

## **APPENDIX A1**

### **Research Issues and Research Questions**

Appendix A

**Table 1. CN-OPS II Research Issues and Questions for the Child Nutrition Director Survey (Year 1)**

<b>Issue/Module</b>	<b>Question</b>
<b>Food Service Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How many schools operate under Provision 2, Provision 3, and Community Eligibility?</li> <li>▪ How long have the schools operated under the provision?</li> <li>▪ How many schools operate in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) only, or both SBP and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)?</li> <li>▪ What is the increase in charter schools operating in NSLP and SBP?</li> </ul>
<b>Professional Standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What types of training and technical assistance are provided?</li> <li>▪ What sources of training and technical assistance are used?</li> <li>▪ Who is meeting the professional standards requirements for training?</li> <li>▪ Which hiring standards are being used?</li> <li>▪ How are State Agency Child Nutrition Directors tracking, or how do they anticipate tracking, annual continuing education/training requirements?</li> <li>▪ What differences do States experience with residential child care institutions that impact their ability to comply with professional standards requirements?</li> <li>▪ What difficulties do States experience with charter schools that impact compliance with professional standards requirements?</li> </ul>
<b>Child Nutrition Director Background</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Which hiring standards are being used?</li> </ul>

**Table 2. CN-OPS II Research Issues and Questions for the Child Nutrition Director Survey (Year 2)**

Issue/Module	Question
<b>Food Service Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What are State criteria for Independent Review of Applications in SFAs with high free and reduced price meal certification error?</li> <li>▪ How many SFAs and schools operate under Provision 2, Provision 3, and Community Eligibility?</li> <li>▪ How long have the schools operated under the Community Eligibility Provision?</li> <li>▪ How many schools operate in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) only, or both SBP and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)?</li> <li>▪ What is the increase in charter schools operating in NSLP and SBP?</li> </ul>
<b>Subsidies, Resources, and Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Does the State provide financial resources for school meals to SFAs in the form of per-meal subsidies? What was the total amount given?</li> <li>▪ Do States have adequate staffing resources for monitoring?</li> <li>▪ Does the State provide support for any other aspects of the school food service operation?</li> <li>▪ Have States been able to fully use Federal funds provided to administer the NSLP and the SBP? What challenges have impeded States' ability to fully use Federal funds? What actions impacted States' ability to fully use Federal funds?</li> <li>▪ Did States request funding reallocation for 2016-17? If not, what was the primary reason for not requesting reallocation?</li> <li>▪ Are States using contracted staff (staff employed by contractors, not directly by the State) for certain functions?</li> </ul>
<b>Procurement Procedures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What proportion of SFAs are using an FSMC?</li> <li>▪ Among SFAs that use FSMCs, what proportion use FSMCs that are national, regional, and local? Has this pattern changed over time?</li> <li>▪ Do States review FSMC contracts and cooperative purchasing agreements? If all such agreements are not reviewed, what circumstances trigger a review?</li> <li>▪ Do States require use of prototype contracts or agreements?</li> <li>▪ To what extent are SFA procurement procedures for goods and services for school meals (e.g., processors of USDA Foods; use of FSMCs; micropurchases, and local foods) monitored at the state level, if at all? How does this differ by state?</li> </ul>

<b>Issue/Module</b>	<b>Question</b>
<b>Free and Reduced Price Meal Application</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Do States issue or endorse prototype applications for free and reduced price school meals? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What sources are used for this prototype application’s design or layout?</li> <li>○ Which formats do States use to issue or endorse prototype applications for free and reduced price school meals?</li> <li>○ Are SFAs permitted to develop either the layout or content of their own application materials?</li> <li>○ What are State policies or procedures governing the development, approval, and/or use of applications by SFAs?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Do States issue or endorse prototype versions of application instructions, letters of FAQs for households, communications with households, or any other related materials? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What sources are used for these materials?</li> <li>○ Are State issued or endorsed application materials required for SFAs to use?</li> <li>○ Do states have policies in place governing the development or use of application materials for free and reduced price school meals by SFAs?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>USDA Grants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Are states aware of Team Nutrition Grants, Administrative Review &amp; Training (ART) Grants, and Direct Certification Improvement Grants?</li> <li>▪ Are states promoting Team Nutrition Grants?</li> <li>▪ Are states using Team Nutrition Grants, Administrative Review &amp; Training (ART) Grants, and Direct Certification Improvement Grants?</li> </ul>
<b>Child Nutrition Director Background</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Which hiring standards are being used?</li> </ul>

