

**SFA Directors Interview Guide**

**SFA (SCHOOL FOOD AUTHORITY) DIRECTORS  
SCHOOL BREAKFAST/LUNCH PROGRAM ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS**

**INTERVIEW GUIDE**

(NOTE: THIS GUIDE IS INTENDED TO SUGGEST A LOGIC TO THE INTERVIEW ORDER, AS WELL AS TO IDENTIFY THE KEY AREAS OF CONCERN. PRIORITIES OF THE RESPONDENT, HOWEVER, MAY LIKELY CAUSE VARIATIONS FROM THIS GUIDE.)

**I. INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)**

- A. Interviewer's Introduction
- B. Purpose of the Study/Interview

The Food and Nutrition Service has commissioned Abt Associates to conduct a School Lunch Eligible Non-Participant study for them. This study may be viewed as a marketing study for the school lunch and breakfast programs. The purposes of this study are to determine why families which are potentially eligible for meal benefits do not apply for free and reduced-price meals, and why children approved for free and reduced-price meals do not participate in the programs. The information gained from this study will be used to help FNS develop low-cost, low-burden strategies that can be used by school districts to increase application rates among eligible families and participation rates among approved children.

The purpose of this interview with you is to help us understand the specifics of how the school lunch and breakfast programs work in your school district.

- C. Review Schedule of Focus Groups in the School District
- D. Confidentiality

This interview is confidential. Abt Associates in conducting this study to ensure the complete anonymity of all study participants.

- E. In-Depth Interview

This interview should take about an hour. It is in-depth, which means that while I will ask you specific questions, please add whatever information you feel is appropriate to fully cover your opinions.

F. Taping

This interview is being audiotaped. This taping allows me to focus on what you are saying rather than trying to jot down specific details. Please speak in a voice as loud as mine, so that it can be picked up by the microphone.

II. PERCEPTIONS OF THE SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAM AND PROGRAM OFFERINGS  
(5 minutes)

I would like to start the discussion by understanding a little bit about the school meal programs offered in your district and your perceptions of these programs.

1. Do all schools in your district have a breakfast program? If not, describe the schools which do not have a breakfast program and why.
  - elementary vs. secondary schools
  - geographic location (describe)
  - other
2. Please describe the pattern of participation in the school lunch and breakfast programs. Does it differ by:
  - lunch vs. breakfast
  - geographic location (describe)
  - elementary vs. secondary schools
  - the ages/grades of the students
  - boys vs. girls
  - open vs. closed campuses
  - length of the serving times
  - other
3. If students are able to schedule classes during lunch periods, what alternatives, if any, are available for them to eat lunch?
4. Has participation changed over time? [IF APPROPRIATE:] How so? Why do you think participation has changed?
5. What is your perception of the link between eating nutritious meals and academic performance? How valuable is the school lunch/breakfast program in the education setting? Why do you say that?

III. THE APPLICATION PROCESS/INCOME VERIFICATION (10 minutes)

Now I would like to hear about how families apply to participate in the school meal programs.

1. How are **applications distributed**? Do each of the schools have their own distribution process or is there one district-wide process? [IF APPROPRIATE:] Does this differ for:
  - elementary vs. secondary schools? How so?
  - other
2. How well do you feel this/ese distribution process(es) works? Why do you say that?
3. Have you always distributed applications this/ese way(s)? [IF APPROPRIATE:] In what other ways have you distributed applications?
4. What are the pros and cons of this/the different distribution process(es)?
5. Are families offered any **assistance in completing the application**? If yes, please describe.
6. How do you go about **verifying income**?
  - Do you use **direct certification**? Why/why not?
  - If no direct certification, is verification done at the individual schools or centrally? Describe.
7. How well do you feel this/ese income verification procedure(s) works? Why do you say that?
8. Have you always verified income this/ese way(s)? [IF APPROPRIATE:] In what other ways have you verified income?
9. What are the pros and cons of this/the different income verification procedure(s)?
10. Do you feel that verification discourages some families from applying for school meal benefits? Which families? Why do you say that?

**IV. TICKETING SYSTEMS (10 minutes)**

I would now like to hear about how you go about recording the number of free, reduced-price, and full-price lunches and breakfasts served.

1. Please describe the **ticketing or other systems** (i.e., issuance of benefits systems) you use to record the number of meals served and to whom. Do each of the

schools have their own systems or is there one district-wide system? [IF APPROPRIATE:] Does this differ for:

- the lunch vs. breakfast program? How so?
  - elementary vs. secondary schools? How so?
  - other
2. What systems are used for **pre-payment of tickets and getting tickets**?
  3. [IF NOT ALREADY ANSWERED] How do the cafeteria staff know how much to charge each student?
  4. How do students know which foods to take (i.e., what is part of the reimbursable meal)? What happens if they don't take the right foods?
  5. How well do you feel this/ese recording system work(s)? Why do you say that?
  6. Have you always used this/ese recording system(s)? [IF APPROPRIATE:] In what other ways have you recording the number of meals served and to whom?
  7. What are the pros and cons of this/the different recording system(s)?

V. **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NSLP/SBP** (10 minutes)

Now I'd like to learn more about how the school meal programs actually work.

1. Is the food **served** similarly or does this vary at different schools? Who decides how the food is served? How is the food served (e.g., family vs. cafeteria style; self-service vs. pre-plated)? [DISTINGUISH BETWEEN LUNCH AND BREAKFAST]
2. Are the **kinds** of foods served the same or do they vary at different schools? Who decides what kinds of foods are served? What kinds of foods are served (e.g., ethnic foods, salad bar, etc.)? How is the variety? [DISTINGUISH BETWEEN LUNCH AND BREAKFAST]
  - Do the foods vary from day-to-day?
  - Are there choices each day?
3. Do students ever complain about the **quality and variety** of the food? What do they say? [DISTINGUISH BETWEEN LUNCH AND BREAKFAST]

4. Are the **portions** the same or do they vary at different schools? Who decides the size of the portions? Do the students ever complain about the portion sizes? What do they say? [DISTINGUISH BETWEEN LUNCH AND BREAKFAST]
5. Is **offer vs. served** (OVS) available at all schools in the district? If not, in which types of schools is OVS not available and why? [DISTINGUISH BETWEEN LUNCH AND BREAKFAST]
6. Describe the **meal alternatives** to the reimbursable meals that are available (e.g., vending machines, à la carte foods, close fast-food establishments off campus, etc.)? Do they vary at the different schools? [DISTINGUISH BETWEEN LUNCH AND BREAKFAST]
7. Are there separate lines for à la carte items and does this vary by school? Describe. [DISTINGUISH BETWEEN LUNCH AND BREAKFAST]
8. Do faculty eat with the students? Does this vary at the different schools? Who decides whether faculty eat with students? [DISTINGUISH BETWEEN LUNCH AND BREAKFAST]

**VI. STEPS TO ENCOURAGE APPLICATION/PARTICIPATION (10 minutes)**

Now that I'm more familiar with the school meal programs in your school district, I'd like to hear how you go about making families and students aware of the programs and any steps you have undertaken to encourage application and participation.

1. Please describe any promotional programs and/or materials you use? Are these district-wide programs or do the individual schools develop their own programs and materials? How well do they work? Why do you say that?
2. Do you offer any kinds of nutritional educational programs? To whom? Please describe them. Are these district-wide programs or do the individual schools develop their own programs? How well do they work? Why do you say that?
3. What role, if any, do the school administrators and staff (e.g., principals and teachers) play in encouraging application and participation?
4. Has the school district itself undertaken any initiatives to encourage application and participation? If yes, please describe them. How well do they work? Why do you say that?

5. What specific efforts, if any, have been made to provide outreach with regard to access to the NSLP and SBP for populations such as *homeless children, non-English speaking children, abused/neglected children in shelter, etc.*? If any, please describe them. If not, are there any efforts underway to address these children? If yes, please describe them. If no, why not?

**VII. REASONS FOR NON-APPLICATION/NON-PARTICIPATION (10 minutes)**

Finally, I would like to end this discussion by asking you about your thoughts on why some low-income families do not apply for school meal benefits for their children and why some children who have been approved for benefits accepted do not participate.

1. Based on anything we have been discussing or any other thoughts you may have, what do you think are the primary reasons that some low income families do not apply for their children to participate in the school lunch and breakfast program? Why do you say that? Do you think these reasons differ by:
  - geographic location (describe)
  - elementary vs. secondary schools
  - the ages/grades of the students
  - boys vs. girls
  - other
2. What do you think are the primary reasons that some children who have been approved do not participate in the school lunch program? Why do you say that? What about the school breakfast program? Why do you say that? Do you think these reasons differ by:
  - geographic location (describe)
  - elementary vs. secondary schools
  - the ages/grades of the students
  - boys vs. girls
  - lack of choice
  - preference for home meals
  - other
3. How do you think the number of applications returned could be increased? What about increasing participation rates?

