Attachment H - LEA Recruitment Letter

Date

<<Name>>, <<Title>>
<<Local Education Agency>>
<<Address>>
<<City, State, Zip>>

Dear <<Name>>:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is working with the White House Social and Behavioral Sciences Team (SBST) on a project to improve outcomes in the annual National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program verification process. The project will focus on the content and timing of communication between local educational agencies (LEAs) and households in order to identify practical strategies to reduce household non-response to LEA verification requests. Your LEA has been selected to participate.

Within the next couple of weeks, a member of the SBST will contact you by email or telephone to discuss the project in more detail and learn more about your LEA. The project will take place this school year, 2016-2017. The time leading up to the start of the project will be used to coordinate project activities, such as establishing points of contact, discussing your role in the process, and answering your questions.

About 38 percent of households contacted by their LEAs for supporting documentation failed to respond in SY 2014-2015. Non-response is a concern from both a program integrity and a program access point of view. As you know, non-respondents lose their free or reduced price benefits and must reapply with documentation to regain their eligibility.

Participation requires that LEAs be willing to share their current verification letter and procedures, and be willing to make some limited changes to their current verification letter and when these letters are sent. Your LEA has been selected as part of a sample, so the outcomes observed in your LEA will represent not only your own LEA, but other LEAs that are similar to yours. Participation by selected states and LEAs is required under Section 305 of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, and your cooperation is essential for completeness of data collection and success of the project.

A member of the project team will be following up directly with your office to provide more information and to coordinate your district's participation in the project. Feel free to contact the director of the research team, Nathaniel Higgins, with any questions about the project at (202) 302-9146 or by e-mail at Nathaniel.Higgins@gsa.gov. You should also feel free to contact USDA directly. USDA contacts include: (<<REGIONAL OFFICE DIRECTOR CONTACT>>) and Edward Harper (FNS, Child Nutrition Programs), who may be reached at (703) 305-2340 or by e-mail at Edward.Harper@fns.usda.gov. Your State's Child Nutrition Director, (<<CN DIRECTOR NAME>>), has already been contacted by the project team.

Thank you in advance for your help and cooperation. We look forward to working with you on this important project.

An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not 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 0584-0524. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average one (1) hour and thirty (30) minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

Sincerely,

An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer