

**Appendix B1. Study of School Food Authority (SFA)  
Procurement Practices: Frequently Asked  
Questions - Web Survey and In-Depth Interview**

<b>Q</b>	<b>Why is the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) conducting the Study of School Food Authority (SFA) Procurement Practices?</b>
A	This web survey is being conducted to provide FNS with nationally representative information to describe and assess the practices of SFAs related to procuring goods and services for Child Nutrition program meals served in schools, and to better understand how SFAs make decisions that lead to these procurement practices. The study is one of the first FNS studies to comprehensively examine SFA procurement practices related to food service management companies, cooperative purchasing agreements, recordkeeping, local purchases, and food purchase specifications. Furthermore, study findings will be used by USDA to inform future policy and guidance.
<b>Q</b>	<b>Who is invited to participate in the Study of School Food Authority (SFA) Procurement Practices?</b>
A	There will be two phases of data collection for the study. The first phase will include a web survey of approximately 560 SFAs. From the group of SFAs who complete the web survey, a subsample will be selected to participate in a follow-up SFA Procurement Practices In-Depth Interview (IDI); approximately 100 SFAs will complete the follow-up IDI to meet the study's follow-up IDI subsample requirement and provide FNS with in-depth information from a wide range of SFAs.
<b>Q</b>	<b>Why did you select our SFA?</b>
A	Your SFA is part of a nationally representative sample. The selected SFAs for this study are in urban, suburban, and rural areas and include schools of varying sizes/grade levels. By completing this survey, you serve as the voice for many SFAs like yours across the country. The sample of SFAs for this study is a subsample of SFAs that responded to the second year of the Child Nutrition Program Operations Study II (CN-OPS-II) survey. Your experiences and opinions about procurement practices are extremely valuable as FNS continually seeks to improve SFA procurement processes.
<b>Q</b>	<b>Are we required to participate?</b>
A	Your SFA's cooperation is encouraged, given its authorization under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, Section 305:  <i>States, State educational agencies, local educational agencies, schools, institutions, facilities, and contractors participating in programs authorized under this Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C 1771 et seq.) shall cooperate with officials and contractors acting on behalf of the Secretary, in the conduct of evaluations and studies under those Acts.</i>  Also, please know that this study is not an audit—in this study, we are asking you to be partners in assessing the range of procurement practices currently in use by your SFA.
<b>Q</b>	<b>What types of information should I be prepared to provide?</b>
A	For the web survey, you should be prepared to provide the following information for your SFA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Details about solicitation methods used for school year (SY) 2017–2018</li><li>• Templates and guidance used to develop procurement solicitations</li><li>• Types of cost and/or other analyses used prior to publishing a solicitation</li><li>• Types of contracts awarded</li><li>• Use of micropurchases and the geographic preference option</li><li>• Efforts to monitor contract performance/procurement procedures (e.g., Buy American requirements)</li><li>• Approaches to managing Food Service Management Company (FSMC) contracts and cooperative purchasing arrangements, if relevant</li><li>• Identification of decision-makers, procurement methods, and best practices utilized throughout procurement</li></ul>
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 five 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.	
<b>Q</b>	<b>How long is the data collection period?</b>

A	The data collection period will last from October 2018 to April 2019. The web survey should take approximately 90 minutes to complete.
<b>Q</b>	<b>What if we do not have time or staff to participate in the study?</b>
A	We understand that your time is valuable. The study has been carefully designed and pretested to collect the required information with minimal burden to both you and your staff.
<b>Q</b>	<b>Who should I contact if I have questions about the study, web survey, or IDI?</b>
A	If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the 2M survey help desk anytime by either calling (toll-free) <b>1-844-250-1911</b> or emailing <a href="mailto:sfaprocurement@2mresearch.com">sfaprocurement@2mresearch.com</a> .
<b>Q</b>	<b>What is the contact information for my FNS Regional Study Liaison?</b>
A	Contact information for your Regional Office: Regional Office: [NAME OF REGIONAL OFFICE] FNS Regional Study Liaison: [NAME] Address: XXXXXX Phone: XXX-XXX-XXXX
<b>Q</b>	<b>How does FNS protect the privacy of the information that is provided?</b>
A	FNS and the 2M/Mathematica Study Team will only use your responses for statistical and descriptive purposes, including summary tabulations. Your responses will not be disclosed or used in identifiable form for any other purpose unless otherwise compelled by law. This means that SFA responses will be identifiable to FNS and the 2M/Mathematica Study Team; however, your personal information (name, telephone number, etc.) will be kept private and the responses you provide will not be associated with your personal information. The Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has approved the web survey (OMB Number: 0584-XXXX. Expiration Date: X/XX/20XX).