FNS1/FNS5SFA.IG  
5/15/92

**School Principals Interview Guide**



**SCHOOL PRINCIPALS  
SCHOOL BREAKFAST/LUNCH PROGRAM ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS**

**INTERVIEW GUIDE**

(NOTE: THIS GUIDE IS INTENDED TO SUGGEST A LOGIC TO THE INTERVIEW ORDER, AS WELL AS TO IDENTIFY THE KEY AREAS OF CONCERN. PRIORITIES OF THE RESPONDENT, HOWEVER, MAY LIKELY CAUSE VARIATIONS FROM THIS GUIDE.)

**I. INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)**

- A. Interviewer's Introduction
- B. Purpose of the Study/Interview

The Food and Nutrition Service has commissioned Abt Associates to conduct a School Lunch Eligible Non-Participant study for them. This study may be viewed as a marketing study for the school lunch and breakfast programs. The purposes of this study are to determine why families which are potentially eligible for meal benefits do not apply for free and reduced-price meals, and why children approved for free and reduced-price meals do not participate in the programs. The information gained from this study will be used to help FNS develop low-cost, low-burden strategies that can be used by school districts to increase application rates among eligible families and participation rates among approved children.

The purpose of this interview with you is to help us understand the specifics of how the school lunch and breakfast programs work in your school.

- C. Review Schedule of Focus Groups in the School
- D. Confidentiality

This interview is confidential. Abt Associates in conducting this study to ensure the complete anonymity of all study participants.

- E. In-Depth Interview

This interview should take about an hour. It is in-depth, which means that while I will ask you specific questions, please add whatever information you feel is appropriate to fully cover your opinions.

F. Taping

This interview is being audiotaped. This taping allows me to focus on what you are saying rather than trying to jot down specific details. Please speak in a voice as loud as mine, so that it can be picked up by the microphone.

II. PERCEPTIONS OF THE SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAM AND PROGRAM PARTICIPATION (5 minutes)

I would like to start the discussion by understanding a little bit about your school, participation in your meal programs and your perceptions of these programs.

1. Where does your school draw from (i.e., what is the catchment area)? What are the names of the principle areas (i.e. what are the feeder schools, if appropriate)?
  - Grades
  - Number of students
  - Geographically large or small
2. Describe the pattern of participation in the school lunch and school breakfast program? Does it differ by:
  - lunch vs. breakfast (if school has breakfast program)
  - the ages/grades of the students
  - boys vs. girls
  - open vs. closed campus
  - length of the serving times
  - other
3. If students are able to schedule classes during lunch periods, what alternatives, if any, are available for them to eat lunch?
4. Has participation changed over time? [IF APPROPRIATE:] How so? Why do you think participation has changed?
5. What is your perception of the link between eating nutritious meals and academic performance? How valuable is the school lunch/breakfast program in the education setting? Why do you say that?

III. THE APPLICATION PROCESS/INCOME VERIFICATION (10 minutes)

Now I would like to hear about how families apply to participate in the school meal programs.

1. Could you describe the procedures used to **distribute and approve applications**. Please comment on:
  - Timing
  - Personnel
  - Outreach
  - Other
2. How well do you feel this distribution process works? Why do you say that?
  - Are there any problems with this distribution process? If yes, please describe them.
  - Do you have any suggestions for improving the process or solving the problems? If yes, please describe them?
  - What would be barriers to implementing these?
3. Have you always distributed applications this way? [IF APPROPRIATE:] In what other ways have you distributed applications?
4. What are the pros and cons of this/the different distribution process(es)?
5. Are families offered any **assistance in completing the application**? If yes, please describe.
  - What kinds of problems do you find families are having in completing the application?
6. How do you go about **verifying income**? [IF APPROPRIATE:]
7. How well do you feel this income verification procedure works? Why do you say that?
  - Are there any problems with this verification procedure? If yes, please describe them.
  - Do you have any suggestions for improving the procedure or solving the problems? If yes, please describe them?
  - What would be barriers to implementing these?
8. Have you always verified income this way? [IF APPROPRIATE:] In what other ways have you verified income?
9. What are the pros and cons of this/the different income verification procedure(s)?

**IV. TICKETING SYSTEMS (10 minutes)**

I would now like to hear about how you go about recording the number of free, reduced-price, and full-price lunches and breakfasts served.

1. Please describe the **ticketing or other systems** (i.e. issuance of benefits systems) you use to record the number of meals served and to whom. [IF APPROPRIATE:] Does this differ for the lunch vs. breakfast program? How so?
  - Can students purchase meals on a daily basis?
2. What is the system for **pre-payment of tickets and getting tickets**?
3. [IF NOT ALREADY ANSWERED] How do the cafeteria staff know how much to charge each student?
4. How do students know which foods to take (i.e., what is part of the reimbursable meal)? What happens if they don't take the right foods?
5. How well do you feel this recording system works? Why do you say that?
  - Are there any problems with this recording system? If yes, please describe them.
  - Do you have any suggestions for improving the process or solving the problems? If yes, please describe them?
  - What would be barriers to implementing these?
6. Have you always used this recording system? [IF APPROPRIATE:] In what other ways have you recording the number of meals served and to whom?
7. What are the pros and cons of this/the different recording system(s)?

**V. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NSLP/SBP (10 minutes)**

Now I'd like to learn more about how the school meal programs actually work.

1. At what time are they **scheduled**? [DISTINGUISH BETWEEN LUNCH AND BREAKFAST]

- Does the schedule work? Are there any problems? Please describe them.
  - How could the schedule be improved?
  - What would be barriers to implementing these?
2. How long do they **last**? [DISTINGUISH BETWEEN LUNCH AND BREAKFAST]
- Is the time sufficient? Are there any problems? Please describe them.
  - How could this be improved?
  - What would be barriers to implementing these?
3. What is the **space** where meals are served and students eat like? [DISTINGUISH BETWEEN LUNCH AND BREAKFAST]
- Does the space work? Are there any problems? Please describe them.
  - Is there sufficient space to feed all the students scheduled to eat?
  - How could this be improved?
  - What would be barriers to implementing these?
4. How is the food **prepared and delivered**? [DISTINGUISH BETWEEN LUNCH AND BREAKFAST]
- Does the preparation and delivery work? Are there any problems? Please describe them.
  - How could this be improved?
  - What would be barriers to implementing these?
5. How is the food **served** (e.g., family vs. cafeteria style; self-service vs. pre-plated)? [DISTINGUISH BETWEEN LUNCH AND BREAKFAST]
6. What **kinds** of foods are served (e.g., ethnic foods, salad bar, etc.)? [DISTINGUISH BETWEEN LUNCH AND BREAKFAST]
- How is the variety? Do the foods vary from day-to-day?
  - What choices are available? Are there choices everyday?

- Do students eat the food? Which do they prefer?
7. What do students complain about? What do they say? [DISTINGUISH BETWEEN LUNCH AND BREAKFAST] Do students ever complain about the:
    - Portion sizes?
    - Food quality?
    - Variety?
  8. Describe the **meal alternatives** to the reimbursable meals that are available (e.g., bring lunch from home, vending machines, à la carte foods, close fast-food establishments off campus, etc.)? [DISTINGUISH BETWEEN LUNCH AND BREAKFAST]
  9. Do faculty go through the same food line as the students? [DISTINGUISH BETWEEN LUNCH AND BREAKFAST]
  10. Do faculty eat with the students? [DISTINGUISH BETWEEN LUNCH AND BREAKFAST]
  11. Are there any changes you would like to see in the way faculty and students interact during meal periods? If yes, please describe them.
    - What impact do you think these changes would have on students' participation and eating behavior?
    - What would be barriers to implementing these?

**VI. STEPS TO ENCOURAGE APPLICATION/PARTICIPATION (10 minutes)**

Now that I'm more familiar with the school meal programs in your school, I'd like to hear how you go about making families and students aware of the programs and any steps you have undertaken to encourage application and participation.

1. Please describe any promotional programs and/or materials you use? How well do they work? Why do you say that?
  - What changes do you think need to be made to the promotional programs/materials you use?
  - What would be barriers to implementing these?
2. Do you offer any kinds of nutritional educational programs? To whom? Please describe them. How well do they work? Why do you say that?
  - What changes do you think need to be made to the nutritional education programs?

