Survey of Food Assistance Information Systems School Food Authorities

Responding Agency

[Affix label here]

If necessary, make corrections to the contact information appearing above by crossing out incorrect information and writing in corrections.

Introduction

This is a survey of school food service directors in 26 states. The information from this survey is for a study being conducted by Abt Associates Inc. for the United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service.

The survey collects general information about the computer information systems that maintain client data for the National School Lunch program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). The survey is part of a larger study to compile data on information system capabilities of all major USDA programs, including the Food Stamp Program (FSP) and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).

The goal of the study is to determine the availability of program administrative data that could be used by USDA to study program operations and for research examining rates of multiple program participation.

Questions about the content of the survey may be directed to:

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Abt Associates Inc.
55 Wheeler Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

617-520-3061 (*voice*)
617-520-2954 (*fax*)
jesse_valente@abtassoc.com (*email*)

Please return the completed survey in the envelope provided by the date indicated in the cover letter. If you lose the envelope, please return the survey to Mr. Jesse Valente at the above address. You may also fax the completed survey.

Instructions

Most survey questions are about the computer system used to manage the school meals programs. In addition, there are a few general questions about the school district's information system. To be clear about the purpose of all questions, we define the following terms:

School food authority (SFA)   Responsible for USDA school meals programs

School district   Responsible for education curriculum

Student information system (SIS)   Computer system maintained by the school district, containing student records, attendance, and transcript information

SFA computer system   Computer system for managing the school meals programs

Please respond to all questions. The responses do not need to be typed. If you need clarification of the meaning or intent of survey questions, you may phone or email the contact person designated on the cover page. Abt Associates will follow up with you after we receive the instrument to obtain information for any questions that are left blank. Please feel free to add explanatory notes in the margins, if needed.

Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 requires that all persons who respond to this collection of information be informed that they are not required to respond unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. (See 5 CFR 1320.5(b)(i)). The time required to complete this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions and complete the information collection. Comments on the burden or content of this collection of information may be sent to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Program, Attn: Parke Wilde, 1800 M Street, Room S2092, N.W. Washington, DC 20036.

Question Format

All questions require a single-response, unless **(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)** appears above response categories. The survey contains three types of questions:

Type of Question	Sample Question
▪ Questions with pre-specified response categories. → Answer question by placing an X in the box next to the correct response.	1. During what year did you receive this survey? |___| 1. 2000 |___| 2. 2001 |_X_| 3. 2002
▪ Questions requiring numeric open-end response. → Answer question by providing response in specified format.	2. During what calendar month did you receive this survey? MONTH (ENTER 1-12): | 0 | 1 |
▪ Questions requiring open-end response. → Answer question by writing response in space provided.	6. Provide respondent name. Jane Doe

A. SFA SCHOOL MEALS INFORMATION SYSTEM

A1. What is the name of the computer software package(s) used by your SFA for managing the school meals programs?

(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

|__| 1. B.O.S.S. (Back Office Software Solutions)
|__| 2. Bon Appetit Software
|__| 3. CAFS (Computer Assisted Food Service)
|__| 4. CompuHelp
|__| 5. CNP Manager
|__| 6. Kyrus (Formerly Accu Series)
|__| 7. Lunchbox (Kyrus Corp.)
|__| 8. Mealtime (Energetics)
|__| 9. Mealtime (CLM Group, Inc.)
|__| 10. Meal Tracker (Accu-Scan)
|__| 11. Netel
|__| 12. Nutrition Data Systems
|__| 13. PCS Revenue Control Systems
|__| 14. Snap Systems
|__| 15. Other, specify below:

_____

_____

A2. For the following list of student identifying information, indicate whether the item is in your SFA database of students approved for school meals. NOTE: This question is about the SFA's school meals system, not the district's student information system.

