

AN APPRAISAL OF THE EDUCATIONAL ASPECTS
OF THE SCHOOL LUNCH IN SELECTED ARKANSAS SCHOOLS

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CHAPTER I

BASIC BELIEFS FOR SCHOOL LUNCH

In the school of yesterday health books stressed the importance of proper diet and health habits in the lives of children. Children read the rules, memorized them to repeat to the teacher, and promptly forgot most of them, because no opportunity had been provided to use the information presented.

In the school of today, materials and situations are made available for teaching health, social, and citizenship habits. One of the ways in which this is done is through classroom activities which stress participating in and receiving benefits from the school. For instance, through the construction of food charts and posters, discussions of daily menus, the use of check lists for basic foods, dramatizations and music, children are made aware of the importance of the school lunch.¹

However, the part the school lunch can have in the total educational program depends upon the beliefs of the administrator, teachers, pupils, and parents in its educational value. If we believe that the purposes of the school lunch program are to (1) establish desirable food habits, (2) acquire a functional knowledge of nutrition, (3) develop an appreciation of aesthetic surroundings, (5) practice good citizenship habits, (6) participate in desirable educational work experiences, and (7) understand sound sanitary standards² we can see that the school lunch does contribute

¹ "Pilot Health Program at Crossett," The Journal of Arkansas Education, XXII(November, 1948), p. 16.

² School Lunch Policies and Standards, p. 3

to the total educational program provided for every individual in the community.

On the other hand, if we believe that the school lunch is merely a feeding program, we will find that those involved serve food and make no effort to carry out any other purposes. In this event we may agree with Winning S. Pendergast who says that "too few lunch programs are being used as an effective teaching device."³

Again and again in educational literature, where the school lunch is discussed, evidences are given that show children do enjoy the experiences of the school lunch and learn food habits. Many educators refer to the school lunchroom as an opportunity for functional learning experiences just as is the classroom, the library, and the laboratory. Epsie Young,⁴ director of Elementary Education, Orange, Texas, calls the school lunchroom a laboratory for learning. She considers it a natural school laboratory for teaching health, social and citizenship habits. A majority of educators universally are placing much importance on the value of the school lunch as is shown by the reports of conferences and workshops. For example, in summarizing the Rural Life and Education Conference held in Denver, Colorado, April 25-26, 1946 the following statement was made:

The school that functions as the center of the community living must contribute to all of its significant activities and needs. It supplements the home in providing for the better nutrition of children through school lunch programs. Rightly administrated such programs yield not only in better nutrition, but concomitant learning in socialization, culture, and democratization.⁵

³ Winning S. Pendergast, "What the School Lunch Means to the Community." What's New in Home Economics, XIII (October, 1948) pp. 120-124.

⁴ Epsie Young, "The School Lunchroom-Workshop For Living." School Food Service Association News, IV (August, 1947) pp. 3-8.

⁵ Utah School Lunch Workshop Program, (August, 1946).

Not only educators, but educational literature is replete with specific examples of the definite contributions the school lunch can make to the school and community.

The school lunch can make definite contributions to the total school program in promoting healthy bodies and in serving as an extended classroom, offering an opportunity for school wide lessons in courtesy and etiquette, and in providing practical work experiences for students.⁶ Here the school can further democratic procedures when the student shares with others the benefits and responsibilities of the program. Pendergast says that:

✓ If he (the child) meets foods day after day, well cooked, attractively served, and if the experiences of eating them were a pleasant interlude in his school day, he would form a good lunch habit that later would be hard to break. If this luncheon experience were, furthermore, a social activity in which unconscious good manners were the example set by teachers and older students, and if consideration for others was shown in the care of the dining room, and good citizenship in the respectful treatment of school lunch equipment, the lunch program would be a real boon to the community.⁷

The success with which the school lunch is made a part of the total educational program depends upon the cooperation among various groups concerned with the school. E. Neige Todhunter in 1948 said:

The effectiveness of the school lunch program is dependent upon five groups: School administrators, who arrange for it in their planning; teachers, who need to recognize the importance of the school lunch as a laboratory for learning; children, who need to learn why they need an adequate lunch; parents, who need to see that learning about food at school is the same as learning other subject matter, and that school and home can work together in the program for the child; lunchroom managers, who need to know

⁶ Delia M. Garrett, "The School Lunch Program, Survey and Philosophy," Practical Home Economics, (January, 1945) pp. 21-23.

⁷ Pendergast, op. cit., p. 120.

what they can do for the child and who need to be trained for their particular job.⁸

When schools are organized in a community they are concerned with guiding the child through growth and development for life in a democracy. Democracy is not a political state, but a way of life generally accepted by those who believe in providing for optimal individual development. Since a democratic society is a changing society, schools are continuously remaking their program in the light of the needs of the child and the demands of the environment.