- What would be barriers to implementing these?
3. What role, if any, do the school administrators and staff (e.g., principals and teachers) play in encouraging application and participation?
    - What changes do you think need to be made to the role administrators and staff play in encouraging application and participation?
    - What would be barriers to implementing these?
  4. Has the school district itself undertaken any initiatives to encourage application and participation? If yes, please describe them. How well do they work? Why do you say that?
    - What changes do you think need to be made to school district initiatives to encourage application and participation?
    - What would be barriers to implementing these?
  5. What specific efforts, if any, have been made to provide outreach with regard to access to the NSLP and SBP for populations such as *homeless children, non-English speaking children, abused/neglected children in shelters, etc?* If any, please describe them. If not, are there any efforts underway to address these children? If yes, please describe them. If no, why not?

**VII. REASONS FOR NON-APPLICATION/NON-PARTICIPATION (10 minutes)**

Finally, I would like to end this discussion by asking you about your thoughts on why some low-income families do not apply for school meal benefits for their children and why some children who have been approved do not participate.

1. Based on anything we have been discussing or any other thoughts you may have, what do you think are the primary reasons that some low-income families do not apply for their children to participate in the school lunch and breakfast program? Why do you say that? Do you think these reasons differ by:
  - the ages/grades of the students
  - boys vs. girls
  - free vs. reduced-price students
  - other
2. What do you think are the primary reasons that some children who have been approved do not participate in the

school lunch program? Why do you say that? What about the school breakfast program? Why do you say that? Do you think these reasons differ by:

- the ages/grades of the students
- boys vs. girls
- free vs. reduced-price students
- lack of choice
- preference for home meals
- other

3. How do you think the number of applications returned could be increased? What about increasing participation rates?

FNS1/FNS5PRIN.IG  
5/15/92



**Non-Applicant Parents Focus Group**

**Moderator's Guide**

**NON-APPLICANT PARENTS  
SCHOOL BREAKFAST/LUNCH PROGRAM FOCUS GROUPS**

**MODERATOR'S GUIDE**

(NOTE: THIS GUIDE IS INTENDED TO SUGGEST A LOGIC TO THE DISCUSSION ORDER, AS WELL AS TO IDENTIFY KEY AREAS OF CONCERN. PRIORITIES OF THE GROUP, HOWEVER, WILL LIKELY CAUSE VARIATIONS FROM THIS GUIDE.)

**I. INTRODUCTION (10 minutes)**

**A. Moderator's Introduction**

1. General Nature and Purpose of a Focus Group
2. Role of the Moderator

My role as the moderator is generally to direct the content and flow of the discussion and to make sure that it is on the right track. I am not looking for any right or wrong answers, so feel free to offer both positive and negative viewpoints.

**B. Specific Purpose (objectives) of this focus group**

The organization that is sponsoring this discussion is interested in better understanding the concerns and needs of parents such as yourselves, regarding food and nutrition for your school-aged children. It was decided that a small, informal discussion among parents like you would be an excellent starting point.

We will be talking tonight about a number of topics including your thoughts about food and nutrition for your children and how or what arrangements you have made, if any, for feeding them while they are in school.

Before we begin the discussion, I would like to go over a few basic ground rules.

**C. Ground Rules**

1. This session is being audiotaped. This taping allows me, as the moderator, to focus on you, the participants, rather than trying to jot down specific details about the discussion. The tapes will be used by Abt Associates staff to prepare a report. Our report will not make reference to any one of you by name. By assuring your anonymity, I hope that you will speak openly and candidly about tonight's topic.

2. Please speak in a voice as loud as mine, so that it can be picked up by the microphone.
3. We encourage you to share your opinions with the group, but please avoid side conversations while other participants are speaking.
4. (OPTIONAL): For the comfort of the group, please do not smoke.

D. Self-Introductions

I'd like to first start by having us get to know a little bit about each other. Can you please give me your name (first name only is fine), where you live and how long you've lived there, whether you are married, the ages of your children and where they go to school, your occupation if you work, and your spouse's occupation, if he or she works.

E. Self-Administered Questionnaire (SAQ) (10 minutes)

Before we begin the discussion, I would like you to answer a brief questionnaire. This questionnaire will give us a little more information about the people who are participating in this discussion. Because we are only using first names, we are not interested in identifying any of you specifically, but rather in understanding more about this group.

First I will pass the questionnaire out to everyone and then I will read each question out loud for you to answer. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have as we are going through the questionnaire.

[MODERATOR PASSES OUT THE SAQ, READS THE FIRST QUESTION AND ANY INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE QUESTION ALOUD AND ASKS FOR QUESTIONS FROM PARTICIPANTS. PARTICIPANTS COMPLETE FIRST QUESTION. REPEAT UNTIL ALL QUESTIONS ARE ANSWERED. MODERATOR COLLECTS SAQ.]

II. GENERAL PERCEPTIONS OF FOOD/NUTRITION NEEDS FOR SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN (10 minutes)

I would like to begin the discussion by asking you a general question about food eaten by your school-aged children.

1. If one of your relatives or close friends in your neighborhood asked you about what it was like to have to feed your children in the morning and while they are at school, what would you tell them?

- What are your primary concerns or problems you have feeding your children in the morning? while they are at school?
  - Is it different for elementary and high school aged children?
  - What about feeding them for breakfast vs. lunch?
2. Is food and nutrition for your children while they are at school something you think about much?
- What about in the morning before they go to school?
  - What do you think about?
  - What kinds of concerns come to mind?
  - What do you worry about?
  - What are your primary concerns?
  - Have these changed over time (elementary vs. high school)? How?
  - Are your concerns different for breakfast vs. lunch? How?
3. What are your thoughts on the relationship between your children eating nutritiously and their performance in school? Do you think they do better if they eat nutritiously every day?

**III. CURRENT HABITS/PRACTICES WITH REGARD TO FEEDING SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN (10 minutes)**

Now I would like to ask you about how you currently feed your children in the morning and while they are at school.

1. What arrangements have you made for feeding (how do you feed) your school-aged children?
- Do these differ by:
    - the children's ages?
    - where they go to school?
    - whether they are boys or girls?
    - for breakfast vs. lunch?
  - How do they differ?

2. Are you satisfied with the arrangements you have made for breakfast? lunch?
  - What do you like about them?
3. What do you dislike about them?
  - What have you done, if anything, to try and change the arrangements with which you are dissatisfied?
  - [IF NOTHING, ASK]: What do you think is stopping you from changing your current arrangements?
4. Did you always have these arrangements or did you ever have other arrangements for feeding your school-aged children?
  - What were they?
  - What did you like about them?
  - What did you dislike?
  - Why are you no longer feeding your children under these arrangements?

IV. AWARENESS/KNOWLEDGE OF SCHOOL BREAKFAST/LUNCH PROGRAM (20 minutes)

I would now like to ask you about a particular arrangement in which some parents have made plans to feed their school-aged children -- the school lunch program.

1. Have any of you heard of the school lunch program? [GET HAND COUNT.]
2. [IF ANYONE AWARE]: How did you hear about it?
  - Did the schools conduct any special programs? Please describe them.
  - Did the schools put out any special information? Please describe it.
  - Did the schools send anything home with your children? Please describe it.
3. What have you heard about it?

PROBE FOR:

- Perception of school nutrition programs as "welfare" or "nutrition" programs
  - Attitudes toward welfare programs
  - Attitudes toward child nutrition programs
  - Awareness that all students, regardless of income, may participate and that some students pay no fee, some pay a reduced-price and others pay full price
4. Do you know anybody who participates in the school lunch program?
- What have they told you? Please be as specific as possible.
  - What have you heard about who is eligible to participate?
  - What have you heard about the application and application process?
    - Understandability of form
      - Any assistance provided by the school or school district to help complete the application
    - Income verification
    - Confidentiality of information
  - What have you heard about how students obtain food?
    - Ticketing system
    - Confidentiality of participation
  - What have you heard about the time that lunch is scheduled and the amount of time allotted to go through the line and eat lunch?
  - What have you heard about the cafeteria or space where the children eat?
  - What have you heard about the food itself?
    - Appearance
    - Odor
    - Taste
    - Amount
    - Variety
    - Appropriateness (e.g., ethnicity)
5. Who do you think participates in the school lunch program? Describe that person/family.

