

## ERS Peer Review Plan

Preliminary Title: The National School Lunch Program: Background, Trends, and Issues, 2024 Edition

Type of Report (ERR, EIB, EB) EIB

Influential Scientific Information

Agency: Economic Research Service  Highly Influential Scientific Assessment  
USDA

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Subject of Review: The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is the Nation's second largest food and nutrition assistance program. The program operates in about 100,000 public and nonprofit private schools and provides billions of meals to tens of millions of children and adolescents each year (hereafter "children" or "students" as applicable for brevity). The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Economic Research Service (ERS) periodically reports on NSLP policies and operations following major changes to the program. The last such report was published in 2008. Since that time, the program has undergone major changes precipitated by the Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA) and the COVID-19 pandemic. This report provides an overview of the NSLP, documents major changes to the program since 2008, and examines historical trends and participant characteristics. It also summarizes relevant research on the financial status of school food authorities (SFAs), program participation, the nutritional quality of school lunches, and the impact of the program on children's diets. It concludes by discussing longstanding and emergent issues facing the program, as well as research and data needs.

Purpose of Review: The purpose of the review is to ensure the high-quality of the economic analysis, transparent explanation of methods, objective interpretation of results, and effective communication to the intended audience.

Type of Review:  Panel Review  Individual Reviewers

Alternative Process (Briefly Explain):

Timing of Review (Est.): Start: 11/6/2023 Completed: 1/25/2024

Number of Reviewers:  3 or fewer  4 to 10  More than 10

Primary Disciplines/Types of Expertise Needed for Review: Economists

Reviewers selected by:  Agency  Designated Outside Organization

Opportunities for Public Comment?  Yes  No

If yes, briefly state how and when these opportunities will be provided:

How:

When:

Peer Reviewers Provided with Public Comments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No
Public Nominations Requested for Review Panel?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No