**Table 3. CN-OPS II Research Issues and Questions for the Child Nutrition Director Survey (Year 3)**

Issue/Module	Question
<b>Food Service Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What are State criteria for Independent Review of Applications in SFAs with high free and reduced price meal certification error?</li> <li>▪ How many SFAs and schools operate under Provision 2, Provision 3, and Community Eligibility?</li> <li>▪ How long have the schools operated under the Community Eligibility Provision?</li> <li>▪ How many schools operate in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) only, or both SBP and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)?</li> <li>▪ What is the increase in charter schools operating in NSLP and SBP?</li> </ul>
<b>Subsidies, Resources, and Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Does the State provide financial resources for school meals to SFAs in the form of per-meal subsidies? What was the total amount given?</li> <li>▪ Do States have adequate staffing resources for monitoring?</li> <li>▪ Does the State provide support for any other aspects of the school food service operation?</li> <li>▪ Have States been able to fully use Federal funds provided to administer the NSLP and the SBP? What challenges have impeded States' ability to fully use Federal funds? What actions impacted States' ability to fully use Federal funds?</li> <li>▪ Did States request funding reallocation for 2016-17? If not, what was the primary reason for not requesting reallocation?</li> <li>▪ Are States using contracted staff (staff employed by contractors, not directly by the State) for certain functions?</li> </ul>
<b>Professional Standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What types of training and technical assistance are provided?</li> <li>▪ What sources of training and technical assistance are used?</li> <li>▪ Who is meeting the professional standards requirements for training?</li> <li>▪ Which hiring standards are being used?</li> <li>▪ How are State Agency Child Nutrition Directors tracking, or how do they anticipate tracking, annual continuing education/training requirements?</li> </ul>
<b>Child Nutrition Director Background</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Which hiring standards are being used?</li> </ul>

**Table 4. CN-OPS II Research Issues and Questions for the Child Nutrition Director Survey (Year 4)**

Issue/Module	Question
<b>Food Service Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What are State criteria for Independent Review of Applications in SFAs with high free and reduced price meal certification error?</li> <li>▪ How many SFAs and schools operate under Provision 2, Provision 3, and Community Eligibility?</li> <li>▪ How long have the schools operated under the Community Eligibility Provision?</li> <li>▪ How many schools operate in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) only, or both SBP and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)?</li> <li>▪ What is the increase in charter schools operating in NSLP and SBP?</li> </ul>
<b>Subsidies, Resources, and Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Does the State provide financial resources for school meals to SFAs in the form of per-meal subsidies? What was the total amount given?</li> <li>▪ Do States have adequate staffing resources for monitoring?</li> <li>▪ Does the State provide support for any other aspects of the school food service operation?</li> <li>▪ Have States been able to fully use Federal funds provided to administer the NSLP and the SBP? What challenges have impeded States' ability to fully use Federal funds? What actions impacted States' ability to fully use Federal funds?</li> <li>▪ Did States request funding reallocation for 2016-17? If not, what was the primary reason for not requesting reallocation?</li> <li>▪ Are States using contracted staff (staff employed by contractors, not directly by the State) for certain functions?</li> </ul>
<b>Procurement Procedures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What proportion of SFAs are using an FSMC?</li> <li>▪ Among SFAs that use FSMCs, what proportion use FSMCs that are national, regional, and local? Has this pattern changed over time?</li> <li>▪ Do States review FSMC contracts and cooperative purchasing agreements? If all such agreements are not reviewed, what circumstances trigger a review?</li> <li>▪ Do States require use of prototype contracts or agreements?</li> </ul>
<b>Professional Standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What types of training and technical assistance are provided?</li> <li>▪ What sources of training and technical assistance are used?</li> <li>▪ Who is meeting the professional standards requirements for training?</li> <li>▪ Which hiring standards are being used?</li> <li>▪ How are State Agency Child Nutrition Directors tracking, or how do they anticipate tracking, annual continuing education/training requirements?</li> </ul>

<b>Issue/Module</b>	<b>Question</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ What differences do States experience with residential child care institutions that impact their ability to comply with professional standards requirements?</li><li>▪ What difficulties do States experience with charter schools that impact compliance with professional standards requirements?</li></ul>
<b>Child Nutrition Director Background</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Which hiring standards are being used?</li></ul>

