

APPENDIX C

RESEARCH ISSUES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Appendix C

Table C-1. Year 3 Research Issues and Questions for State Child Nutrition Director survey

Issue	Question
<p>Section A: Administrative Review Process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How many states completed (by March 31, 2014) menu reviews using Option 1, 2, 3 or the <i>Menu Planning Tool for Certification for Six Cent Reimbursement</i>? Of those using Option 1 or Option 3, how many had Nutrient Analyses conducted by state agency staff? How many of the reviews conducted under Option 3 were successfully validated? ▪ How many SFAs in the state received a Resource Management Comprehensive Review? Of these, how many were conducted due to failure to complete the Resource Management Risk indicator at least 4 weeks prior to the onsite review? ▪ How many abbreviated Special Provision Option reviews were conducted (when a school was not selected for an SPO review in a non-base year)? ▪ Among schools selected for Administrative Review and operating an Afterschool Snack Program (ASP), how many onsite reviews were conducted? ▪ How many dollars did states assess the Fiscal Actions (FA) designed to recover overpayments? How many overclaims were disregarded using the \$600 disregard of overclaim provision? ▪ How many SFAs in the state appealed findings from the new Administrative Review process? How many of these had had findings resulting in Fiscal Actions? ▪ In how many states did findings based on the State's Meal Access and Reimbursement Performance Standard 1 increase or decrease under the new Administrative Review process? ▪ How many SFA reviews of students' certification and benefit issuance documentation were conducted through a census of all free and reduced price eligible students? A sampling method at the 95% confidence level? The 99% confidence level? ▪ How do states rate the new Administrative Review process? What is the most important recommendation they would make to FNS on the new Administrative Review process?
<p>Section B: Resources and Finances State subsidies to SFAs</p> <p>Budget issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does the state provide financial resources for school meals to SFAs in the form of per-meal subsidies? What was the total amount given? ▪ Does the state provide support for any other aspects of the school food service operation? ▪ Do states have adequate staffing resources for monitoring? ▪ Have states been able to fully-use Federal funds provided to administer the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP)? What challenges have impeded state's ability to fully-use Federal funds? What actions impacted states' ability to fully-use Federal funds? ▪ Did states request funding reallocation for 2012-13? If not, what was the primary reason for not requesting reallocation? ▪ Are states using contracted staff for certain functions?
<p>Section C: Operational Procedures Provision 2/3 Food service management companies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How many SFAs and schools are operating under each provision? ▪ How many SFAs/schools are using Food Service Management Companies (FSMCs)? How many of these are national, regional, or local companies?

Issue	Question
<p>Charter schools</p> <p>USDA Foods</p> <p>Reallocation of unused entitlement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How many charter schools are participating in the SBP and/or NSLP? ▪ For purposes of school food operations, are charter schools treated as a separate SFA, as part of an existing SFA, or a combination of both? Does this vary by state? ▪ Do states allow SFAs to order from the full list of USDA foods? How do states obtain feedback from SFAs regarding which USDA Foods to offer? ▪ How do SFAs submit their requests for specific quantities of USDA Foods? ▪ How often can SFAs order USDA Foods? ▪ How do states reallocate unused entitlement at the end of the School Year? ▪ Do states review SFA cooperative purchasing agreements or GPO contracts prior to their execution? If so, under what circumstances? ▪ Do states have prototype procurement documents or model contracts for SFAs, cooperatives, or GPOs can use when contracting services? If so, under what circumstances is use of these procurement documents or model contracts mandatory?
<p>Section D: State Data Systems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How many states have standardized computer-based reporting systems that are used by some or all SFAs to send data on school meal programs to the State? What services are provided by these systems, and what functions are available? In what year was each system first implemented? ▪ How are these systems linked to SFAs, schools or other sites (e.g., online, web-based, encrypted vs. unencrypted email)? ▪ Who developed the systems (e.g., a vendor, state child nutrition IT staff, other state IT staff)? What was the primary funding source? ▪ How satisfied are states with their systems? ▪ Does the system allow the state to upload required data to USDA's Food Programs Reporting System (FRPS)? If so, how satisfied are states with the link to FRPS?

**THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT
BLANK**

Table C-2. Year 3 Research Issues and Questions for SFA Director Survey

Issue	Question
Section 1: School Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How many schools participate in SBP and/or NSLP? How many schools participate in the NSLP Afterschool Snack Program or the At-Risk Supper Program? ▪ How many schools participating in SBP are eligible for severe need reimbursement? How many schools are participating in NSLP as high need?
Section 2: Student Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What percentage of students are certified for free or reduced-price meals? ▪ What percentage of students do not have access to the SBP or NSLP? ▪ What was the average daily attendance for students? ▪ How many breakfast and lunch serving days were in the 2013-2014 school year?
Section 3: Food Service Operations Special Provision Options Application Processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How many schools are operating under Special Provision Options for NSLP and SBP? ▪ What is the likelihood that schools will elect the Community Eligibility Provision when the option becomes available? ▪ What is the primary format of the system parents use to apply for free or reduced-price meals certification? ▪ With what other systems are application processing systems integrated? ▪ Who developed the application processing systems? ▪ What percentage of districts determine eligibility with an automated system? ▪ What percentage of districts use standardized criteria to identify applications for verification for cause?
Section 4: Cooperative Purchasing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What percentage of SFAs use management companies or cooperative purchasing agreements for procurement? What percentage pay fees? ▪ In what ways do SFAs oversee the execution of contracts or cooperative agreements? ▪ What percentage of SFAs have an advisory council? What percentage of advisory councils gather information from SFAs to inform their decision-making processes? ▪ What percentage of advisory councils elect members? On average, how long are council members' terms?
Section 5: New Meal Pattern Requirements General Implementation Nutrient Requirements Purchasing Changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How challenging has it been to continue to implement the meal patterns? ▪ Has plate waste changed as a result of the new patterns? What are the reasons for the change? ▪ How challenging has it been for SFAs to meet the new nutrition standards for breakfast? ▪ What changes have taken place in serving fruit and vegetables at breakfast or lunch because of the new meal patterns? ▪ How difficult has it been for SFAs to meet the 50 percent whole grain-rich requirements at breakfast or lunch? ▪ What proportion of SFAs have difficulty meeting minimum calorie requirements or not exceeding maximum calorie requirements for grade-age groups? ▪ What is the current average daily sodium content of meals served? ▪ What practices will SFAs use to meet sodium targets? ▪ What adjustments have SFAs made to meet student requests for additional food? ▪ What proportion of SFAs have changed the types and amounts of USDA Foods ordered to implement the new meal patterns? ▪ Which vegetable groups do SFAs have difficulty purchasing? What are the reasons

Issue	Question
Implementation Assistance	<p>for the difficulty?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For which meal components do SFAs use USDA Foods to meet the new meal pattern requirements? ▪ How many SFAs use the USDA sharing website? ▪ What percentage of SFAs are certified for the additional 6 cents per lunch reimbursement? What are the reasons SFAs have not submitted materials for the additional reimbursement?
Section 6: Meal Prices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What is the average price charged for full-price, reduced-price, and adult breakfasts and lunches for the current school year? ▪ What actions did SFAs take in response to the paid lunch equity provision? ▪ What non-Federal revenue sources did SFAs use to mitigate potential price increases in paid meals? ▪ What was the weighted average price of paid NSLP meals in the current school year? ▪ How many SFAs have increased a la carte prices over the past year? For what types of foods have prices increased? How much have prices increased?
Section 7: Revenues and Expenditures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What was the total dollar amount of food service program revenues for the 2012-2013 school year? What was the total dollar amount of food service expenditures for the 2012-2013 school year?
Section 8: Farm to School Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What percentage of SFAs participated in Farm to School activities in the 2012-2013 school year? How many schools participated in Farm to School activities? How many schools had edible gardens? ▪ What food items do SFAs purchase locally? ▪ How often do districts' meals or snacks include components purchased locally? ▪ What were total food costs in the 2012-2013 school year? What were total food costs excluding USDA Foods and DoD Fresh? ▪ What percentage of food purchases were spent on locally sourced foods, including and excluding milk? ▪ What proportion of SFAs might increase or decrease their local purchases for the 2014-2015 school year?
Section 9: Food Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In which locations are foods served to students? ▪ Who serves food to students? ▪ What percentage of SFAs allow outside groups to use SFA kitchens without school nutrition staff oversight? ▪ What percentage of SFAs have a health and hygiene policy for school nutrition employees? When may employees return to work after symptoms of vomiting or diarrhea? ▪ What proportion of SFAs offer paid sick leave to full- and part-time school nutrition employees? ▪ How many SFAs have been investigated as part of a foodborne illness outbreak? What are sources of outbreaks?
Section 10: Smarter Lunchrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What proportion of SFA directors have heard of the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement? ▪ What percentage of SFAs have school nutrition staff who have received Smarter Lunchrooms training? ▪ Approximately how many schools in each SFA are implementing various Smarter Lunchroom strategies? How many were using at least one strategy in the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years?