(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

|__| 1. Student name
|__| 2. Student grade level
|__| 3. Student address
|__| 4. Student phone number
|__| 5. Student date of birth
|__| 6. Student Social Security Number
|__| 7. Student food stamp case number
|__| 8. Student TANF[1] case number
|__| 9. Student gender
|__| 10. Parent or guardian name
|__| 11. Parent or guardian SSN
|__| 12. Certification date
|__| 13. Type of certification: reduced-price vs. free

[1] TANF may be known by another name in your state. Please see the cover letter.

A3. Are all schools in your SFA connected (i.e., networked) to the same computer system for managing school meals, or does each school have a separate system?

(CHECK ONE)

|__| 1. All connected to single system
|__| 2. Some connected to single system
|__| 3. Each school has separate system

B. DISTRICT STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

B1. What is the name of the computer software package used by your district for the STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (i.e. student attendance and transcript records)?

|__| 1. Mac school (Chancery Software)
|__| 2. Win school (Chancery Software)
|__| 3. SASIXP (National Computer Systems, Inc.)
|__| 4. Other, specify below:

_____

_____

B2. Does the district's STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM contain information identifying students who are approved for free and reduced-price meals?

(CHECK ONE)

|__| 1. Yes, identifies free and reduced-price approvals
|__| 2. No, identifies free meals approval only
|__| 3. No, identifies reduced-price approval only
|__| 4. No, does not identify school meals approval

B3. Is the computer system for managing the school meals programs separate from the Student Information System, in the sense that they use different software or reside on different computers?

|__| 1. Yes, separate
|__| 2. No, not separate

C. POINT-OF-SALE SYSTEMS FOR SCHOOL MEALS PROGRAMS

C1. Do any schools in your district use point-of-sale (POS) systems for the school meals programs?

|__| 1. Yes
|__| 2. No → **GO TO PAGE 3**

C2. How many elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools in your district use POS systems?

ELEM SCHOOLS: |__|__|__|__|
MIDDLE SCHOOLS: |__|__|__|__|
HIGH SCHOOLS: |__|__|__|__|

C3. Is the same POS software used by all schools using POS?

|__| 1. Yes
|__| 2. No

C4. What are the name(s) of the POS software systems used by schools in your district?

(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

|__| 1. B.O.S.S. (Back Office Software Solutions)
|__| 2. Bon Appetit Software
|__| 3. CAFS (Computer Assisted Food Service)
|__| 4. Compuhelp
|__| 5. CNP Manager
|__| 6. Kyrus (Formerly Accu Series)
|__| 7. Lunchbox (Kyrus Corp.)
|__| 8. Mealtime (Energetics)
|__| 9. Mealtime (CLM Group, Inc.)
|__| 10. Meal Tracker (Accu-Scan)
|__| 11. Netel
|__| 12. Nutrition Data Systems
|__| 13. PCS Revenue Control Systems
|__| 14. Snap Systems
|__| 15. Other, specify below:

_____

_____

_____

_____

C5. POS systems are designed to report meal counts each day. Do the POS systems used in your district also have the capability to identify which students receive meals each day?

|__| 1. Yes, all systems do
|__| 2. Yes, some systems do
|__| 3. No → **GO TO PAGE 3**

C6. How long are participation data for individual students retained by the software system? For example, could you check whether a particular student received meals this week, this month, this semester, or back to the start of the school year?

_____

_____

_____

_____

C7. Do any schools in your district provide school breakfast under the USDA School Breakfast Program?

|__| 1. Yes
|__| 2. No

C8. For each of the types of meals listed below, indicate whether the POS system identifies students who **receive** meals.

(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

|__| 1. Breakfast
|__| 2. Lunch
|__| 3. After school snacks
|__| 4. Varies by school

D. DIRECT CERTIFICATION FOR SCHOOL MEALS

D1. Does your district use Direct Certification to establish eligibility for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)?

|__| 1. Yes
|__| 2. No → **GO TO PAGE 5**

D2. What method does your district use to establish Direct Certification for the NSLP?