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**Table 5. CN-OPS II Research Issues and Questions for the School Food Authority (SFA) Director Survey (Year 1)**

Issue/Module	Question
<b>School Participation in CN Programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How many schools participate in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and/or National School Lunch Program (NSLP)?</li> <li>▪ How many elementary, middle, and high schools participate in SBP and/or NSLP?</li> <li>▪ How has school participation changed over time?</li>   <li>▪ How many schools participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Afterschool At-Risk Supper Program, and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)?</li> <li>▪ What are non-participating schools' intentions to participate for CACFP and SFSP?</li> <li>▪ What are schools doing to build awareness and promote CACFP and SFSP?</li> </ul>
<b>Student Participation and Meals Served</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How many students participate in SBP and/or NSLP?</li> <li>▪ How many students in elementary, middle, and high schools participate in SBP and/or NSLP? How many SBP and NSLP meals were served?</li> <li>▪ How many SBP and NSLP meals were served in elementary, middle, and high schools?</li> <li>▪ How has student participation and the number of meals served changed over time?</li> </ul>
<b>Meal Prices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is the average price charged for full-price, reduced-price, and adult meals for the current school year?</li> <li>▪ How have meal prices changed over time?</li> </ul>
<b>Food Service Operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How many schools are operating under Provision 2, Provision 3, and the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) for NSLP only, SBP only, and both NSLP and SBP?</li> <li>▪ How long have the schools operated under the provision?</li> <li>▪ Does the district have schools eligible for CEP?</li> <li>▪ Does the district group schools to participate in the CEP?</li> <li>▪ What are reasons for non-participation in CEP?</li> </ul>
<b>Eligibility Determination and Verification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What technology is used for eligibility determination and verification?</li> <li>▪ What is the relative number of children directly certified during the year compared to those directly certified at the start of the school year?</li> <li>▪ Is direct verification used?</li> <li>▪ Do SFAs use of verification for cause?</li> <li>▪ What are the reasons that prompt districts to verify for cause?</li> <li>▪ How do the distribution of verification for cause outcomes compare to outcomes for other verified applications?</li> </ul>

Issue/Module	Question
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Do SFAs follow-up with households that did not respond to initial requests for verification documentation?</li> <li>▪ Does the district accept emailed copies of verification documentation?</li> <li>▪ Do SFAs use rolling verification as applications are certified, rather than all at once in October?</li> <li>▪ What challenges do SFAs face in matching enrolled students to household participation in SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR?</li> </ul>
<b>Financial Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What difficulties have SFAs experienced in monitoring costs paid out of the nonprofit school food service account?</li> <li>▪ What is the role of the business manager in making decisions that impact the nonprofit school food service account?</li> <li>▪ What creates an inability at the SFA level to separate costs and revenue for purposes of measuring compliance with the non-program revenue requirement?</li>   <li>▪ What alternative meal policies are used for children in arrears?</li> <li>▪ What methods are used to collect money owed as a result of unpaid school meals?</li> <li>▪ What are the implications for non-payment?</li> <li>▪ What was the size of non-payment, and what was the success of recovery?</li> </ul>
<b>Training and Professional Standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What are the training, technical assistance, and continuing education topics, including topics such as the Food Buying Guide, Crediting, Product Formulation Statement, and Web based Menu Planner Training Module?</li> <li>▪ What sources of training and technical assistance are used?</li> <li>▪ How useful was the training and technical assistance?</li> <li>▪ Do SFAs that had Team Up training have ongoing follow-up?</li> <li>▪ Are relationships with Team Up mentors being maintained?</li>   <li>▪ Who is meeting professional standards requirements?</li> <li>▪ What hiring standards being used?</li> <li>▪ How are SFAs tracking annual continuing education and training requirements?</li> <li>▪ What types of training are being taken?</li> <li>▪ What is the popularity of certain training topics?</li> <li>▪ Are SFAs using the FNS Professional Standards Training Tracking Tool?</li> <li>▪ How useful is the FNS Professional Standards Training Tracking Tool?</li> <li>▪ What barriers and challenges have SFAs experienced with documenting staff completion of continuing education and training activities, and using the FNS Professional Standards Training</li> </ul>

