

**Supporting Statement for OMB Clearance for the Study of Non-Response to
the School Meals Application Verification Process**

Appendix 14

District Recruitment Letter



United States
Department of
Agriculture

OMB Approval No.: 0584-XXXX
Expiration Date: XX/XX/20XX

**MATHEMATICA
Policy Research**

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<<DATE>>

<<SFA Director Name>>, <<Title>>
<<School District>>
<<Address>>
<<City, State Zip>>

Dear <<SFA Director Name>>:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), has contracted with Mathematica Policy Research to conduct the Study of Non-Response to the School Meals Application Verification Process in school year (SY) 2017–2018. Mathematica and FNS have identified a sample of school districts from around the country to participate in this important research study, and your district was selected as one of these districts.

This study will examine the accuracy of district income verification procedures. As such, Mathematica will need your assistance in gathering data related to your district’s SY 2017-2018 verification procedures, as well as information on the households selected for verification.

The following timeline shows when Mathematica will need your district’s assistance with gathering data for this study:

- **January through March 2018:** One of the study’s objectives is to independently verify eligibility for two samples of households approved by application on the basis of income or categorical eligibility, and selected for verification by the district. These samples include: (1) households that did not respond to verification requests, and (2) responding households with no changes in benefits. To verify eligibility of these two samples, Mathematica will ask you to provide an electronic copy of your district’s verification sample for SY 2017–2018 after the verification process has been completed in fall 2017. After the requested data have been received, a sample of households will be chosen and contacted in early 2018 for a household survey.
- **March and April 2018:** Another study objective is to examine the process of selecting applications “for cause” for verification. In early 2018, Mathematica will ask you to complete a 20-minute telephone interview about your district’s process for selecting applications “for cause” for verification.
- **April and May 2018:** In the early spring 2018, Mathematica will contact you for additional information on the households from your original district verification sample. This additional information will include household-level data on changes in certification status, reapplication status, and whether the households were directly certified later in the year.

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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-XXXX. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average nine 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.

LETTER TO: <<SFA Director Name>>
FROM: Eric Zeidman
DATE: <<DATE>>
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The information collected through this study will be aggregated on the district level and are for research purposes only. Results will never be used to identify any individual student or household, school, or School Food Authority, or to alter any student's current benefit status or the meal reimbursements paid to SFAs.

For your reference, please find included a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) about the study and a brochure that will be sent to households before conducting the household survey.

Participation of selected districts and schools is highly encouraged, as stated in Section 305 of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. If you would like to verify your state's support of the study, you may contact your state's Child Nutrition Director, <<Name of CN Director>>. You may also contact the FNS project officer, Holly Figueroa at 703-305-2105 or by email at Holly.Figueroa@fns.usda.gov.

A Mathematica representative will be following up directly with your office to provide more information and to coordinate your district's participation in the study. Feel free to contact me toll free at 1-8XX-XXX-XXXX or email ezeidman@mathematica-mpr.com if you have any questions about your participation in the study. Thank you in advance for your help and cooperation. We look forward to working with you to conduct this important study.

Sincerely,

Eric Zeidman
Project Director

Enclosures:

District Frequently Asked Questions

Household Survey Brochure