefits are that more students may be offered nutritious meals and schools and school districts may experience reduced administrative burden. A big difference, however, is that the Free and Reduced Price Lunch data are not available for participating schools and districts. Many States, districts, and schools use Free and Reduced Price Lunch data for things other than determining eligibility for the School Breakfast and Lunch programs. Today we are interested in knowing what these uses are in your State and how your State might need to adjust if these data were not available for schools and districts participating in the Community Eligibility Option.

C. Do you have any questions about the Community Eligibility Option or what I am trying to learn today? [ANSWER QUESTIONS AS NEEDED]

Information provided in this survey will be kept private, to the extent provided by law. No data will be attributed to specific survey respondents. De-identified data from this study will be provided to the Food and Nutrition Service of the U.S Department of Agriculture, and aggregate measures of subgroups of Local Education Agencies (LEAs) may also be provided. Responses to the study will in no way affect your agency’s receipt of funds from USDA’s school meals program. As you may know, the Healthy-Free Kids Act of 2010 (PL 111-296, Section 305) requires cooperation with program research and evaluation by agencies and contractors participating in programs authorized under the Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966.

[IF NECESSARY, READ: If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a study participant, call Teresa Doksum. She is the Institutional Review Board Administrator at Abt Associates. Her phone number is 877-520-6835 (toll-free).

Going forward, I will refer to Free and Reduced Price Lunch data as “FRPL.” Also, when I say “LEA,” I am referring to a Local Education Agency, often called a school district.

There are two categories of use for the FRPL data that we are interested in learning more about: reporting and allocation of funds. Let’s talk about any reporting that your State does to the Federal government.

Reporting

1. Does your State use FRPL data in any of its reporting to the Federal government, other than for the School Breakfast and Lunch Programs?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Don’t know

2. Does your State use FRPL data for reporting to the Federal government related to No Child Left Behind (NCLB)?
 - Yes → ASK 4 NEXT
 - No → ASK 3 NEXT
 - Don’t know → ASK 3 NEXT

3. What does your State use to identify economically disadvantaged students for NCLB (No Child Left Behind)?

[SPECIFY] _____

4. Can you tell me about any **other** types of reporting to the Federal government that your State uses FRPL data for?

[SPECIFY] _____

-

Allocation of Funds

Now let’s talk about allocation of State-level funds or Federal level funds that your State has control over.

5. Do any of your LEAs (districts) **allocate** Title 1 funds to schools based on FRPL data?

- Yes
- No
- Don’t know

I will now ask you questions about different methods of allocating State funds to schools and LEAs, as described on the “Phone Survey Worksheet.” For each item, please tell me if your State uses FRPL data to allocate State Funds to LEAs or to schools, and if your State requires LEAs to use FRPL data to allocate State funds to schools for that item.

6. READ EACH PROGRAM, AND ASK THE THREE QUESTIONS ACROSS THE ROW:

Item/Program	Does your STATE use FRPL data to allocate State funds to....				Does your State require LEAs (districts) to use FRPL data to allocate State funds to schools for:
	... LEAs (districts) for:		... schools for:		
a. Early childhood education programs	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
b. Tutoring programs	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
c. Vocational and technical education programs	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
d. Telecommunication and internet expenses (the E-rate initiative)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
e. Literacy and reading programs	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
f. Special education programs	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
g. Curriculum development	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
h. After school programming	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
i. Teacher professional development	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
j. Other (specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
k. Other (specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
l. Other (specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
m. Other (specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

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7. Does your State require LEAs to waive fees for low income students through the use of FRPL data?
- Yes → ASK 8 NEXT
 - No → ASK 9 NEXT
 - Don't know → ASK 9 NEXT
8. Does your State require LEAs to use FRPL data to determine the allocation of funding to support waivers for:
- [READ ANSWER CATEGORIES BELOW, CHECK IF ANSWER YES]*
- Transportation
 - Advanced Placement tests
 - Sports fees
 - Textbooks
 - Any other support waivers? *[SPECIFY]* _____
 - Don't know

Other

9. Does your State use FRPL data for any **planning** purposes?
- Yes
 - No
 - Don't know
10. Many states are moving towards value-added models of teacher effectiveness and include students' FRPL status in these models. Does your state use FRPL data for this purpose?
- Yes
 - No
 - Don't know

Data Sources

Next, I would next like to discuss data sources that could replace FRPL. One is the American Community Survey, which is an ongoing, annual survey conducted by the Census Bureau. It is intended as an improved replacement for many uses of long-form Census data. Income and poverty data are part of this survey and can be aggregated for school districts.

[IF ASKED: More information is at www.census.gov/acs]

11. If your State didn't have the FRPL data, do you think it would consider using the American Community Survey data for the purposes you currently use FRPL data for?
- Yes
 - No
 - Don't Know

12. What other sources of data do you think your State would consider using (to replace FRPL data)?

- Don't Know → ASK 14 NEXT

[SPECIFY] _____

13. How do you think these other data sources will compare with FRPL data? Would you say they will be not as good, as good, or better?

- Not as good
- As good
- Better
- Don't Know → ASK 14 NEXT

14. Do you think other data sources would be adequate to meet the needs of what you currently use the FRPL data for in your State?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

15. Do you think your State would use **more than one** source of data (to replace FRPL data)?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

16. Do you know if any **LEAs** in your State use the FRPL data for any purposes that are not specifically mandated by the State? Please think about the use of both aggregated data and individual level data.

- Yes → ASK 17 NEXT
- No → ASK 18 NEXT
- Don't Know → ASK 18 NEXT

17. Please briefly describe these ways in which LEAs use the FRPL data.

[SPECIFY] _____

18. Are there other State agencies that use FRPL data that you are aware of?

- Yes → ASK 19 NEXT
- No → ASK 21 NEXT

19. What agencies?

[SPECIFY] _____

20. Do you know what they use the FRPL data for?

[SPECIFY] _____

Communication

21. Have there been discussions about the Community Eligibility Option at the State level that you are aware of?

- Yes → ASK QUESTION 22
- No → GO TO QUESTION 23
- Don't Know → GO TO QUESTION 23

22. What has been the nature of those discussions?

[SPECIFY] _____

23. Has there been communication between the offices at the Federal Department of Education (that allocate Federal and State Funds) and your office about the Community Eligibility Option?

- Yes → ASK QUESTION 24
- No → GO TO CONCLUSION
- Don't Know → GO TO CONCLUSION

24. What has been the nature of these discussions?

[SPECIFY] _____

[CONCLUSION]

This concludes our interview. Thank you again for your time. I invite you to send me an email at CommunityEligibility@abtassoc.com after this interview if other uses of the FRPL data come to mind.

Community Eligibility Option Evaluation

State Education Agency (SEA) Phone Survey Worksheet

Please complete this worksheet in preparation for the Community Eligibility Option Evaluation State telephone survey.

Often times, there is not one person at the State level who is knowledgeable about all the ways Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL) data are used. If this is true for your State, please take the time to contact other departments to ask if FRPL data are used for any of the following programs:

Item/Program	Does your STATE use FRPL data to allocate State funds to....		Does your State require LEAs (districts) to use FRPL data to allocate State funds to schools for:
	... LEAs (districts) for:	... schools for:	
a. Early childhood education programs	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
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k. Other (specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
l. Other (specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
m. Other (specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No