Issue/Module	Question
	Tracking Tool?
<b>Food and Beverage Marketing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Who is allowing or restricting food and beverage marketing in schools?</li> <li>▪ What types of foods and beverages are marketed in schools?</li> <li>▪ What is the role of marketing in SFA finances?</li> </ul>
<b>Food Service Equipment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What food service equipment needs replacement?</li> <li>▪ Are SFAs using food service equipment grants?</li> <li>▪ What equipment is being purchased with food service equipment grants?</li> <li>▪ What is the feasibility of lower state and local thresholds on equipment purchases?</li> <li>▪ Is the equipment purchase threshold appropriate or outdated for nature of program operations?</li> </ul>
<b>Meal Counting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What technology is used to track meals served?</li> <li>▪ What method of counting is used in non-cafeteria points of service?</li> <li>▪ What training and oversight is provided to cashiers on meal counting?</li> <li>▪ What alternatives to the traditional cashier model are used?</li> </ul>
<b>Smarter Lunchrooms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is the implementation of Smarter Lunchrooms activities?</li> </ul>
<b>Revenues and Expenditures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What are SFA annual revenues and expenditures?</li> <li>▪ How have annual revenues and expenditures changed over time?</li> </ul>
<b>SFA Director Background</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Which hiring standards are being used?</li> </ul>

**Table 6. CN-OPS II Research Issues and Questions for the School Food Authority (SFA) Director Survey (Year 2)**

<b>Issue/Module</b>	<b>Question</b>
<b>School Participation in CN Programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How many schools participate in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and/or National School Lunch Program (NSLP)?</li> <li>▪ How many elementary, middle, and high schools participate in SBP and/or NSLP?</li> <li>▪ How has school participation changed over time?</li>   <li>▪ How many schools participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Afterschool At-Risk Supper Program and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)?</li> <li>▪ What are non-participating schools' intentions to participate for CACFP and SFSP?</li> <li>▪ What are schools doing to build awareness and promote CACFP and SFSP?</li> </ul>
<b>Student Participation and Meals Served</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How many students participate in SBP and/or NSLP?</li> <li>▪ How many students in elementary, middle, and high schools participate in SBP and/or NSLP? How many SBP and NSLP meals were served?</li> <li>▪ How many SBP and NSLP meals were served in elementary, middle, and high schools?</li> <li>▪ How has student participation and the number of meals served changed over time?</li> </ul>
<b>Meal Prices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is the average price charged for full-price, reduced-price, and adult meals for the current school year?</li> <li>▪ How have meal prices changed over time?</li> </ul>
<b>Eligibility Determination and Verification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What technology is used for eligibility determination and verification?</li> <li>▪ What method of contact do schools use to contact households selected for verification (letter, phone, email, text, other)?</li> <li>▪ Do schools translate verification notices into the language known to be spoken by the recipient household?</li> <li>▪ What is the relative number of children directly certified during the year compared to those directly certified at the start of the school year?</li> <li>▪ Is direct verification used?</li> <li>▪ Do SFAs use of verification for cause?</li> <li>▪ What are the reasons that prompt districts to verify for cause?</li> <li>▪ How do the distribution of verification for cause outcomes compare to outcomes for other verified applications?</li> <li>▪ Do SFAs follow-up with households that did not respond to initial requests for verification documentation?</li> </ul>