(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY AND ANSWER FOLLOWUP QUESTIONS AS INDICATED, THEN GO TO PAGE 5)

|__| 1. Letter from FSA to students ® **ANSWER D3-D5**
|__| 2. Computer match by the SFA/district or its contractor ® **ANSWER D6-D9**
|__| 3. Computer match by state FSA ® **ANSWER D10-D12**
|__| 4. Computer match by state dept. of education ® **GO TO PAGE 5**
|__| 5. Other, specify below:

_____

_____

BASED ON YOUR RESPONSE TO D2, PLEASE ANSWER THE APPROPRIATE SECTION OF FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS BELOW.

1. Letter from food stamp agency to students

D3. During what calendar month does the FSP send letters to students?

MONTH (ENTER 01-12): |__|__|

D4. Last year, did the FSP send one letter per child or one letter per family?

|__| 1. One letter per child
|__| 2. One letter per family

D5. Last year, how many letters were returned to your district?

|__|__|__|__|__|

2. Computer match by SFA/district

D6. Does the SFA/district perform the match in-house or use the services of a contractor?

|__| 1. SFA/district does match
|__| 2. Contractor does match

D7. During what calendar month does the SFA/district receive data from the FSP for computer matching?

MONTH (ENTER 01-12): |__|__|

D8. What is the name of the software program used for computer matching?

_____

_____

D9. Indicate all data items from district/SFA files that are used to match student records to FSP agency records.

(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

|__| 1. Student name
|__| 2. Student address
|__| 3. Student phone number
|__| 4. Student SSN
|__| 5. Student gender
|__| 6. Student date of birth
|__| 7. Student grade level
|__| 8. Student food stamp case number
|__| 9. Student TANF[1] case number
|__| 10. Parent or guardian name
|__| 12. Parent or guardian SSN
|__| 13. Other, specify below:

_____

_____

_____

[1] TANF may be known by another name in your state. Please see the cover letter.

D. DIRECT CERTIFICATION (continued)

> ### 3. Computer match by state food stamp agency

D10. During what calendar month does the food stamp agency perform the match?

MONTH (ENTER 01-12): |__|__|

D11. Does the SFA or district send data to the food stamp agency or does the state department of education coordinate the transfer of records to the food stamp agency?

(CHECK ONE)

|__| 1. District
|__| 2. SFA
|__| 3. State dept of education → **GO TO PAGE 5**

D12. Indicate all data items sent by the district/SFA to the food stamp agency for direct certification matching.

(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

|__| 1. Student name
|__| 2. Student address
|__| 3. Student phone number
|__| 4. Student SSN
|__| 5. Student gender
|__| 6. Student date of birth
|__| 7. Student grade level
|__| 8. Student food stamp case number
|__| 9. Student TANF[1] case number
|__| 10. Parent or guardian name
|__| 12. Parent or guardian SSN
|__| 13. Other, specify below:

_____

_____

_____

[1] TANF may be known by another name in your state.
  Please see the cover letter.

GO TO PAGE 5

E. CONFIDENTIALITY AND RELEASE OF RECORDS

E1. This question is about use of student records for research purposes. Federal government agencies, such as USDA, often use administrative records to study program operations and patterns of participation in their programs. Are there any special procedural requirements that must be met when government agencies request student records from your district?

|__| 1. Yes → **SPECIFY BELOW**
|__| 2. No → **GO TO QUESTION 2**

Specification of requirements:

E2. Did the SFA director answer these questions or designate someone else to answer?

|__| 1. Answering himself/herself → **PLEASE PROVIDE EMAIL ADDRESS FOR FOLLOW-UP PURPOSES:**

       Email: _____

|__| 2. Someone else → **PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR FOLLOW-UP PURPOSES.**

       Respondent:

       Phone number:

       Email address:

E3. Approximate time to complete the survey (add time spent by all respondents).

|__|__|__| minutes

This completes our survey. Thank you very much for your cooperation!