Educators today realize that the school provides an environment, which must be developed by all concerned; pupils, teachers, administrators, and parents. All learning situations need to be so utilized that they promote the ability of the child to think at the level of his maturation and intelligence. One educator defines the role of the school as the place: "To provide an educative environment for all American youth regardless of intelligence level or social, or economic status."⁹ He further points out the need for all educators clarifying their educational purposes:

If then, what we strive to accomplish in education is to make our school the finest possible exemplification of democratic living, and an agency for the understanding and continuous re-interpretation and refinement of the ideals that characterize our way of life as unique and distinctive, those who are concerned with the program of the school; administrators, teachers, pupils, and community groups must seek to discover the deeper ideals and values to which we as people give our wholehearted allegiance.¹⁰

⁸ E. Neige Todhunter, "Increasing the Effectiveness of the School Lunch as a Nutritional Measure," Nutrition News Letter 77, (December, 1948).

⁹ Harold Alberty, Reorganizing the High School Curriculum, p. 54.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 34.

The school in a democracy provides opportunities for the individual to acquire knowledge, techniques, and skills which have a functional value. Life, today, offers many new problems which continually must be met and solved. One cannot place a limit on the knowledge that any child will need. One current writer describes the curriculum:

....composed of the experiences children undergo, it follows as a corollary that the curriculum is the result of interaction of a complex of factors, including the physical environment and the desires, beliefs, knowledge, attitudes, and skills of the persons served by and serving the school; namely, the learners, community adults, and educators.¹¹

The success of the school program cannot be judged solely on the skills acquired. The criteria for judgement must be changed behavior of the child exemplifying values sought in the good life. Furthermore, the school is concerned with offering the child, a variety of experiences in an effort to develop all his potentialities to the fullest extent.

As has been pointed out previously in this study, the school lunch offers learning experiences in health, social, and citizenship activities which contribute to the child's growth. Certainly the school lunch is an experience, which the school offers the child, that can help him to become aware of some of the many factors affecting his growth and development.

¹¹ Alice Meil, Changing The Curriculum, p. 10.

CHAPTER II

DESCRIPTION OF PROBLEM

With these interpretations and understandings of the functions of current education in mind, a study was undertaken by the writer to determine what was being done in Arkansas schools to make use of the school lunch; and in turn to use the information as a basis for making recommendations for improving supervision of the program.

In 1947 the Southern States Work Conference on Educational Problems, meeting at Daytona Beach, Florida made a study of the school lunch program and made recommendations for improvements in School Lunch Policies and Standards. One recommendation of this study served as a basis for beginning a survey in Arkansas schools in 1948 of the educational aspects of the school lunch.

Educational aspects of the program are fundamental if the program is to be functional and to be a part of the total school program. It is the phase of the program which requires the cooperative efforts of all school lunch personnel. School lunch personnel can assist in the educational program but cannot initiate or be responsible for it. The committee recommends that administrators, teachers and school lunch personnel analyze the educational possibilities of the school lunch program and adapt these to their particular situations.¹

A well rounded program, according to leaders in the school lunch field, takes into consideration nutritional status of meals served, personnel, and physical equipment, as well as the educational aspects.

When adequate, attractive, type A meals are planned, prepared, and served under sanitary conditions; when the school lunchroom is operated on a sound financial basis, as decided upon by

¹ School Lunch Policies and Standards, p. 34.

school and community representatives; when school lunches are integrated into the total school system with full support and cooperation of faculty and community, then the school lunch program will take its rightful place in the educational system.²

This study was limited to one phase, the educational aspects. Other studies are being made in the state on the aspects of personnel and organization of the school lunch program at this time. Mildred Stringfield, at Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa is making a study of personnel in Arkansas School Lunch Programs. Mary Mosley is making a study of the history and organization of the School Lunch Program in Arkansas at the University of Texas. Future studies will be made of the nutritional value of meals served and the physical arrangements within the lunchroom.

The "school administrator", as used in this study, means the superintendent or principal of the school. In some schools the principal answered the questionnaire.

"High school", as used here, refers to either a high school or the combined elementary and high school grades. The term is used as it appears in the name of the school.

"Urban", as used in this study, refers to towns with populations of 2,500 and over. All other towns are classified as rural.

This study was made through the use of questionnaires, and personal observations of school lunch programs in operation. This information, when secured, was tabulated and recommendations made for strengthening the supervision of the school lunch program in its educational aspects. Basic beliefs, recognized as contributing to the improvement of supervision of

² Daisy I. Purdy, "The School Lunch Program," Journal of Home Economics, 39 (September, 1947), p. 407.

the school lunch, previously agreed upon by the School Lunch Service of the State Department of Education of Arkansas, served as a guide for developing the questionnaire to be used in this survey.

