

APPENDIX B-3

SCHOOL NUTRITION MANAGER INTERVIEW GUIDE

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## SCHOOL NUTRITION MANAGER INTERVIEW GUIDE

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**Interviewer instructions:** Tailor questions based on information provided from other sources, including prior interviews and your review of any documents received from any respondent. For example, if the SFA director confirms or reports that non-reimbursable foods are not sold in any schools, do not ask the non-reimbursable foods questions.

### A. Introduction

The purpose of this interview is to determine what kinds of information are available about the foods served in reimbursable meals for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program and the staff who perform food service activities in your school. Reimbursement rates for school meals sold in the contiguous 48 States and the District of Columbia are assessed periodically using a rigorous cost study methodology applied to a sample of public SFAs and schools. That cost study methodology has never been applied in outlying areas such as [Puerto Rico/the U.S. Virgin Islands]. We are trying to find out if the methodology can be used to determine the cost of producing reimbursable lunches and breakfasts because an accurate assessment of meal costs could be used to adjust per-meal reimbursement rates in [Puerto Rico/the U.S. Virgin Islands].

The study is not an audit. We will not identify you or share any information you provide outside of the study team, which includes FNS reviewers. We will store any records you share with us in password-protected, secure folders or in locked filing cabinets, and we will destroy these records after the project ends. Your school's participation is mandatory under Section 28 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act.

In case we miss anything in our notes, may I have your permission to record our conversation? We will not share the recordings outside of our study team. [IF YES, START RECORDING.]

Do you have any questions for me before we begin?

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 0584-0606. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 2.5 hours 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. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support, 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 1014, Alexandria, VA 22302, ATTN: PRA (0584-0606). Do not return the completed form to this address.

## B. Meal production and planning

Let's start with some questions about how the meals served in your school are produced and planned.

1. Does your school participate in the School Breakfast Program? Does it provide meals, snacks, or at-risk suppers through the Child and Adult Care Food Program, or CACFP? Does it provide afterschool snacks through the NSLP?
2. Does your school have a point-of-sale, or POS, system?
3. Is your school's kitchen a receiving or satellite kitchen that obtains partially or fully prepared meals from a central or production kitchen? [If needed: A receiving or satellite kitchen receives food or meals from an outside source that are either ready to serve or require minimal preparation. A production kitchen prepares foods or meals to be sent to other schools in addition to preparing and serving foods or meals at its own school.]
  - a. [IF NO:] Does your school's kitchen prepare meals for serving only at your school, or is it a production kitchen that also ships meals for serving at other schools?
    - i. If the school is a production kitchen: How many other schools receive meals prepared in your school's kitchen? What method do you use to determine how many meals are prepared for each school?
4. Are all your school's reimbursable lunch and breakfast menus planned at the SFA level?
  - a. [IF NO:] What are the reasons your school plans its own menu, for example, due to remote location?
5. Does your school use a cycle menu? What is the cycle frequency? Can you provide a copy of the cycle menu/a menu for a typical week to us?
  - a. Does your school plan entire menus for reimbursable meals, or does the SFA do most of the planning while allowing you flexibility to offer certain types of foods within a category, such as fresh fruits and vegetables?

## C. Reimbursable lunches and breakfasts

I would now like to ask you for some additional details about the information that is available about reimbursable meals, and whether your school will be able to report this information to us in the cost study. The following questions are about the availability of detailed information on foods prepared for and served in reimbursable breakfasts and lunches in the course of a week.

6. Does your school keep production records that document the foods that are prepared for and served in reimbursable meals each day?
  - a. [IF NO:] Do you have any other records, such as from the POS system or menu planning software that include this information?
  - b. [IF Q6 OR Q6A = YES:] Can you provide an example of the *completed* records that document the foods that are prepared for and served in reimbursable meals each day for a typical school week?

- i. [We plan to review your records, but in the meantime] We are interested in whether you will be able to report detailed information on each food item that is offered to students as part of reimbursable meals. Do your records include the following information, or if we gave you a template of a daily production record, would you be able to provide this information once daily for a school week?
        - Name and portion size for each food item
        - Number of portions: Prepared, served in reimbursable meals, sold a la carte or to adults, left over, and wasted (if not documented this way, can these be estimated?)
        - Identification of USDA Foods
        - Identification of foods prepared from a recipe
7. If the school kitchen produces meals: Does your school prepare any foods from scratch, for example, spaghetti and meatballs, or by combining two or more ingredients, for example, a turkey and cheese sandwich?
  - a. [IF NO:] Just to confirm, are all the foods offered in reimbursable meals commercially prepared?
  - b. [IF YES:] Does your school use standardized recipes for all foods prepared from scratch? A “recipe” could be for foods prepared from scratch or foods that combine two or more ingredients. A recipe includes the name of each ingredient used, the amount included in the recipe, and the number of portions the recipe produces.
    - i. [IF YES:] Can you please provide us copies of three standardized recipes?
      - ii. [IF NO:] Would you be able to write down each recipe used in your school during one school week, including the name of each ingredient used, the amount included in the recipe, and the number of portions the recipe produces?
8. Does your school offer self-serve or made-to-order food bars, such as sandwich or deli bars, salad bars, or condiment bars? [IF NO, GO TO NEXT QUESTION.]
  - a. What types of bars does your school offer? On how many days per school week?
  - b. Will you be able to provide a list of all items offered on the food bars over a school week?
9. Would you be able to access the internet at school to complete a survey that asks for details about the foods prepared for and served in reimbursable breakfasts and lunches in the course of a week? How reliable is the internet service?

