

**C10. GROUP 2—PRINCIPAL INTRODUCTION LETTER TO SCHOOLS**

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OMB Control # 0584-XXXX  
Expiration Date: XX/XX/20XX

**Michael Ponza**  
Project Director  
(510) 830 3707

<Date>

<P\_FN> <P\_LN>  
<School>

Dear <P\_FN> <P\_LN>:

Recently, your school was selected for the School Nutrition and Meal Cost Study (SNMCS) as part of your district's participation in the study. Mathematica Policy Research is conducting the SNMCS for the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). 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). The study will examine the food and nutrient content of school meals as well as meal costs and revenues. The study comes at a critical time as child nutrition continues to be a pressing issue faced by educators and policymakers. The enclosed fact sheet provides an overview of the SNMCS.

We will be conducting data collection efforts at your school, typically over one or two days. We will send professionally trained field interviewers to conduct interviews and make observations. We are asking for your support to ensure that this is a smooth process for everyone involved. **We request that a school liaison be designated so that study personnel can work directly with someone to coordinate the details of the data collection.** (This person should not typically be the food service manager. We are already working directly with the district's SFA director to coordinate study activities involving foodservice operations.)

The following data collection activities are set to take place in your school food authority (SFA) and school during the 2014–2015 school year. We are working with SFA director to centrally schedule all district activities in the study and will confirm that schedule with you, and/or your staff:

**Student and Parent Interviews.** Professional data collectors will interview a small sample of students and their parents randomly selected from district rosters. Selected parents and students will be notified about the study by mail. Participation is voluntary, and they may choose not to participate in advance or at the time of the interview if they wish. Interviewers will obtain information on student characteristics, dietary intake, and consumption of and satisfaction with school meals. Students' height and weight will be measured as part of the interview.

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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Student interviews will take place in schools. Parent interviews can take place at school during after-school hours or outside of school. Data collection activities will differ for elementary school students and those in middle and high schools and have been designed to be age appropriate. Kindergarten and prekindergarten students will not be included in the study.

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

**Principal Surveys.** The Principal Survey is a brief, web-based questionnaire that covers general school characteristics and school policies related to nutrition education and physical activity and education. Mathematica will be sending you an email invitation with a link to the web survey when it's ready to be completed.

**Competitive Foods Checklists.** The designated school liaison will be asked to complete a simple set of forms detailing the availability to students of vending machine items and other sources of food such as school stores. We will communicate with your school liaison by email or phone to get the checklist completed. This should typically require up to 30 minutes to complete, depending on the different sources of foods available.

**Menu Survey.** Your school's foodservice manager 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 specified week.

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 call a member of our project team at 1-888-xxx-xxxx, or email [xxxx@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto:xxxx@mathematica-mpr.com). We look forward to working with you on this important study.



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Sincerely,

Michael Ponza  
SNMCS Project Director  
Mathematica Policy Research