6. Are any of you aware that children can also have breakfast in school? [GET HAND COUNT.]
7. [IF ANYONE AWARE]: How did you hear about the breakfast program?
  - Did the schools conduct any special programs? Please describe them.
  - Did the schools put out any special information? Please describe it.
  - Did the schools send anything home with your children? Please describe it.
8. What have you heard about it?

PROBE FOR:

- Perception of school nutrition programs as "welfare" or "nutrition" programs
  - Attitudes toward welfare programs
  - Attitudes toward child nutrition programs
  - Awareness that all students, regardless of income, may participate and that some students pay no fee, some pay a reduced-price and others pay full price
9. Do you know anybody who participates in the school breakfast program?
    - What have they told you? Please be as specific as possible.
    - What have you heard about who is eligible to participate?
    - What have you heard about the application and application process?
      - Understandability of form
      - Income verification
      - Confidentiality of information
    - What have you heard about how students obtain food?
      - Ticketing system
      - Confidentiality of participation
    - What have you heard about the time that breakfast is scheduled and the amount of time allotted to go through the line and eat breakfast?

- What have you heard about the cafeteria or space where the children eat?
  - What have you heard about the food itself?
    - Appearance
    - Odor
    - Taste
    - Amount
    - Variety
    - Appropriateness (e.g., ethnicity)
10. Who do you think participates in the school breakfast program? Describe that person/family.

V. EXPERIENCES/PERCEPTIONS/BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL BREAKFAST/LUNCH PROGRAM (25 minutes)

Now I would like to talk about experiences any of you might have had with the school lunch or breakfast program. Please be as specific as possible as we are very interested in hearing both the positives and negatives.

1. Have any of your children ever participated in the school lunch program at either the current school(s) or previous school(s) your child(ren) attend(ed)? [GET HAND COUNT.]
  - What about the school breakfast program? [GET HAND COUNT.]
2. What were your experiences? [SPECIFY LUNCH VS. BREAKFAST PROGRAM.]
  - What did you like?
  - What did you dislike?
  - Why are you no longer participating?
  - What could have been done differently so that you would still be participating?
3. Have any of you ever applied to participate in the school lunch program at either the current school(s) or previous school(s) your child(ren) attend(ed)? [GET HAND COUNT.]
  - If no, why not?
  - What about the school breakfast program? [GET HAND COUNT.]
  - If no, why not?



PROBES:

- Not receive application form/materials
  - Not understand application/materials
    - Language barrier
    - Materials difficult to read
  - Not feel were eligible for benefits
    - Why?
  - Application requires disclosure of sensitive information (income verification)
    - What are reactions?
  - Lack of confidentiality regarding application for school meal benefits
  - Lack of anonymity of students receiving free and reduced-price meals
  - Dislike of school bureaucracy, anti-government programs
  - Structural issues
    - Scheduling
    - Time allotted
  - Operational issues
    - Cafeteria or space
    - Food delivery
  - Food and nutrition issues
    - Prefer feeding children at home
    - Children not like food/why?
4. [IF NOT ALREADY COVERED] What were your experiences with the application process? [SPECIFY LUNCH VS. BREAKFAST PROGRAM.]
- What did you like?
  - What did you dislike?
5. Was anyone ever turned down after you applied? [GET HAND COUNT -- SPECIFY LUNCH VS. BREAKFAST PROGRAM]
- What were you told, if anything, about why you were turned down?
  - Who told you?
  - What were your reactions?
6. What role did your child or children play in your decision not to apply to participate?
- Did you and your child or children discuss participation?
  - What did your child or children tell you?

- Does the role your child or children play differ by:
    - the children's ages?
    - where they go to school?
    - whether they are boys or girls?
    - for breakfast vs. lunch?
7. What could have been done differently so that you would have decided to apply to participate?
  8. What do you think about the idea of direct certification for the school meal programs, that is, if you are already approved for benefits like food stamps or public assistance, you would automatically be approved for the school meal programs?
    - How would direct certification effect your decision to apply for school meal benefits?
    - What do you like about direct certification? Why do you say that?
    - What do you dislike about direct certification? Why do you say that?

**VI. WRAP-UP (5 minutes)**

What do you think would need to be different in order for you to consider participating in the school lunch program for your children? What about the school breakfast program?

**PROBE FOR:**

- All school children were treated the same (e.g. all pay the same for meals, all receive free meals)

**Non-Applicant Students Focus Group**

**Moderator's Guide**

**NON-APPLICANT STUDENTS  
SCHOOL BREAKFAST/LUNCH PROGRAM FOCUS GROUPS**

**MODERATOR'S GUIDE**

(NOTE: THIS GUIDE IS INTENDED TO SUGGEST A LOGIC TO THE DISCUSSION ORDER, AS WELL AS TO IDENTIFY KEY AREAS OF CONCERN. PRIORITIES OF THE GROUP, HOWEVER, WILL LIKELY CAUSE VARIATIONS FROM THIS GUIDE. LANGUAGE USED BY THE MODERATOR WILL BE APPROPRIATE TO THE AGE AND MATURITY OF THE GROUP.)

**I. INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)**

**A. Explain group process and purpose.**

1. Introduce self.

2. We are here today to talk about breakfast and lunch both in and out of school. The people who set up the breakfast and lunch programs in schools want to know what students your age think of these programs. You may or may not participate in these programs but you probably know other students who do participate or could participate. [SHOW SCHOOL MENU AND EXPLAIN PARTICIPATION.] You may also have heard things about the program. So, we think that you would know best what students your age would like and dislike. Since we couldn't talk to everyone in your class, we've picked you to speak for all students your age.

I want you to know that I have nothing to do with your school meal programs so I want you to feel free to say what you really think. There are no right or wrong answers. Everyone's opinion is very important--that's why we are meeting as a group. If we thought you were all going to have the same opinion on everything, we would have only talked to one of you.

- B. Explain ground rules.
1. Talk one at a time.
  2. Talk as loud as I do.
  3. No side conversations.
  4. Explain audiotaping.
  5. Explain anonymity.

C. Introductions.

Even though you probably all know each other, I'd like to go around and have you introduce yourselves to me. Please tell me your name, age, grade, and who else lives at home.

II. WARM-UP: BREAKFAST/LUNCH OPTIONS (5 minutes)

- A. Tell me all the different ways you could have breakfast and lunch during the school week.

PROBES:

- Bring lunch from home
- Eat off campus
- School meals

- B. How do students decide what to do for breakfast or lunch?

III. EVALUATION OF SCHOOL BREAKFAST/LUNCH PROGRAMS (25-30 minutes)

We know that in your school lunch (and breakfast) are available. Some students are eligible to get lunch (and breakfast) at a free or reduced cost. Other children can get the same meals but they must pay full price. We're interested in getting your impressions of the programs involving free and reduced cost meals. [SHOW MENU TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN REIMBURSABLE MEALS AND Á LA CARTE ITEMS.]

- A. Awareness (5 minutes)

1. First of all let's talk about how students find out about the breakfast and lunch programs. Do students know that they may be able to get breakfast and lunch in school for no cost or at a reduced price? [ASK FOR EACH PROGRAM SEPARATELY]

2. How do they find out? Does the school do anything to let you know about these programs? What does the school do? [ASK FOR EACH PROGRAM SEPARATELY]
3. Do they make it sound like something students your age would want? Reasons why/why not. [ASK FOR EACH PROGRAM SEPARATELY]

B. Operations/Procedure (5-10 minutes)

1. First, thinking about breakfast, is breakfast scheduled at a convenient time for most students?
  - Is there enough time to eat the breakfast?
2. Are students who have to travel to school, either by bus or some other way, able to eat the breakfast offered at school?
  - Do you think more students would eat the school breakfast if it was offered at a different time? IF YES...
    - What time would be best?
3. Now thinking about lunch, is lunch scheduled at a convenient time for most students? (PROBE FOR STUDENTS WHO HAVE NOT INCLUDED TIME FOR LUNCH IN THEIR SCHOOL SCHEDULE)
  - Do you think more students would eat the school lunch if it was offered at a different time? IF YES...
    - What time would be best?
4. Is there enough time to go through the line and eat the school lunch during lunch period? IF NOT...
  - Why not? What needs to be different?
5. Some students get free or reduced price meals and others pay full price. How do the cafeteria staff know what to charge?
  - Are there any problems with this? IF YES...
    - What are they?
    - How would you change it?

6. Does everyone know who gets a meal for free and who gets it at a reduced cost? IF YES...
  - How do they know?
  - Does it create any problems? Do you think it stops any students from participating?
  - Is this the same or different for breakfast?

C. *Food Quality and Variety* (5 minutes)

[SHOW MENU TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN REIMBURSABLE MEALS AND À LA CARTE ITEMS.]

1. What do students think of the food served in the breakfast program? What about the lunch program?  
PROBES:
  - Appearance
  - Odor
  - Taste
  - Variety
  - Quantity
2. How would you change the foods served in the school breakfast program? What about the school lunch program?
  - Do you think this would get more students to participate in the school breakfast program? What about the lunch programs?
  - If they made these changes would you ever consider participating? Why/why not? [ASK SEPARATELY FOR EACH PROGRAM]

D. *Image and Attitude* (10-15 minutes)

I'd like to get an idea of the types of students who participate in the school breakfast and lunch programs. I have some pictures of all different kinds of students. I'd like you to look through these and separate them into two piles: One pile of students who look like they would get the school lunch for free or less than full price and one pile of kids who look like they would pay full price. I'd like you to do this as a group.

[NOTE: PHOTOGRAPHS WILL BE AGE-APPROPRIATE TO THE GROUP BEING INTERVIEWED]

1. Let's look at the students who you think would get lunch for free or less than full price. [DISPLAY ALL PHOTOS ON TABLE] Why did you put these together? How are the students in this group similar to one another?
  - Tell me more about these students...
    - What are they like?
    - Are they students you would want to be friends with? Why/why not?
    - How are they the same/different from you?
    - Where do they live?
    - What do they like to do?
  
2. Of the students who can get lunch for free or less than full price, some students participate in the lunch program and some students don't. Divide this pile into the students who do and don't take the lunch.
  - Tell me about the students who can get lunch for free or less than full price and choose to take the lunch. What are they like? Describe them to me.
    - Why do they participate in the school lunch?
  - What about the students who can get lunch for free or less than full price but choose not to take it? What are they like?
    - Why don't they participate in the school lunch?
  - If all students could get meals for free, would the students eat the meals? Why or why not?
  
3. Would you have divided up these piles any differently if we were talking about students who do and don't participate in the breakfast program? IF YES...
  - How would you have divided them?
  - Why would it be different?



4. Now let's look at the students who if they took the school lunch would have to pay full price. [DISPLAY ALL PHOTOS ON TABLE] Why did you put these together? How are the students in this group similar to one another?
  - Tell me more about these students...
    - What are they like?
    - Are they students you would want to be friends with? Why/why not?
    - How are they the same/different from you?
    - Where do they live?
    - What do they like to do?
  
5. Of the students who would have to pay full price, some students choose to participate in the school lunch program and some choose not to. Divide this pile into the students who do and don't take the lunch.
  - Tell me about the full-price students who take the school lunch. What are they like? Describe them to me.
    - Why do they participate in the school lunch?
  - What about the full-price students who choose not to take the school lunch? What are they like?
    - Why don't they participate in the school lunch?
  - If all students could get meals for free, would the students eat the meals? Why or why not?
  
6. Would you have divided up these piles any differently if we were talking about students who do and don't participate in the breakfast program? IF YES...
  - How would you have divided them?
  - Why would it be different?

**IV. APPLICATION PROCESS (15 minutes)**

- A. Now I 'd like to talk about applying for the free or reduced cost breakfast and lunch programs in more detail. We understand that all the students in your school can have the opportunity to apply for participation in these programs.

We're trying to help the people who run these programs understand why students choose to apply and not to apply. So your experiences are very important to us and any reason you had for applying or not applying is okay. Remember, I have nothing to do with running these programs so you should free to be honest about your opinions and feelings related to this.

1. Some students I've spoken to in other schools have told me that they had applied for free or reduced-price school meals in the past but did not apply this year.
  - Why do you think someone who applied for free or reduced-price meals in the past would stop applying?
  - What could make them change their mind?
2. Let's talk about the application that has to be filled out before you can actually participate in the breakfast or lunch programs in your current school. Can you tell me about this--how does it work?
3. Who is eligible for the school breakfast and lunch programs?
  - Can anyone apply?
  - Why do you think they ask you to fill out an application?
4. What do you think they do with the information on the application?
  - Who ends up reading it?
  - Is it private?

5. Who hands out the applications?
  - Where is it handed out?
  - When is it handed out?
  - How do you feel about the way this is done?
6. After you received the application, what happened?
  - What did you think the school expected you to do with the application?
  - What did you actually do with it?
7. If you didn't give it to your parents to fill out, why not?
8. If you did give it to your parents, then what happened to the application?
  - Did you talk with your parents about it?
  - What did you say?
  - What did you want your parents to do and why?
  - Did your parents fill it out? Why/why not?
  - How did you feel about that?
9. For those of you whose parents did fill out the application, what happened next?

V. **WRAP-UP AND SUMMARY** (5-10 minutes)

We just talked about the school breakfast and lunch programs in terms of why you think students your age do and don't like these programs. The people in charge of these programs want to get more students your age interested in participating in them. Once more, tell me the reasons why students your age don't want to participate in the programs and any ideas you have to make them better.

[DISTRIBUTE SAQs TO EACH PARTICIPANT, ADMINISTER, AND COLLECT.]

FNS3/FNS8NAST.MG  
10/20/93

**Non-Participant Students Focus Group**

**Moderator's Guide**

**NON-PARTICIPANT STUDENTS  
SCHOOL BREAKFAST/LUNCH PROGRAM FOCUS GROUPS**

**MODERATOR'S GUIDE**

(NOTE: THIS GUIDE IS INTENDED TO SUGGEST A LOGIC TO THE DISCUSSION ORDER, AS WELL AS TO IDENTIFY KEY AREAS OF CONCERN. PRIORITIES OF THE GROUP, HOWEVER, WILL LIKELY CAUSE VARIATIONS FROM THIS GUIDE. LANGUAGE USED BY THE MODERATOR WILL BE APPROPRIATE TO THE AGE AND MATURITY OF THE GROUP. TIMES WILL VARY DEPENDING ON THE AGE OF THE GROUP.)

**I. INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)**

A. Explain group process and purpose.

1. Introduce self.
2. Purpose of group.

We are here today to talk about breakfast and lunch both in and out of school. The people who set up the breakfast and lunch programs in schools want to know what students your age think of these programs. You may or may not participate in these programs but you probably know other students who do participate or could participate. [SHOW SCHOOL MENU AND EXPLAIN PARTICIPATION.] You may also have heard things about the program. So, we think that you would know best what students your age would like and dislike. Since we couldn't talk to everyone in your class, we've picked you to speak for all students your age.

I want you to know that I have nothing to do with your school meal programs so I want you to feel free to say what you really think. There are no right or wrong answers. Everyone's opinion is very important--that's why we are meeting as a group. If we thought you were all going to have the same opinion on everything, we would have only talked to one of you.

- B. Explain ground rules.
1. Talk one at a time.
  2. Talk as loud as I do.
  3. No side conversations.
  4. Explain audiotaping.
  5. Explain anonymity.

C. Introductions.

Even though you probably all know each other, I'd like to go around and have you introduce yourselves to me. Please tell me your name, age, grade, and who else lives at home.

**II. WARM-UP: BREAKFAST/LUNCH OPTIONS (5 minutes)**

- A. Tell me all the different ways you could have breakfast and lunch during the school week.

PROBES:

- Bring lunch from home
- Eat off campus
- School meals

- B. How do students decide what to do for breakfast or lunch?

**III. GENERAL PERCEPTIONS ABOUT SCHOOL BREAKFAST/LUNCH PROGRAM (10 minutes)**

We know that in your school, lunch (and breakfast) are available. Some students can get lunch (and breakfast) either for free or for less than the full price. Other children can get the same meals but they must pay full price. We're interested in knowing what you think of the complete meals. That is, the lunch that is offered for the same price every day. [SHOW MENU TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN REIMBURSABLE MEALS AND A LA CARTE ITEMS.]

Since I don't know anything about the breakfast or lunch that you can get for free or for less than full price, why don't you tell me a little bit about it.

[ASK EACH QUESTION FOR BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAMS SEPARATELY]

1. First of all let's talk about how students find out about the breakfast and lunch programs. Do students know that they may be able to get breakfast and lunch in school for no cost or at a reduced price?
  - How do they find out? Does the school do anything to let you know about these programs? What does the school do?
  - Do they make it sound like something students your age would want? Reasons why/why not.
  - Do you think they should be doing anything else to let students know about these programs?
2. Can students who get meals for free or less than the full price get the same food as the students who pay full price? How do you know this?
3. Now let's talk about what students like and don't like. Let's start with the breakfast program. What do you think of it/what have you heard about it from other students?
4. What about the lunch program? What do you think of it/what have you heard about it from other students?
5. Do students think of the breakfast and lunch programs differently? Is one better than the other? Why?