The questionnaire was made up of a series of questions dealing with certain selected areas. These were; (1) coordination of the school lunch with the total school program, (2) community interest and participation, (3) participation in democratic procedures, (4) establishment of desirable health practices, (5) appreciation of aesthetic surroundings, and (6) acquirement of acceptable social habits. Five questionnaires were developed; for the school administrator, school lunch manager, home economics instructor, grade school instructor, and Parent-Teachers' Association. Although each of these incorporated all of the areas mentioned, they differed slightly in wording in order to represent more accurately the type of work usually carried on by people in these positions.³ As the questionnaire was developed it was tested for clarity and ease of understanding, by persons connected with the school lunch program in the Jefferson School, Stillwater, Oklahoma. From the results of this preliminary testing, revisions were made and the final form was developed.

Since time did not permit a detailed study from all schools a random sampling was made, using the Fisher Yates table of random numbers,⁴ selecting seventy-four of the 905 schools operating school lunch programs in the year 1947-1948. Communities in which the schools were located varied radically in geographical setting, traditions, standards of living, cultural

³ See Series of Questionnaires and Accompanying Letter in Appendix, page 39.

⁴ E. F. Lindquist, Statistical Analysis in Educational Research, pp. 262-264.

and economic levels. Schools in the rich delta lands along the Mississippi contrast with those located in picturesque mountain regions of the northwest the rice belt of central Arkansas, in the oil fields of the southern part of the state, and in the cotton and fruit growing sections. Included are both Negro and white schools. Some of the students are transient Mexican laborers. The culture of the small, deep-south town contrasts with the vigor of the communities of the western part of the state. Children of owners of small farms balance the scale with children of the sharecropper and tenant farmer. Large town schools and small rural schools are also found in the group.

Schools in this study were grouped according to the number of students served. Group one consisted of schools serving less than 100 students. Those serving from 100 to 200 were placed in the second group. The third group was composed of those schools serving 200 to 300 daily. All schools serving more than 300 were placed in group four.

Identification of the schools according to location in the state, whether it is rural or urban, and the number of students served is shown in Figure I, page 10.

FIGURE I

Identification Of School According To:
 1. Location, 2. Rural, Urban, 3. Number of Students Served



KEY:

- Less than 100 served
- 100 - 200 served
- 200 - 300 served
- 300 or more served
- Rural
- ⊙ Urban

The purpose and scope of the study were explained in a letter sent to each of the seventy-four schools selected and cards enclosed which they were asked to sign and return if willing to cooperate.⁵ A return of fifty was anticipated for the study, however fifty-eight were received.

Five groups of persons were contacted; school administrators, school lunch managers, home economics teachers, grade school teachers, and Parent-Teachers' Association members. The list of school administrators, school lunch managers, and home economics teachers was obtained from information in the State Department of Education, Little Rock, Arkansas. Each administrator was asked to send the writer the name of a grade school teacher. The name of the chairman of the school lunch committee in the local Parent-Teachers' Association was secured from the state office of the Arkansas Congress of Parents and Teachers. In this manner a mailing list for the questionnaire was compiled.

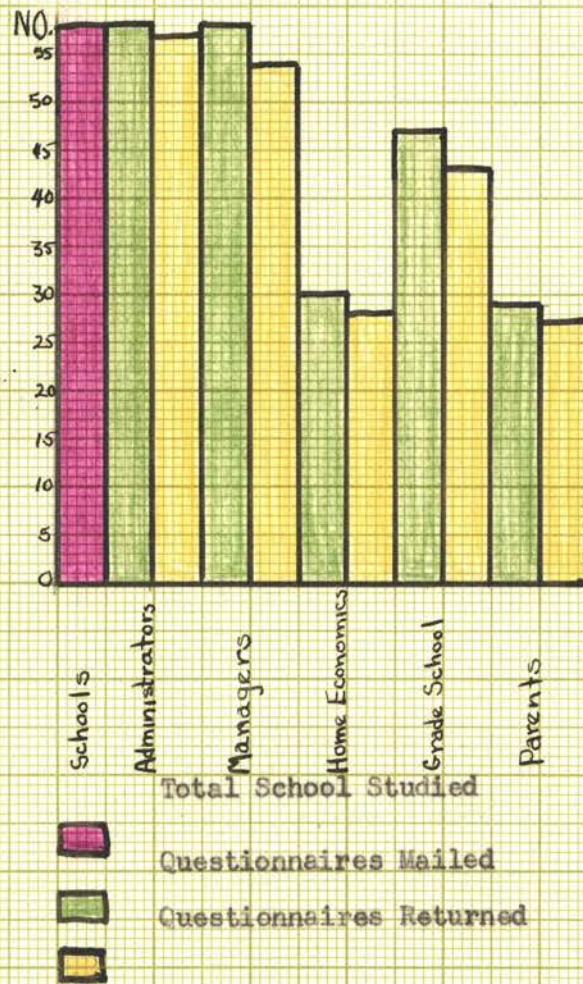
Fifty-eight schools were represented in the final return of questionnaires. Fifty-seven administrators responded. One superintendent in one of the larger schools did not respond. Returns were received from fifty-four school lunch managers. Thirty of the fifty-eight schools had home economics teachers. Twenty-eight of these home economics teachers cooperated by making returns. The names of forty-seven grade school instructors were received from administrators. Of this number, questionnaires were received from forty-three of the instructors. The writer was able to contact twenty-nine chairmen of the school lunch committee of the Parent-Teachers' Association. Twenty-seven returned the questionnaire.