Issue/Module	Question
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How many times do schools follow up with households that do not respond to verification requests?</li> <li>▪ Does the district accept emailed copies of verification documentation?</li> <li>▪ Do SFAs use rolling verification as applications are certified, rather than all at once in October?</li> <li>▪ What challenges do SFAs face in matching enrolled students to household participation in SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR?</li> <li>▪ What percentage of the free and reduced price meals applications are electronic or web-based?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Meal Pattern Requirements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Certification for Additional 6-Cent Reimbursement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Since when are SFAs certified for the additional 6 cents per lunch reimbursement?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Implementation Assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What proportion of SFAs use the USDA sharing website to assist with menu changes?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Use of USDA Foods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What proportion of SFAs changed the type and/or amount of USDA Foods in order to meet the meal pattern requirements?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ General Challenges Associated with Implementing the Meal Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ To what extent did SFAs face challenges in implementing the meal pattern requirements in SY 2016-17?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Whole Grain-Rich Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ To what extent did SFAs face challenges in implementing the 100 percent whole grain-rich requirements?</li> <li>○ What practices did SFAs use to meet the 100 percent whole grain-rich requirement?</li> <li>○ What challenges do SFAs face in implementing the 100 percent whole grain-rich requirement?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Fruit and Vegetable Requirements for Lunch <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How have SFAs changed the types of fruits and vegetables offered in lunches since implementing the meal requirements?</li> <li>○ What proportion of SFAs experienced difficulties purchasing vegetables in the five required subgroups?</li> <li>○ What were the reasons SFAs experienced difficulties with purchasing specific types of vegetables?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Calorie Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What proportion of SFAs face challenges in meeting the calorie standards for breakfast and lunch? Do the calorie minimums or</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Issue/Module	Question
	<p>maximums pose more of a challenge?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What proportion of SFAs made adjustments to meet students' needs/wants for additional foods? What types of adjustments have SFAs made?</li> <li>▪ Sodium Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What proportion of SFAs know the sodium content of their meals? Among SFAs that know sodium contents, what is the average sodium content of breakfasts? Lunches?</li> <li>○ What practices do SFAs anticipate using to meet the sodium target for SY 2017-18?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Perceptions of student consumption <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How often do students consume particular foods?</li> <li>○ What are the reasons for observed plate waste?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Smart Snacks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What experiences and challenges do SFAs encounter with the standards?</li> <li>▪ Are SFAs in compliance with the standards?</li> </ul>
<b>Procurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What competitive solicitation mechanisms do SFAs employ (e.g. invitation for bid versus request for proposal) to procure goods and services for school meals?</li> <li>▪ To what extent are SFAs using other contracting vehicles (e.g., cooperative purchasing agreements, informal purchases/ group purchasing organizations, micro-purchases) both formal and informal, for purchasing goods and services?</li> <li>▪ What types of suppliers or food sources do SFAs contract with when purchasing food, (e.g. direct purchase from farmers, food hubs, school gardens, distributors, or FSMCs)?</li> <li>▪ To what extent are SFA procurement procedures for goods and services for school meals (e.g., processors of USDA Foods; use of FSMCs; micropurchases, and local foods) monitored at the state level, if at all? How does this differ by state?</li> <li>▪ To what extent do multiple SFAs procure food together under cooperative purchasing agreements?</li> <li>▪ What individuals and/or groups of individuals are responsible for procurement (i.e., ultimately evaluate price quotes and competitive proposals to make final contract award decisions)? To what extent does this vary across SFA size or State?</li> </ul>
<b>Free and Reduced Price Meal Application</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What are SFA perceptions of the USDA F/RP meal application prototype?</li> <li>▪ What sources do SFAs use for the design, development, and format of their F/RP meal application prototype and supplemental</li> </ul>

<b>Issue/Module</b>	<b>Question</b>
	<p>application materials?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How do SFAs typically obtain or develop their application materials?</li> <li>▪ Do SFAs issue or endorse prototype versions of application instructions, letters of FAQs for households, communications with households, or any other related materials?</li> <li>▪ Do SFAs issue an electronic or web-based application for free and reduced price school meals? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Who is responsible for the development of these applications?</li> <li>○ To what extent do SFAs encourage households to submit electronic or web-based free and reduced price meals applications?</li> <li>○ Has use of electronic or web-based applications for free and reduced price school meals resulted in any advantages or benefits for SFAs, such as reduced administrative burden or household reporting errors?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Meal Counting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What technology is used to track meals served?</li> <li>▪ What method of counting is used in non-cafeteria points of service?</li> <li>▪ What training and oversight is provided to cashiers on meal counting?</li> <li>▪ What alternatives to the traditional cashier model are used?</li> </ul>
<b>Revenues and Expenditures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What are SFA annual revenues and expenditures?</li> <li>▪ How have annual revenues and expenditures changed over time?</li> </ul>
<b>SFA Director Background</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Which hiring standards are being used?</li> <li>▪ What is the background of other key SFA staff?</li> </ul>
<b>Suggestions from SFA Director</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What other suggestions do SFAs have for FNS?</li> </ul>