#### D. Food price records

The next questions are about the sources of the foods used in your kitchen or available in your cafeteria.

10. Does the SFA purchase all the foods delivered to your school, does your school purchase all the foods, or do you have a mix of both SFA and school purchases? [Skip to the next section if the school does not purchase any foods.]
11. Does your school order from vendors any of the foods that it uses, including foods purchased for school meals and other foods sold by the school? The orders can include both fresh items and commercially-prepared items.
  - a. [IF YES:] Is your SFA responsible for paying for all of your school's food orders, or is your school responsible for paying for at least some orders?
12. If school is responsible for any payments: For each vendor, do you have records of the item, the unit size, the price per unit, and the quantity of each food item purchased for the past three months? For example, the records would show the quantity purchased and the unit price, such as 20 cases of peaches with 6 #10 cans per case at \$18.50 per case. These records might be invoices, delivery slips, or monthly statements.
  - a. [IF YES:] Can you provide us a sample of some pages from these records that show the information available for each purchase? Please share examples from each vendor your school uses. You do not need to share examples for the entire past three months.
  - b. [IF YES:] How often do you receive invoices from each vendor? [If needed: Can any vendors provide a monthly summary statement?]
  - c. [IF NO:] If we created a list of all the food items used in your school in a school week, would you be able to provide the unit size and the price paid for each item on this list?

#### E. Non-reimbursable foods

Some food service departments offer or sell foods or beverages outside of reimbursable school meals. These could be adult meals, foods that are sold a la carte in a cafeteria serving line, in vending machines located in the cafeteria or in the school building, a school store, food cart, or snack bar. I am now going to ask about the availability of detailed information on foods offered or sold outside of reimbursable school meals in the course of a week—we refer to these foods as non-reimbursable foods.

13. Does your food service department sell any non-reimbursable foods or beverages or provide free meals to food service workers or other staff? We are only interested in non-reimbursable items that are offered or sold by your food service department, not by other entities.
  - a. [IF NO:] I just want to confirm that your food service department does not generate revenue from the sale of foods outside of reimbursable meals. Is that correct?
  - b. [IF YES:] Do you have any reports, for example, from a POS system, that document the type and number of these foods that were sold each day? Can you provide an example of a report that shows this or any available information on the sale of non-reimbursable foods and beverages?
    - i. [IF NO:] Is it possible at the point-of-sale for the cashier to record the type and number of non-reimbursable foods and beverages sold for a school week?

14. Can you provide information on the total dollar value of daily non-reimbursable foods sales for your school? If not, can you provide information on weekly sales?

15. For non-reimbursable food items that are pre-packaged or made from recipes, can you provide the following information?
- Food name
  - Portion size
  - For pre-packaged items, the manufacturer or brand name and product code
  - A description of the item, such as its type, for example, whole wheat bread, banana-nut muffin; form, such as fresh or frozen fruit; flavor, such as chocolate milk; and fat content, for example, reduced-fat chips
  - Number of portions sold on-site, sent off-site to be sold at other schools, left over for later use, and wasted

#### F. School food service staff

Now I would like to discuss what information is available about the people who prepare breakfast, lunch, or other food items in the school. I am specifically interested in staff who are employees of the food service department.

16. Do you have a list of all staff who work in your school's kitchen or cafeteria performing tasks such as preparing and serving meals, food service administrative activities, or any other work they do for food service?
- a. [IF NO:] What is the name, job title, and contact information of the person who would be able to provide this information if we requested it in a future cost study?
  - b. [IF YES:] For every person on that list, will you [or your colleague] be able to provide the following information about their salary and hours worked?
    - Job title/description
    - Salary on any basis, for example, annual, monthly, twice per month, bi-weekly, weekly, or hourly
    - Whether or not the person receives fringe benefits
    - Hours per week that they work for the school
    - Weeks per year that they work for the school
    - If applicable: Hours that they work on the NSLP and SBP versus hours that they work on CACFP meals and snacks or NSLP afterschool snacks
17. Can you [work with your colleague to] provide examples of the records that show food service personnel job title, salary, receipt of fringe benefits for the current school year, and hours worked in a pay period? Please redact any names, Social Security Numbers, or other personally identifiable information from these records.
18. For every person who works in your school's kitchen or cafeteria, will you [or your colleague] be able to tell us what each person is scheduled to be working on from the time they get to work until the time they leave at the end of their workday? For example:
- Starts work at 6:30 AM and prepares and serves breakfast until 8:30 AM,
  - Has a 15 minute break from 8:30 AM to 8:45 AM,
  - Prepares lunch from 8:45 AM to 10:45 AM,



- Has a 15 minute break from 10:45 AM to 11:00 AM,
  - Serves lunch to students, teachers, and other adults from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM,
  - And so on until the end of her work day.
- a. [IF YES:] Please think about someone who works in your school’s kitchen or cafeteria. What are the steps you would take to describe their schedule for a workday? [If needed: I am interested in learning the process you would follow, not the actual information about this person’s schedule.]

G. Closing

19. [IF RESPONDENT WILL SUBMIT RECORDS:] I have in my notes that you will share [LIST RECORDS] with me. Let’s gather those documents now.

[IF RECORDS CANNOT BE PROVIDED WHILE INTERVIEWER IS ONSITE, PROVIDE INSTRUCTIONS TO POST/SEND BY [DATE].]

Those are all the questions I had for you today. Thank you for your time.