⁵ See Appendix p.48.

A summarization of the results of the number of questionnaires mailed and received is shown in Figure 1, page 13. Excellent response was made by the administrators and school lunch managers. Returns from the home economics instructors and Parent-Teachers' members is small when compared with the total number of schools, however, it must be remembered that not all schools had home economics departments and Parent-Teachers' Associations. Grade school teachers, who were contacted, made excellent response.

FIGURE 2

NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES MAILED AND RETURNED FROM EACH GROUP



The data in Table I indicates the number of questionnaires returned from each of the groups participating in the study from fifty-eight schools. The table shows that more returns were received from schools serving 100 to 300 students than from the lowest and highest classification.

TABLE I
NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES RETURNED FROM EACH GROUP ACCORDING
TO NUMBER SERVED

Number Served	Administrators	Managers	Home Economics Instructor	Grade School Instruc- tors	P.T.A.
0 - 100	13	13	1	9	2
100 - 200	16	15	6	14	7
200 - 300	16	14	10	11	10
300 - up	12	12	11	9	8
Total Returns	57	54	28	43	27

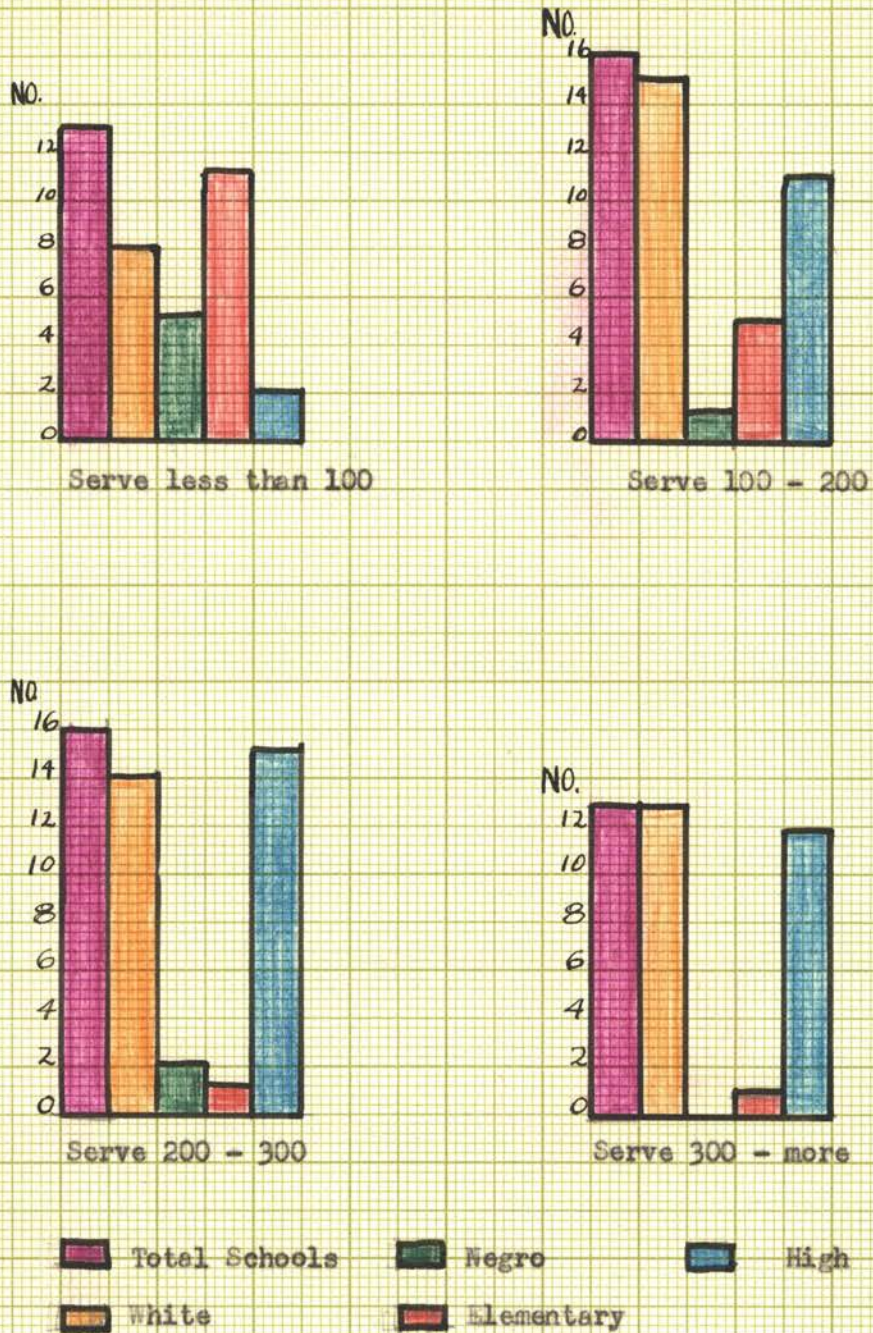
Two other classifications were given the schools in this study. Elementary schools are those schools having either six or eight grades. High schools are either the combined elementary and high schools or high schools alone. The organization of the schools in this study according to white, Negro, elementary or high school is shown in Figure 3, page 15.