**Table 7. CN-OPS II Research Issues and Questions for the School Food Authority (SFA) Director Survey (Year 3)**

Issue/Module	Question
<b>School Participation in CNPs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How many schools participate in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and/or National School Lunch Program (NSLP)?</li> <li>▪ How many elementary, middle, and high schools participate in SBP and/or NSLP?</li> <li>▪ How has school participation changed over time?</li>   <li>▪ How many schools participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Afterschool At-Risk Supper Program and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)?</li> <li>▪ What are non-participating schools' intentions to participate for CACFP and SFSP?</li> <li>▪ What are schools doing to build awareness and promote CACFP and SFSP?</li> </ul>
<b>Student Participation and Meals Served</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How many students participate in SBP and/or NSLP?</li> <li>▪ How many students in elementary, middle, and high schools participate in SBP and/or NSLP? How many SBP and NSLP meals were served?</li> <li>▪ How many SBP and NSLP meals were served in elementary, middle, and high schools?</li> <li>▪ How has student participation and the number of meals served changed over time?</li> </ul>
<b>Meal Prices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is the average price charged for full-price, reduced-price, and adult meals for the current school year?</li> <li>▪ How have meal prices changed over time?</li> </ul>
<b>Eligibility Determination and Verification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What technology is used for eligibility determination and verification?</li> <li>▪ What method of contact do schools use to contact households selected for verification (letter, phone, email, text, other)? ]</li> <li>▪ Do schools translate verification notices into the language known to be spoken by the recipient household?</li> <li>▪ What is the relative number of children directly certified during the year compared to those directly certified at the start of the school year?</li> <li>▪ Is direct verification used?</li> <li>▪ Do SFAs use of verification for cause?</li> <li>▪ What are the reasons that prompt districts to verify for cause?</li> <li>▪ How do the distribution of verification for cause outcomes compare to outcomes for other verified applications?</li> <li>▪ Do SFAs follow-up with households that did not respond to initial requests for verification documentation?</li> </ul>



Issue/Module	Question
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How many times do schools follow up with households that do not respond to verification requests?</li> <li>▪ Does the district accept emailed copies of verification documentation?</li> <li>▪ Do SFAs use rolling verification as applications are certified, rather than all at once in October?</li> <li>▪ What challenges do SFAs face in matching enrolled students to household participation in SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Meal Pattern Requirements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Certification for Additional 6-Cent Reimbursement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Since when are SFAs certified for the additional 6 cents per lunch reimbursement?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Implementation Assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What proportion of SFAs use the USDA sharing website to assist with menu changes?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Use of USDA Foods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What proportion of SFAs changed the type and/or amount of USDA Foods in order to meet the meal pattern requirements?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ General Challenges Associated with Implementing the Meal Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ To what extent did SFAs face challenges in implementing the meal pattern requirements in SY 2016-17?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Whole Grain-Rich Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ To what extent did SFAs face challenges in implementing the 100 percent whole grain-rich requirements?</li> <li>○ What practices did SFAs use to meet the 100 percent whole grain-rich requirement?</li> <li>○ What challenges do SFAs face in implementing the 100 percent whole grain-rich requirement?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Fruit and Vegetable Requirements for Lunch <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How have SFAs changed the types of fruits and vegetables offered in lunches since implementing the meal requirements?</li> <li>○ What proportion of SFAs experienced difficulties purchasing vegetables in the five required subgroups?</li> <li>○ What were the reasons SFAs experienced difficulties with purchasing specific types of vegetables?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Calorie Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What proportion of SFAs face challenges in meeting the calorie standards for breakfast and lunch? Do the calorie minimums or maximums pose more of a challenge?</li> <li>○ What proportion of SFAs made adjustments to meet students’</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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	<p>needs/wants for additional foods? What types of adjustments have SFAs made?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sodium Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What proportion of SFAs know the sodium content of their meals? Among SFAs that know sodium contents, what is the average sodium content of breakfasts? Lunches?</li> <li>○ What practices do SFAs anticipate using to meet the sodium target for SY 2017-18?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Perceptions of student consumption <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How often do students consume particular foods?</li> <li>○ What are the reasons for observed plate waste?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Meal Counting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What technology is used to track meals served?</li> <li>▪ What method of counting is used in non-cafeteria points of service?</li> <li>▪ What training and oversight is provided to cashiers on meal counting?</li> <li>▪ What alternatives to the traditional cashier model are used?</li> </ul>
<b>Revenues and Expenditures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What are SFA annual revenues and expenditures?</li> <li>▪ How have annual revenues and expenditures changed over time?</li> </ul>
<b>Procurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What competitive solicitation mechanisms do SFAs employ (e.g. invitation for bid versus request for proposal) to procure goods and services for school meals?</li> <li>▪ To what extent are SFAs using other contracting vehicles (e.g., cooperative purchasing agreements, informal purchases/ group purchasing organizations, micro-purchases) both formal and informal, for purchasing goods and services?</li> <li>▪ What types of suppliers or food sources do SFAs contract with when purchasing food, (e.g. direct purchase from farmers, food hubs, school gardens, distributors, or FSMCs)?</li> <li>▪ To what extent are SFA procurement procedures for goods and services for school meals (e.g., processors of USDA Foods; use of FSMCs; micropurchases, and local foods) monitored at the state level, if at all? How does this differ by state?</li> <li>▪ To what extent do multiple SFAs procure food together under cooperative purchasing agreements?</li> <li>▪ What individuals and/or groups of individuals are responsible for procurement (i.e., ultimately evaluate price quotes and competitive proposals to make final contract award decisions)? To what extent does this vary across SFA size or State?</li> </ul>
<b>Smart Snacks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What experiences and challenges do SFAs encounter with the standards?</li> <li>▪ Are SFAs in compliance with the standards?</li> </ul>