**IV. EVALUATION OF SPECIFIC MEAL COMPONENTS (30-35 minutes)**

Now I'd like to talk about the breakfast and lunch programs in more detail.

**A. Operations/Procedure (10 minutes)**

1. First, thinking about breakfast, is breakfast scheduled at a convenient time for most students?
  - Is there enough time to eat the breakfast?
2. Are students who have to travel to school, either by bus or some other way, able to eat the breakfast offered at school?
  - Do you think more students would eat the school breakfast if it was offered at a different time? IF YES...
    - What time would be best?

3. Now thinking about lunch, is lunch scheduled at a convenient time for most students? (FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL, PROBE FOR STUDENTS WHO HAVE NOT INCLUDED TIME FOR LUNCH IN THEIR SCHOOL SCHEDULE)
  - Do you think more students would eat the school lunch if it was offered at a different time? IF YES...
    - What time would be best?
4. Is there enough time to go through the line and eat the school lunch during lunch period? IF NOT...
  - Why not? What needs to be different?
5. Some students get free or reduced price meals and others pay full price. How do the cafeteria staff know what to charge?
  - Are there any problems with this? IF YES...
    - What are they?
    - How would you change it?
6. Does everyone know who gets a meal for free and who gets it at a reduced cost? IF YES...
  - How do they know?
  - Does it create any problems? Do you think it stops any students from participating?
  - Is this the same or different for breakfast?

B. *Food Quality and Variety* (10 minutes)

[SHOW MENU TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN REIMBURSABLE MEALS AND À LA CARTE ITEMS.]

1. What do students think of the food served in the breakfast program? What about the lunch program?

PROBES:

- Appearance
- Odor
- Taste
- Variety
- Quantity



2. Is the food in the breakfast program different from other food served in the cafeteria?
  - How is it different?
3. Is the food in the lunch program different from other food served in the cafeteria?
  - How is it different?
4. How does the food in the school breakfast program compare to food you can have at home?
  - Is one better than the other? Reasons why.
5. How does the food in the school lunch program compare to food you can bring from home?
  - Is one better than the other? Reasons why.
  - What about in comparison to food you can buy outside of school?
  - What about in comparison to food you can buy inside of school, but outside of the cafeteria (e.g., school store)
  - Are there particular school lunches that you won't eat? Which one(s)?
6. How would you change the foods served in the school breakfast program? What about the school lunch program?
  - Do you think this would get more students to participate in the school breakfast program? What about the lunch programs?
  - If they made these changes would you ever consider participating? Why/why not? [ASK SEPARATELY FOR EACH PROGRAM]

C. *Image and Attitude* (10-15 minutes)

I'd like to get an idea of the types of students who participate in the school breakfast and lunch programs. I have some pictures of all different kinds of students. I'd like you to look through these and separate them into two piles: One pile of students who look like they would get the school lunch for free or less than full price and one pile of kids who look like they would pay full price. I'd like you to do this as a group.

[NOTE: PHOTOGRAPHS WILL BE AGE-APPROPRIATE TO THE GROUP BEING INTERVIEWED]

1. Let's look at the students who you think would get lunch for free or less than full price. [DISPLAY ALL PHOTOS ON TABLE] Why did you put these together? How are the students in this group similar to one another?
  - Tell me more about these students...
    - What are they like?
    - Are they students you would want to be friends with? Why/why not?
    - How are they the same/different from you?
    - Where do they live?
    - What do they like to do?
  
2. Of the students who can get lunch for free or less than full price, some students participate in the lunch program and some students don't. Divide this pile into the students who do and don't take the lunch.
  - Tell me about the students who can get lunch for free or less than full price and choose to take the lunch. What are they like? Describe them to me.
    - Why do they participate in the school lunch?
  - What about the students who can get lunch for free or less than full price but choose not to take it? What are they like?
    - Why don't they participate in the school lunch?
  
3. Would you have divided up these piles any differently if we were talking about students who do and don't participate in the breakfast program? IF YES...
  - How would you have divided them?
  - Why would it be different?

4. Now let's look at the students who if they took the school lunch would have to pay full price. [DISPLAY ALL PHOTOS ON TABLE] Why did you put these together? How are the students in this group similar to one another?
  - Tell me more about these students...
    - What are they like?
    - Are they students you would want to be friends with? Why/why not?
    - How are they the same/different from you?
    - Where do they live?
    - What do they like to do?
5. Of the students who would have to pay full price, some students choose to participate in the school lunch program and some choose not to. Divide this pile into the students who do and don't take the lunch.
  - Tell me about the full-price students who take the school lunch. What are they like? Describe them to me.
    - Why do they participate in the school lunch?
  - What about the full-price students who choose not to take the school lunch? What are they like?
    - Why don't they participate in the school lunch?
6. Would you have divided up these piles any differently if we were talking about students who do and don't participate in the breakfast program? IF YES...
  - How would you have divided them?
  - Why would it be different?

V. WRAP-UP AND SUMMARY (5-10 minutes)

We just talked about the school breakfast and lunch programs in terms of why you think students your age do and don't like these programs. The people in charge of these programs want to get more students your age interested in participating in them. So, once more, tell me the reasons why students your age don't want to participate in the programs and any ideas you have to make them better.

[IF NOT MENTIONED, ASK THE FOLLOWING...]

1. Do you believe that more students would participate in the breakfast and/or lunch programs if the meals were free for everybody? Why do you say that?
2. Do you believe that more students would participate in the breakfast and/or lunch programs if more teachers ate breakfast and lunch with students in school? Why do you say that?

[DISTRIBUTE SAQS TO EACH PARTICIPANT, ADMINISTER, AND COLLECT]

**Self-Administered Questionnaire for  
Non-Applicant Parents**

ABT ASSOCIATES  
55 Wheeler Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
617/492-7100  
PROJ #FOCUS  
FNS3/FNS8PAR.SAQ  
10/20/93

FIRST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

1-3/  
4-5/

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

GROUP #: \_\_\_\_\_

6/

**SELF-ADMINISTERED QUESTIONNAIRE  
NON-APPLICANT PARENTS**

1. Are you a... [CIRCLE ONE NUMBER ONLY]

MALE..... 1

7/

FEMALE..... 2

2. What is your marital status? [CIRCLE ONE NUMBER ONLY]

SINGLE, NEVER MARRIED..... 1

8/

MARRIED OR LIVING AS MARRIED..... 2

SEPARATED..... 3

DIVORCED..... 4

WIDOWED..... 5

3. How long have you lived in this school district? [CIRCLE ONE NUMBER ONLY]

LESS THAN ONE YEAR..... 1

9/

ONE TO TWO YEARS..... 2

TWO TO THREE YEARS..... 3

THREE TO FOUR YEARS..... 4

FOUR TO FIVE YEARS..... 5

FIVE TO TEN YEARS..... 6

MORE THAN TEN YEARS..... 7

4. What school-related activities or programs are you involved in or have you attended? [CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]

PARENTS/TEACHERS ASSOCIATION (PTA)..... 1

10/

OPEN-SCHOOL NIGHTS..... 2

11/

OTHER (SPECIFY: \_\_\_\_\_) ... 3

14/

12-13/

5. What income or food assistance programs do you or your family currently participate in? [CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]

- WIC..... 1 15/
- FOOD STAMPS..... 2 16/
- AFDC..... 3 17/
- OTHER (SPECIFY: \_\_\_\_\_) ... 4 20/
- NONE..... 5 21/

18-19/

6. During the current school year, did you apply for free or reduced price school meals? [CIRCLE ONE NUMBER ONLY]

- YES..... 1 SKIP TO QUESTION 8 22/
- NO..... 2 ANSWER QUESTION 7

7. What is the most important reason why you did not apply for free or reduced price school meals for your children? [CIRCLE ONE NUMBER ONLY]

- WE ARE NOT ELIGIBLE..... 1 23/
- I DO NOT THINK WE ARE ELIGIBLE..... 2
- MY CHILDREN PREFER MEALS PREPARED AT HOME..... 3
- I NEVER RECEIVED AN APPLICATION..... 4
- I AM NOT AWARE OF THE FREE OR REDUCED PRICE MEAL PROGRAM..... 5
- I DID NOT WANT TO GIVE INCOME INFORMATION TO THE SCHOOL..... 6
- I PREFER TO PAY FULL PRICE..... 7
- THE APPLICATION FORM WAS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND..... 8
- ANOTHER REASON..... 9

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

24-25/

8. Below are a number of statements to which you may or may not agree. Please read each statement, and then for each one, please circle the number that corresponds to your answer. Circle number "1" if you agree with the statement; circle number "2" if you disagree with the statement. If you really do not know how you feel about the statement, then circle number "8" for "don't know".