Five groups of people representing fifty-eight schools located in typical communities in Arkansas reported conditions regarding the educational aspects of the school lunch in the total school program. These reports form the basis for the material in the following chapter.

FIGURE 3

TYPE OF SCHOOLS STUDIED ACCORDING TO:

(1) White, Negro, (2) Elementary, High, (3) Number of Students Served



CHAPTER III

APPRAISAL OF EDUCATIONAL VALUES

Keeping in mind the purposes of this study; (1) that of discovering the strengths and weaknesses of the educational aspects of the school lunch program, and (2) that of making improvements in the quality and kind of supervision of the program in Arkansas schools; questions from the questionnaires were grouped into six areas. Questions pointing toward coordination with the total school program, development of health habits, provision for social activities, practicing democratic ideals, appreciation of aesthetic surroundings and community participation, were summarized and tabulations made.

Compiling of responses does not show the entire picture of the situation as it exists. It is more important to make a detailed analysis of each situation. Trends are shown in the summaries made in this chapter and not conclusive evidence.

Reports of administrators, managers, home economics teachers, grade school teachers, and parents have been summarized in five tables given on the following pages. Pertinent facts gleaned from the responses made by the fifty-seven administrators answering the questionnaire are summarized in Table II, page 17.

CONDITIONS REPORTED BY ADMINISTRATORS

TABLE II

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES 57 ADMINISTRATORS MADE
REGARDING THE SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

Types of Answers Made	Number Answering		
	Yes	No	Occa- sion- ally
Items Showing:			
I. Coordination With The Total School Program			
a. Belief that school lunch is an integral part of total school program	53	2	2
b. Teachers assume responsibility	44	5	2
c. Teachers aware of possibilities of intergration	46	5	4
d. Problems discussed with faculty	38	6	13
e. Lunches provided by school for needy students	48	4	4
f. Facilities of lunch available for school groups	52	4	1
Total	283	26	26
II. Development Of Health Habits			
a. Planning meals by students	21	29	7
b. Hand washing for meals	41	5	11
c. Exercise after meals	51	4	2
d. Rest after meals	18	33	6
Total	131	71	26
III. Appreciation of Aesthetic Surroundings			
a. Students make suggestions for improving appearance of lunchroom	32	15	8
b. Attractive lunchroom	50	7	0
Total	82	22	8
IV. Encouraged Social Attitudes			
a. Students practice good grooming and agreeable manners	44	1	12
b. Younger children served before older ones	50	5	2
Total	94	6	14

TABLE I (Cont'd)

Types of Answers Made	Number Answering		
	Yes	No	Occa- sion- ally
Items Showing:			
V. Fostered Democratic Ideals			
a. Problems discussed with students	27	13	15
b. Students assist with food preparation	23	29	5
c. Students serve food	41	10	6
d. Students have experiences in marketing	7	38	6
e. Students clean-up following meals	44	12	1
f. Students suggest menus	37	10	9
g. Students suggest improvements of service	33	17	10
h. Students show lunchroom to visitors	28	17	12
i. Needy students work for lunches	36	15	5
Total	<u>276</u>	<u>161</u>	<u>69</u>
VI. Participation By Community			
a. Planning Committees	30	24	3
b. Problems discussed with school board	23	18	15
c. Problems discussed with community members	26	16	12
d. Needy students provided for by civic clubs	5	34	2
e. Needy students provided for by P.T.A.	10	37	4
f. Needy students provided for by church groups	2	34	3
g. Needy students provided for by others in community	8	30	1
h. Parents invited to eat in lunchroom	46	1	9
i. 10 percent parents visit	26	6	7
j. 20 percent parents visit	12	6	1
k. 50 percent parents visit	5	6	0
l. Facilities of school lunch available for community use	15	29	5
Total	<u>208</u>	<u>241</u>	<u>62</u>

From the viewpoint of the administrator the school lunch is being coordinated in the total school program by the teachers. Problems are discussed with the faculty and provisions made for the coordination with regular classroom activities. The facilities of the lunchroom are available for use by school groups. This includes class banquets and parties. As a part of making the lunch program functional, lunches are provided for students unable to pay for them.