<b>Issue/Module</b>	<b>Question</b>
<b>SFA Director Background</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Which hiring standards are being used?</li> <li>▪ What is the background of other key SFA staff?</li> </ul>
<b>Free and Reduced Price Meal Application</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What are SFA perceptions of the USDA F/RP meal application prototype?</li> <li>▪ What sources do SFAs use for the design, development, and format of their F/RP meal application prototype and supplemental application materials?</li> <li>▪ How do SFAs typically obtain or develop their application materials?</li> <li>▪ Do SFAs issue or endorse prototype versions of application instructions, letters of FAQs for households, communications with households, or any other related materials?</li> <li>▪ Do SFAs issue an electronic or web-based application for free and reduced price school meals? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Who is responsible for the development of these applications?</li> <li>○ What percentage of free and reduced price meals applications are electronic or web-based?</li> <li>○ To what extent do SFAs encourage households to submit electronic or web-based free and reduced price meals applications?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Has use of electronic or web-based applications for free and reduced price school meals resulted in any advantages or benefits for SFAs, such as reduced administrative burden or household reporting errors?</li> </ul>
<b>Suggestions from SFA Director</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What other suggestions do SFAs have for FNS?</li> </ul>

**Table 8. CN-OPS II Research Issues and Questions for the School Food Authority (SFA) Director Survey (Year 4)**

<b>Issue/Module</b>	<b>Question</b>
<b>School Participation in CNPs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How many schools participate in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and/or National School Lunch Program (NSLP)?</li> <li>▪ How many elementary, middle, and high schools participate in SBP and/or NSLP?</li> <li>▪ How has school participation changed over time?</li>   <li>▪ How many schools participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Afterschool At-Risk Supper Program and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)?</li> <li>▪ What are non-participating schools' intentions to participate for CACFP and SFSP?</li> <li>▪ What are schools doing to build awareness and promote CACFP and SFSP?</li> </ul>
<b>Student Participation and Meals Served</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How many students participate in SBP and/or NSLP?</li> <li>▪ How many students in elementary, middle, and high schools participate in SBP and/or NSLP? How many SBP and NSLP meals were served?</li> <li>▪ How many SBP and NSLP meals were served in elementary, middle, and high schools?</li> <li>▪ How has student participation and the number of meals served changed over time?</li> </ul>
<b>Meal Prices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is the average price charged for full-price, reduced-price, and adult meals for the current school year?</li> <li>▪ How have meal prices changed over time?</li> </ul>
<b>Eligibility Determination and Verification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What technology is used for eligibility determination and verification?</li> <li>▪ What method of contact do schools use to contact households selected for verification (letter, phone, email, text, other)?</li> <li>▪ Do schools translate verification notices into the language known to be spoken by the recipient household?</li> <li>▪ What is the relative number of children directly certified during the year compared to those directly certified at the start of the school year?</li> <li>▪ Is direct verification used?</li> <li>▪ Do SFAs use of verification for cause?</li> <li>▪ What are the reasons that prompt districts to verify for cause?</li> <li>▪ How do the distribution of verification for cause outcomes compare to outcomes for other verified applications?</li> <li>▪ Do SFAs follow-up with households that did not respond to initial requests for verification documentation?</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How many times do schools follow up with households that do not respond to verification requests?</li> <li>▪ Does the district accept emailed copies of verification documentation?</li> <li>▪ Do SFAs use rolling verification as applications are certified, rather than all at once in October?</li> <li>▪ What challenges do SFAs face in matching enrolled students to household participation in SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR?</li> </ul>
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