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Appendix D: Moderator's Guide for Teacher Focus Groups

Section 1. Introduction to Focus Group (3 minutes)

Thank you so much for taking the time to talk to us today. My name is [Moderator name], and I'll be leading this focus group. Focus groups are a type of research used to gather opinions about a specific topic. Today, we are going to talk about the technology you use in your classrooms. The United States Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service is sponsoring this effort to learn more about how teachers around the country access and use educational technology in order to develop better content for teachers.

Before we get started, I want to mention a few things:

- There are no wrong answers. Our whole purpose for being here today is to hear what you think, so please speak up, especially if what you have to say is different than what someone else is saying. You may represent what a lot of other educators think.
- You don't have to answer every question but I do want to hear from everyone, so I might call on you at some point.
- Everything we talk about here will be kept private. That means your individual responses will not be reported and your name will not be associated with anything you say in our reports.
- If it's ok with everybody here, we'd like to record these conversations. They will only be used to confirm our notes and allow us to revisit this conversation. Nobody but the people in this room will ever hear the recordings, and any transcriptions of this conversation will not include any names. Is that ok with everybody? (Note to moderator: If someone is uncomfortable, thank them and allow them to leave - do not stop the recording)

Does anyone have any questions before we begin?

Okay, great. First, I'm going to have everyone go around and introduce themselves. You all might know each other already, but I want to get to know you, too. Just say your first name, subject/area(s) of expertise and you're favorite activity to do with your students. I'll go first.

[Note to Moderator: *allow each participant to introduce himself or herself.*]

Section 2: General Attitudes and Familiarity with Technology (6 minutes)

Well now that we know each other, let's jump right in.

- For what purpose do you regularly use technology in your classroom?
 - In general, what do you use technology for the most in your classroom most often? [**Probe:** *assessment, administrative tasks, communication, instructional time etc.*]
- What types of technology is available to you in your school? [**Probe:** *e-backpacks, tablets, smart boards, videos/TV, internet access, projectors*]
 - How easily can students access computers in your school? [**Probe:** *Computer Labs, cart model, 1:1 environment, laptops, desktops etc.*]
- Can anybody share an example of when technology helped you accomplish a successful lesson?

Now that we've heard a little from you and so that we are on the same page, when we say education technology, we're referring to *any technology that helps support instruction, collaboration, preparation, communication, and/or student learning.*

Section 3. Technology in Teaching (35 minutes)

3a. Technology to Support Learning

- What are some ways you use education technology to help your students learn?
 - What are some programs you think are particular effective at supporting student learning? How?
 - [**Probe:** *social media, YouTube, content management systems, PowerPoint, Google classroom etc.*]?
 - What are some devices you think are particular effective at supporting student learning? How?
 - [**Probe:** *Smart boards, Chrome Books*]?
 - What are some drawbacks to using education technology in the classroom? And Why?

- Tell me about the specific ways in which you use technology to facilitate reading.

■ **[Probe: eBooks, e-readers]?**

- Do you use education technology for your lesson plans? How?
 - In what ways does technology help eliminate the need for paper?
 - Are certain subjects or topics more effective in an electronic format? Why?
- How does technology help enhance student's learning?
- How does technology help extend student's learning?
- What sort of educational technology use do students find most engaging? Why?
 - What sort of technology do they find least engaging?
- Are there any particular strengths or challenges to using any of these technologies you've mentioned to help students learn about health and nutrition? Why?
- Have you or a colleague ever used technology to get students to track or change a health behavior (or another behavior)?
 - What program or device worked? Why?
 - What didn't work? Why?

3b. Technology for Communication

- How do you currently use technology to communicate with your students?
 - What topics do you generally use technology to communicate about?
 - Are there particular tools you regularly use to communicate with students and their parents? **[Probe: Blackboard, social media, website]**
 - What is particularly effective?
 - What isn't particularly effective?
- How do you currently use technology to communicate with the families of your students? What topics do you generally use technology to communicate about?
 - Are there particular tools you regularly use to communicate with students and their parents? **[Probe: Blackboard, social media, phone, website]**
 - What is particularly effective?
 - What isn't particularly effective?
 - Are there particular factors you notice that make certain families more difficult to communicate with using technology?
 - How do you overcome these particular obstacles?
- How do you currently use technology to communicate with parents/caregivers about school food offerings?
 - Are there particular tools you regularly use to promote or market foods in the cafeteria, snacks bars, or kiosks?
 - What is particularly effective?
 - What isn't particularly effective?
 - Are there particular tools you regularly use to promote fundraisers?

- What are the challenges you face using technology to communicate with your students and their families?
 - Do you see any potential solutions to deal with those challenges?
- Are there any particular strengths or challenges to using any of these technologies you've mentioned to communicate with students and their families about health and nutrition? Why?

3c. Technology Training

- Overall, how comfortable do you feel using technology in your classroom to support your teaching?
 - How did you get comfortable with this technology? Was there a formal training program or were you comfortable from your own pre-existing knowledge/experience?
 - Why don't you feel comfortable?
 - What would you need to feel more comfortable with using technology to support student learning?
- How comfortable do you feel using technology to communicate with your students and their families?
 - How did you become comfortable using technology?
 - Why don't you feel comfortable?
 - What would you need to feel more comfortable?
- How do you feel about the amount and quality of professional development opportunities and materials available to support technology in the classroom?
 - How do you find out about PD opportunities or training information about using technology with your students?
 - Does your school provide any opportunities?
- What other training or information would you like to see
 - Is there any training that would be particularly important for health and nutrition education or communicating about health and nutrition?

3d. Technology Policy

- What are the policies in your school regarding technology use? [**Probe:** *BYOD, YouTube and websites, social media*]
 - Are there any particular sites or platforms that are not allowed? [**Probe:** *BYOD, YouTube and websites, social media*]
 - What do you think about those policies?
 - Are you aware of any recent changes in policy in this school or district?
 - Do you anticipate that any of these policies will change? If so, how?
- Are there barriers in using technology in your school? In your classroom? [**Probe:** *time and availability, maintenance, training, internet speed*]
 - Do you have reliable access to the Internet in your school?
 - Is your bandwidth sufficient?

- Are you able to choose which electronic games or lessons you can use? If no, who determines what you can use [**Probe:** *state, district*]
- Who is in charge of identifying new technologies for your classroom/school?
- What kinds of things do they/you look for when evaluating whether to adopt technology? [Probe: Time, expense, learning curve]

3e. Trends in Education Technology

- What technology do you wish you had in your classroom?
 - What keeps you from having it?
- Are there any types of technology that you would like to see used in your school? [Probe: virtual reality, big data and learning analytics and/or flipped classrooms, distance learning, social media]
- Are there any uses of technology that you've heard about that you *don't think* will be effective?
- Imagine your classroom and your school in 5 years. How is technology different?
 - How do you think, for better or worse, technology will be used to support learning?
 - How do you think, for better or worse, technology will be used to communicate with students and their families?

Section 5. Closing (1 Minute)

It's time for us to wrap up. Does anyone have last thoughts or ideas that you haven't been able to share yet? Okay, one last chance to make your opinion heard:

- If there was one thing FNS should know about technology to help develop effective and *useful* resources for teachers, what would it be?

Thank you so much for joining us today. You were very helpful!