In the development of health habits, the administrators report that handwashing is practiced before meals in 71 percent of the schools. However, only 35 percent of the schools allow students to plan meals. Instead of resting after meals 87 percent have periods of exercise and strenuous games.

Administrators also report that appreciation of aesthetic surroundings is fostered through attractive lunchrooms and by having students make suggestions for improvement of the appearance of the lunchroom.

Social attitudes are encouraged, since a majority of administrators report that students practice good grooming and acceptable manners. Younger children are served before older ones and thus the same age groups enjoy a social hour together.

Democratic ideals are fostered by the lunchroom in several ways, according to the administrators. Students are given work experiences in the areas of preparation, serving, and cleaning up. Only 49 percent of the administrators report discussing problems with the students. Visitors are shown the lunchroom by students in 58 percent of the schools. Students are given experiences in marketing, improvement of service, and meal planning in 46 percent of the lunchrooms.

In community participation the administrators reported discussing problems with community members in 45 percent of the schools. Forty percent discuss problems with the school board and planning committees are reported by 40 percent of the administrators.

Very few reported that needy students were provided for by community groups. Eighty percent of the administrators invite parents to visit the lunchroom, while only 15 percent report that parents actually come. The facilities of the lunchroom are available for use of the community in 26 percent of the schools.

The responses made by the administrators strengthen the personal observations made by the writer, as school lunch supervisor. The responsibility for leadership in making full use of the school lunch rests with the administrator. Too many times adequate plans are not made with the people vitally concerned in the program. Students are not encouraged to offer suggestions for improvements. Many times work experiences are limited to serving the meal and cleaning up afterwards. Work experiences, to be worthwhile, need to be varied and rotated frequently among the students. Sharing in the responsibilities for the lunch program can be a privilege that will provide real learning situations. Observations have shown that too frequently children leave the lunchroom hurriedly to play strenuous games. Quiet games for relaxation are recommended by authorities after the lunch hour. Community members could contribute to this part of the day by supervising the period following the lunch hour. A public relations program needs to be carried out by most schools in order to create interest in the value of the school lunch.

The above view of the administrators may be contrasted with the view of the school lunch manager as shown in Table III, page 21.

CONDITIONS REPORTED BY SCHOOL LUNCH MANAGERS

TABLE III

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES 54 MANAGERS MADE
REGARDING THE SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

Types of Answers Made	Number Answering		
	Yes	No	Occa- sion- ally
Items			
I. Coordination With The Total School Program			
a. Member of planning committee	<u>32</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>3</u>
Total	32	16	3
II. Development of Health Habits			
a. Students return soiled dishes to clean-up section	48	4	1
b. Students encouraged to try new foods	53	0	1
c. New foods used in meals	47	0	4
d. New recipes used	51	0	2
e. Variety of foods served	51	0	1
f. Small servings of new foods	51	2	1
g. Clean uniforms every day	<u>50</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	351	7	11
III. Appreciation of Aesthetic Surroundings			
a. Foods have nice consistency	46	3	5
b. Foods served have pleasing colors	52	0	2
c. Foods are kept separate on plate	<u>46</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
Total	144	6	10
IV. Encouraged Social Attitudes			
a. Pleasant attitude	49	0	5
b. Soft speaking manner	<u>50</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	99	0	4
V. Fostered Democratic Ideals			
a. Students assist in lunchroom	45	8	0
b. Supervision given student workers	43	4	3
c. Food served before students enter lunchroom	14	26	3
d. Food served as student goes along line	44	6	0
e. Filled plates are on the table	<u>21</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	167	63	7
VI. Participation By Community			
a. Requests received for recipes	<u>41</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>9</u>
Total	41	4	9

This summary of responses shows:

(1) Managers were members of the planning committee in 59 percent of the schools.

(2) Health habits were developed by serving small amounts of new foods, which were introduced into the menu often. Workers wore clean uniforms and encouraged cleanliness in the dining room by having students return soiled dishes to the clean-up section.

(3) In order to encourage appreciation of aesthetic surroundings, foods were served which had pleasing colors, were of acceptable consistency and attractively arranged on the plate or tray.

(4) A pleasant social atmosphere was encouraged by the manager's smile, attitude, and soft manner of speaking.

(5) Students were given the opportunity to participate in work experiences by assisting in the lunchroom under the manager's supervision. Students carried their own trays along the serving line.