	<u>AGREE</u>	DIS- <u>AGREE</u>	DON'T <u>KNOW</u>	
A. EVERY HUMAN BEING, REGARDLESS OF INCOME, HAS THE RIGHT TO FOOD, SHELTER, EDUCATION, AND MEDICAL CARE	1	2	8	26/
B. FOOD STAMPS AND OTHER FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS SHOULD BE STOPPED	1	2	8	27/
C. IF MY CHILD EATS MEALS AT SCHOOL, I WILL SAVE FOOD MONEY FOR MY FAMILY	1	2	8	28/
D. IF MY CHILD EATS MEALS AT SCHOOL, I WILL SAVE TIME OR ENERGY	1	2	8	29/
E. I THINK IT IS GOOD FOR CHILDREN TO EAT AT SCHOOL WITH THEIR CLASSMATES	1	2	8	30/
F. IT IS MY RESPONSIBILITY, NOT THE SCHOOL'S, TO FEED MY CHILD	1	2	8	31/
G. THE MEALS AT SCHOOL ARE NOT AS NUTRITIOUS AS WHAT I CAN PROVIDE FOR MY CHILD	1	2	8	32/



**Self-Administered Questionnaire for  
Non-Applicant Students**

ABT ASSOCIATES  
55 Wheeler Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
617/492-7100  
PROJ #FOCUS  
FNS3/FNS8NAST.SAQ  
10/20/93

FIRST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ 1-3/  
DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ 4-5/  
GROUP #: \_\_\_\_\_ 6/

**SELF-ADMINISTERED QUESTIONNAIRE  
NON-APPLICANT STUDENTS**

1. How old are you? [WRITE YOUR AGE BELOW]  
\_\_\_\_\_ YEARS OLD 7-8/
2. What grade are you in? [WRITE YOUR GRADE BELOW]  
\_\_\_\_\_ GRADE 9-10/
3. Are you a boy or girl? [CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]  
1 [ ] BOY 11/  
2 [ ] GIRL
4. How many other children who are in grades K through 12 are  
living at home with you? [WRITE THE NUMBER OF OTHER CHILDREN  
BELOW]  
\_\_\_\_\_ OTHER CHILDREN 13-14/

In your school, children can get a full lunch (and breakfast) in the cafeteria. The rest of the questions ask about these complete meals served in the cafeteria. We are not talking about any individual food items, any meals you may bring from home, or any meals you may buy outside of school. [REFER TO THE MENU AS AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT IS MEANT BY "COMPLETE MEAL."]

**QUESTIONS 5 THROUGH 10 ASK YOU ABOUT THE SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM.**

5. Did you get the school lunch today? [CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]  
1 [ ] YES SKIP TO QUESTION 7 15/  
2 [ ] NO ANSWER QUESTION 6

6. Why did you not eat the school lunch today? [CHECK ALL ANSWERS THAT APPLY]

- 1 [ ] I ATE LUNCH AT HOME OR WENT OUT FOR LUNCH 16/
  - 2 [ ] IT WAS TOO EXPENSIVE 17/
  - 3 [ ] I DID NOT LIKE THE FOOD 18/
  - 4 [ ] I'M EMBARRASSED ABOUT EATING THE SCHOOL LUNCH 19/
  - 5 [ ] I DO NOT EAT LUNCH 20/
  - 6 [ ] I WAS LATE FOR SCHOOL 21/
  - 7 [ ] SOME OTHER REASON [WRITE YOUR REASON BELOW] 22/
- 
- 

23-24/

7. In earlier grades, did you ever regularly participate in the school lunch program? [CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]

- 1 [ ] YES 25/
- 2 [ ] NO (SKIP TO Q.9)
- 8 [ ] DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO Q.9)

8. If you participated regularly in the school lunch program in the past, what grade or grades were you in when you took the school lunch? [CIRCLE ALL THE GRADES YOU WERE IN WHEN YOU PARTICIPATED IN THE SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM.]

KINDERGARTEN 26/

GRADE 1 27/

GRADE 7 33/

GRADE 2 28/

GRADE 8 34/

GRADE 3 29/

GRADE 9 35/

GRADE 4 30/

GRADE 10 36/

GRADE 5 31/

GRADE 11 37/

GRADE 6 32/

GRADE 12 38/

DON'T KNOW 39/

9. Have any of the older children from your household (even if they are no longer living with you) ever regularly participated in the school lunch program? [CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]

1 [ ] YES

40/

2 [ ] NO

6 [ ] NO OLDER CHILDREN

8 [ ] DON'T KNOW

10. Have any of the younger children from your household (even if they are no longer living with you) ever regularly participated in the school lunch program? [CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]

1 [ ] YES

41/

2 [ ] NO

6 [ ] NO YOUNGER CHILDREN

8 [ ] DON'T KNOW

**QUESTIONS 11 THROUGH 16 ASK YOU ABOUT THE SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM.**

11. Did you get the breakfast today? [CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]

1 [ ] YES SKIP TO QUESTION 13

42/

2 [ ] NO ANSWER QUESTION 12

12. Why did you not eat the school breakfast today? [CHECK ALL ANSWERS THAT APPLY]

- 1 [ ] I ATE BREAKFAST AT HOME OR ON THE WAY TO SCHOOL 43/
  - 2 [ ] IT WAS TOO EXPENSIVE 44/
  - 3 [ ] I DID NOT LIKE THE FOOD 45/
  - 4 [ ] I'M EMBARRASSED ABOUT EATING THE SCHOOL BREAKFAST 46/
  - 5 [ ] I DO NOT EAT BREAKFAST 47/
  - 6 [ ] I WAS LATE FOR SCHOOL 48/
  - 7 [ ] SOME OTHER REASON [WRITE YOUR REASON BELOW] 49/
- 
- 

50-51/

13. In earlier grades, did you ever regularly participate in the school breakfast program? [CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]

- 1 [ ] YES 52/
- 2 [ ] NO (SKIP TO Q.15)
- 8 [ ] DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO Q.15)

14. If you participated regularly in the school breakfast program in the past, what grade or grades were you in when you took the school breakfast? [CIRCLE ALL THE GRADES YOU WERE IN WHEN YOU PARTICIPATED IN THE SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM.]

KINDERGARTEN 53/

GRADE 1 54/

GRADE 7 60/

GRADE 2 55/

GRADE 8 61/

GRADE 3 56/

GRADE 9 62/

GRADE 4 57/

GRADE 10 63/

GRADE 5 58/

GRADE 11 64/

GRADE 6 59/

GRADE 12 65/

DON'T KNOW 66/

15. Have any of the older children from your household (even if they are no longer living with you) ever regularly participated in the school **breakfast** program? **[CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]**

- 1 [ ] YES
- 2 [ ] NO
- 6 [ ] NO OLDER CHILDREN
- 8 [ ] DON'T KNOW

67/

16. Have any of the younger children from your household (even if they are no longer living with you) ever regularly participated in the school **breakfast** program? **[CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]**

- 1 [ ] YES
- 2 [ ] NO
- 6 [ ] NO YOUNGER CHILDREN
- 8 [ ] DON'T KNOW

68/

**Self-Administered Questionnaire for**

**Non-Participant Students**

ABT ASSOCIATES  
55 Wheeler Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
617/492-7100  
PROJ #FOCUS  
FNS3/FNS8NPST.SAQ  
10/20/93

FIRST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ 1-3/  
4-5/  
DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
GROUP #: \_\_\_\_\_ 6/

**SELF-ADMINISTERED QUESTIONNAIRE  
NON-PARTICIPANT STUDENTS**

1. How old are you? [WRITE YOUR AGE BELOW] 7-8/  
\_\_\_\_\_ YEARS OLD
2. What grade are you in? [WRITE YOUR GRADE BELOW] 9-10/  
\_\_\_\_\_ GRADE
3. Are you a boy or girl? [CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY] 11/  
[ ] BOY  
[ ] GIRL
4. How many other children who are in grades K through 12 are  
living at home with you? [WRITE THE NUMBER OF OTHER CHILDREN  
BELOW] 12-13/  
\_\_\_\_\_ OTHER CHILDREN

