

C9. GROUP 3—FOODSERVICE MANAGER INTRODUCTION LETTER

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<DATE>

<FSM_FN> <FSM_LN>
<School>

Dear <FSM_FN> <FSM_LN>:

Recently, your school was selected for the School Nutrition and Meal Cost Study (SNMCS) as part of your school food authority's required participation in the study. Mathematica Policy Research and Abt Associates are conducting the SNMCS for the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The study will examine the food and nutrient content of school meals offered and served, as well as meal costs and revenues. It will also provide needed information to assess the effects of the new nutrition standards on food service operations. The enclosed fact sheet provides an overview of the SNMCS.

The study will include several different data collection components at your school. The principal has been notified of these activities and the study will coordinate directly with their staff (or a school liaison) on activities that do not involve food service operations. We will send professionally trained field interviewers to conduct interviews and make observations.

The following data collection activities are set to take place in your school food authority (SFA) and school during the 2014–2015 school year:

Menu Survey. You will be asked to complete a detailed Menu Survey. This web-based survey will collect information on the foods offered and served in reimbursable lunches, breakfasts, and afterschool snacks (if offered) during a target week, and a la carte foods available on a single day. There will also be a set of survey questions asking about food service operations and related policies. Instructions will be available with the survey and technical assistants will be available by phone and email to answer any questions. You will receive \$50 as thanks for completing the survey.

Cafeteria Observations. Data collectors will observe one lunch and one breakfast period (if the school participates in the School Breakfast Program) in each sampled school to document characteristics of food service operations.

Competitive Foods Checklists. The school liaison will be asked to complete a set of forms detailing the availability to students of vending machine items and other sources of food such as school stores.

Plate Waste Observations. Data collectors will estimate the proportion of foods wasted by students in order to assess the nutrient and food group composition of foods wasted, and to assess the relationship between plate waste and characteristics of students, school food environments, and school food service operations.

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-XXXX. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 8 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection.



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Principal, SFA Director, Business Manager, and School Nutrition Manager Cost Interviews. You, along with the principal, designated SFA directors, and business managers, will be asked to participate in an interview to provide information about the full cost of food service, including indirect and administrative costs.

SFA Director and Principal Surveys. The SFA Director and Principal Surveys are web-based questionnaires that cover district policies and school characteristics related to food service operations, nutrition education and physical activity and education.

Participation in the study by selected states, districts, and schools is required under Section 305 of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA). Your participation in this study is extremely valuable, and we appreciate the time and effort that you and other school staff will devote to the study. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our project team at 855-###-####, or e-mail SNMCS@abtassoc.com.

We look forward to working with you on this important study.

Sincerely,

Maria Boyle
Project Director (Abt Associates)
Abt Associates



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