(6) Requests made by parents for recipes of dishes served indicated that the community was aware of the foods provided by the school lunch.

Attention is called to the fact that the school lunch managers seemed to have a much higher opinion of the quality of the school lunch program than did any other group contacted. The writer was in a position as supervisor to observe, not only once but many times, the lunchrooms answering the questionnaires, as well as many others over the state. According to her observations, the school lunch managers answers indicated much better conditions than existed. In many cases the food served was unattractive, poorly prepared, and not too tasteful. Lunchroom personnel did not always appear as neat and as pleasant as was expected by members of the State

Supervisory Staff. In truth, many school lunch situations needed much improvement. If the school lunch managers honestly believe the response made, the State Supervisory Staff must immediately revise and reorganize their personnel training program; for certainly, higher standards must be observed if any progress is made in improving the health of the children through food. Responses of administrators previously shown and those of other persons contacted, which appear in later tables, tend to substantiate the observations of the writer.

One of the groups of teachers which is often given responsibility in the school lunchroom is the home economics instructor. Home economics teachers, because of their training in foods and nutrition, have a unique contribution to make to the program. The points of view of the teachers contacted are expressed in Table IV, page 24.

CONDITIONS REPORTED BY HOME ECONOMICS INSTRUCTORS

TABLE IV

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES 28 HOME ECONOMICS
INSTRUCTORS MADE REGARDING THE SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

Types of Answers Made	Number Answering		
	Yes	No	Occa- sion- ally
Items Showing:			
I. Coordination With The Total School Program			
a. Member of planning committee	12	8	1
b. Plan menus used in lunchroom	16	8	2
c. Check menus planned by others	9	14	1
d. Purchase all food	14	13	1
e. Check market orders planned by others	4	15	2
f. Suggest improvement of marketing	16	10	1
g. Directs nutrition program through elementary teachers	<u>14</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>
Total	85	76	12
II. Development of Health Habits			
a. Suggestions made for improving food preparation	15	7	3
b. Suggests improvements in equipment	20	5	2
c. Suggests improvements in serving food	18	5	4
d. Suggests improvements in cleaning	17	7	2
e. Suggests improvements in storage of food	17	8	1
f. Arranges exhibits to teach nutrition	9	11	3
g. Posters to teach nutrition	15	7	5
h. Demonstrations to teach nutrition	6	13	4
i. Suggests activities for elementary teachers	12	8	7
j. Shares teaching aids	15	5	7
k. Supervise students planning meals	<u>16</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>3</u>
Total	160	84	41
III. Appreciation of Aesthetic Surroundings			
a. Supervise students who provide decorations	<u>16</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>5</u>
Total	16	7	5

TABLE IV (Cont'd)

Types of Answers Made	Number Answering		
	Yes	No	Occa- sion- ally
Items Showing:			
IV. Encouraged Social Attitudes			
a. Homemaking students act as hostess	8	11	5
Total	<u>8</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>5</u>
V. Fostered Democratic Ideals			
a. Homemaking students assist in teaching nutrition with displays	8	12	3
b. Homemaking students make nutrition posters for elementary grades	12	6	7
c. Homemaking students give nutrition demonstrations	9	13	4
d. Work experiences provided for home- making students	15	5	8
e. Homemaking students preserve food for lunchroom	<u>4</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>8</u>
Total	<u>48</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>30</u>
VI. Participation by Community			
a. Nutrition program directed for P.T.A.	6	14	3
b. Directs nutrition program through community nutrition committee	<u>1</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>3</u>
Total	<u>7</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>6</u>

Home economics teachers reported the following conditions regarding educational aspects of the school lunch:

(1) Integration with the total school program seemed apparent to 42 percent of the teachers. Less than 50 percent were members of the planning committee. Over 50 percent did all the menu planning and marketing instead of supervising the manager in doing this work. A nutrition program for the grade school was directed through the elementary teachers in 50 percent of

the cases reported.

(2) More than 50 percent of the teachers indicated that they believe health habits are developed by suggesting improvements in the preparation, serving and clean-up periods. Other means used to teach health reported were, posters and sharing teaching aids with elementary teachers. Very few arranged exhibits or used demonstration methods.

(3) In developing appreciation for aesthetic surroundings 56 percent of the teachers supervised students in providing decorations for the lunchroom.

(4) Homemaking students acted as hostesses at tables in the lunchroom according to the reports of 28 percent of the teachers.

(5) In fostering democratic practices homemaking teachers guided the students in 37 percent of the schools to arrange displays, make posters and give demonstrations related to nutrition information. The highest rating in this area was given to providing work experiences in the lunchroom. Homemaking students in 14 percent of the schools preserved food for use in the lunchroom.

(6) Homemaking teachers had an opportunity to secure community participation and interest by using the lunchroom as a basis for a nutrition program.