**QUESTIONS 5 THROUGH 10 ASK YOU ABOUT EATING LUNCH ON THE DAYS YOU  
ARE IN SCHOOL.**

5. How often do you bring lunch from home? [CHECK ONE ANSWER  
ONLY] 14/  
1 [ ] EVERYDAY  
2 [ ] 3-4 TIMES A WEEK  
3 [ ] 1-2 TIMES A WEEK  
4 [ ] NOT AT ALL  
8 [ ] DON'T KNOW



6. How often do you buy individual items for lunch in the school cafeteria? [CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]

- 1 [ ] EVERYDAY
- 2 [ ] 3-4 TIMES A WEEK
- 3 [ ] 1-2 TIMES A WEEK
- 4 [ ] NOT AT ALL
- 8 [ ] DON'T KNOW

15/

7. How often do you buy things from the vending machines in school for lunch? [CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]

- 1 [ ] EVERYDAY
- 2 [ ] 3-4 TIMES A WEEK
- 3 [ ] 1-2 TIMES A WEEK
- 4 [ ] NOT AT ALL
- 8 [ ] DON'T KNOW

16/

8. How often do you go home to eat lunch? [CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]

- 1 [ ] EVERYDAY
- 2 [ ] 3-4 TIMES A WEEK
- 3 [ ] 1-2 TIMES A WEEK
- 4 [ ] NOT AT ALL
- 8 [ ] DON'T KNOW

17/

9. How often do you leave the school grounds to buy something to eat for lunch? [CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]

- 1 [ ] EVERYDAY
- 2 [ ] 3-4 TIMES A WEEK
- 3 [ ] 1-2 TIMES A WEEK
- 4 [ ] NOT AT ALL
- 8 [ ] DON'T KNOW

18/

10. How often do you just skip lunch and not eat at all? [CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]

- 1 [ ] EVERYDAY
- 2 [ ] 3-4 TIMES A WEEK
- 3 [ ] 1-2 TIMES A WEEK
- 4 [ ] NOT AT ALL
- 8 [ ] DON'T KNOW

19/

In your school, children can get a full lunch (and breakfast) in the cafeteria. The rest of the questions ask about these complete meals served in the cafeteria. We are not talking about any individual food items, any meals you may bring from home, or any meals you may buy outside of school. [REFER TO THE MENU AS AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT IS MEANT BY "COMPLETE MEAL."]

QUESTIONS 11 THROUGH 17 ASK YOU ABOUT THE SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM.

11. Did you get the school lunch today? [CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]

- 1 [ ] YES                    SKIP TO QUESTION 13
- 2 [ ] NO                     ANSWER QUESTION 12

20/

12. Why did you not eat the school lunch today? [CHECK ALL ANSWERS THAT APPLY]

- 1 [ ] I ATE LUNCH AT HOME OR WENT OUT FOR LUNCH
- 2 [ ] IT WAS TOO EXPENSIVE
- 3 [ ] I DID NOT LIKE THE FOOD
- 4 [ ] I'M EMBARRASSED ABOUT EATING THE SCHOOL LUNCH
- 5 [ ] I DO NOT EAT LUNCH
- 6 [ ] I WAS LATE FOR SCHOOL
- 7 [ ] SOME OTHER REASON [WRITE YOUR REASON BELOW]

21/

22/

23/

24/

25/

26/

27/

---

---

28-29/

13. In earlier grades, did you ever regularly participate in the school lunch program? [CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]

- 1 [ ] YES 30/  
2 [ ] NO (SKIP TO Q.16)  
8 [ ] DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO Q.16)

14. If you participated regularly in the school lunch program in the past, how often did you take the school lunch? [CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]

- 1 [ ] EVERYDAY 31/  
2 [ ] 3-4 TIMES A WEEK  
3 [ ] 1-2 TIMES A WEEK  
4 [ ] NOT AT ALL  
8 [ ] DON'T KNOW

15. If you participated regularly in the school lunch program in the past, what grade or grades were you in when you took the school lunch? [CIRCLE ALL THE GRADES YOU WERE IN WHEN YOU PARTICIPATED IN THE SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM.]

KINDERGARTEN

- |         |     |            |     |
|---------|-----|------------|-----|
| GRADE 1 | 33/ | GRADE 7    | 39/ |
| GRADE 2 | 34/ | GRADE 8    | 40/ |
| GRADE 3 | 35/ | GRADE 9    | 41/ |
| GRADE 4 | 36/ | GRADE 10   | 42/ |
| GRADE 5 | 37/ | GRADE 11   | 43/ |
| GRADE 6 | 38/ | GRADE 12   | 44/ |
|         |     | DON'T KNOW | 45/ |

16. Have any of the older children from your household (even if they are no longer living with you) ever regularly participated in the school lunch program? [CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]

1 [ ] YES

46/

2 [ ] NO

6 [ ] NO OLDER CHILDREN

8 [ ] DON'T KNOW

17. Have any of the younger children from your household (even if they are no longer living with you) ever regularly participated in the school lunch program? [CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]

1 [ ] YES

47/

2 [ ] NO

6 [ ] NO YOUNGER CHILDREN

8 [ ] DON'T KNOW

**QUESTIONS 18 THROUGH 24 ASK YOU ABOUT THE SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM.**

18. Did you get the school breakfast today? [CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]

1 [ ] YES            **ANSWER QUESTION 19**

48/

2 [ ] NO            **SKIP TO QUESTION 20**

19. Why did you not eat the school breakfast today? [CHECK ALL ANSWERS THAT APPLY]

- |   |     |   |     |
|---|-----|---|-----|
| 1 | [ ] | I ATE BREAKFAST AT HOME OR ON THE WAY TO SCHOOL   | 49/ |
| 2 | [ ] | IT WAS TOO EXPENSIVE                              | 50/ |
| 3 | [ ] | I DID NOT LIKE THE FOOD                           | 51/ |
| 4 | [ ] | I'M EMBARRASSED ABOUT EATING THE SCHOOL BREAKFAST | 52/ |
| 5 | [ ] | I DO NOT EAT BREAKFAST                            | 53/ |
| 6 | [ ] | I WAS LATE FOR SCHOOL                             | 54/ |
| 7 | [ ] | SOME OTHER REASON [WRITE YOUR REASON BELOW]       | 55/ |
- 
- 

56-57/

20. In earlier grades, did you ever regularly participate in the school breakfast program? [CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]

- |   |     |                           |     |
|---|-----|---------------------------|-----|
| 1 | [ ] | YES                       | 58/ |
| 2 | [ ] | NO (SKIP TO Q.23)         |     |
| 8 | [ ] | DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO Q.23) |     |

21. If you participated *regularly* in the school breakfast program in the past, how often did you take the school breakfast? [CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]

- |   |     |                  |     |
|---|-----|------------------|-----|
| 1 | [ ] | EVERYDAY         | 59/ |
| 2 | [ ] | 3-4 TIMES A WEEK |     |
| 3 | [ ] | 1-2 TIMES A WEEK |     |
| 4 | [ ] | NOT AT ALL       |     |
| 8 | [ ] | DON'T KNOW       |     |

22. If you participated regularly in the school **breakfast** program in the past, what grade or grades were you in when you took the school breakfast? **[CIRCLE ALL THE GRADES YOU WERE IN WHEN YOU PARTICIPATED IN THE SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM.]**

- |              |     |            |     |
|--------------|-----|------------|-----|
| KINDERGARTEN | 60/ |            |     |
| GRADE 1      | 61/ | GRADE 7    | 67/ |
| GRADE 2      | 62/ | GRADE 8    | 68/ |
| GRADE 3      | 63/ | GRADE 9    | 69/ |
| GRADE 4      | 64/ | GRADE 10   | 70/ |
| GRADE 5      | 65/ | GRADE 11   | 71/ |
| GRADE 6      | 66/ | GRADE 12   | 72/ |
|              |     | DON'T KNOW | 73/ |

23. Have any of the older children from your household (even if they are no longer living with you) ever regularly participated in the school **breakfast** program? **[CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]**

- |   |     |                   |  |
|---|-----|-------------------|--|
| 1 | [ ] | YES               |  |
| 2 | [ ] | NO                |  |
| 6 | [ ] | NO OLDER CHILDREN |  |
| 8 | [ ] | DON'T KNOW        |  |

74/

204 Have any of the younger children from your household (even if they are no longer living with you) ever regularly participated in the school **breakfast** program? **[CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY]**

- |   |     |                     |  |
|---|-----|---------------------|--|
| 1 | [ ] | YES                 |  |
| 2 | [ ] | NO                  |  |
| 6 | [ ] | NO YOUNGER CHILDREN |  |
| 8 | [ ] | DON'T KNOW          |  |

75/