In the main, the observations made by the writer were in keeping with the responses made by the teachers. Home economics teachers throughout the state were either assuming full responsibility for planning and directing the school lunch program or were in no way active in the program. Those who assume full responsibility were doing so to the detriment of their health and other needs of their own instructional program. There seems to

be no doubt that home economics teachers need instruction in how to supervise the work of cooperating employees of the school if maximum efficiency is ever to be reached. Such an instructional program might well result from cooperative action between the foods and nutrition people and the teacher trainers in the institutions and the state staff of Homemaking Education and the School Lunch Service. The course of instruction need not be long, for much can be learned in a short period of intensive study, and might well be a part of the extended employment activity of the vocational homemaking teacher. One of the purposes stated in Administration of Vocational Education for in-service teacher training is:

Conferences and workshops-local, district or state-and short, intensive technical courses planned and carried out to meet special needs, with consultant services from special fields provided as needed.¹

Many institutions could plan to provide this instruction.

The elementary teachers contacted, reported definite evidences of cooperation in the six areas which the school lunch contributes to the total school program. Grade school teachers in forty three schools reported lunch activities and responsibilities as shown in Table V, page 28.

¹ Federal Security Agency, Administration of Vocational Education. p. 59.

CONDITIONS REPORTED BY GRADE SCHOOL INSTRUCTORS

TABLE V

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES 43 GRADE SCHOOL
INSTRUCTORS MADE REGARDING THE SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

Types of Answers Made	Number Answering		
	Yes	No	Occas- ion- ally
Items Showing:			
I. Coordination With The Total School Program:			
a. Member of planning committee	13	26	2
b. Use school lunch in teaching language arts	22	3	8
c. Use school lunch in teaching social studies	23	4	9
d. Use school lunch in teaching mathematics	18	9	7
Total	<u>76</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>26</u>
II. Development of Health Habits:			
a. Handwashing before lunch	31	2	10
b. Class activity to teach new food habits	35	1	7
c. Eat new foods as example for students	40	1	1
d. Students have learned to drink milk	35	3	0
e. Students have learned to eat vegetables	40	0	3
f. Students have learned to eat all food offered	38	0	3
g. Students leave clean table	41	1	0
h. School lunch used for activities in health classes	40	0	2
Total	<u>300</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>26</u>
III. Appreciation of Aesthetic Surroundings:			
a. Students provided flowers for lunchroom	21	13	4
b. Exhibits of class activities placed in lunchroom	6	20	6
c. Table decorations for special occasions	19	13	6
d. Posters made for lunchroom	17	13	6
e. Art activities developed from lunchroom	32	1	10
f. Music activities developed from lunchroom	17	8	6
Total	<u>112</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>38</u>
IV. Encouraged Social Attitudes:			
a. Lunchroom used in teaching social habits	35	2	6
b. Students enjoy eating in group	43	0	0
Total	<u>78</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>

TABLE V (Cont'd)

Types of Answers Made	Number Answering		
	Yes	No	Occa- sion- ally
Items Showing:			
V. Fostered Democratic Ideals			
a. Teaches good citizenship in lunchroom	39	0	2
Total	39	0	2
VI. Participation By Community			
No questions on this area			

Grade school instructors have an opportunity to influence the children in their classes in many ways. Using the school lunch to teach health, social attitudes, and citizenship, were frequently reported in the responses made by this group of teachers.

Thirty percent of the teachers had a share in making plans for the school lunch. They used the school lunch as a basis for teaching language, social studies, and mathematics in 49 percent of the schools studied.

Development of health habits was reported a large number of times by the grade school teachers. Evidences of health habits taught were: students were reported as learning to drink milk, eat vegetables, eat all the food offered them and leave the table clean in 87 percent of the schools. Class activity was used to teach new food habits.

Appreciation of aesthetic surroundings was reported by the grade school teachers in 50 percent of the schools. This was done by students bringing flowers for the lunchroom, placing exhibits of class activities in the

lunchroom, and providing table decorations for special occasions. Art activities were developed from the lunchroom theme. In the music classes the lunchroom provided inspiration for lessons.

A majority reported the use of the lunchroom in teaching social attitudes. Manners, courtesy, and etiquette were taught. The fellowship of eating in a group was enjoyed by the students.

Citizenship was taught in the lunchroom by 90 percent of the teachers, according to the returns.

Throughout this period of personal observation by the writer as school lunch supervisor, and extremely conscious of the items included in the questionnaire used in this thesis, her conclusions were that grade school teachers made better use of the school lunchroom as resource material for teaching health, social attitudes, and citizenship than did other teachers. However, the writer was also made aware of the fact that grade school teachers were being overworked because of their responsibility for children during the lunch hour. The effect of nervous strain, placed by continuous teaching responsibility from 8:30 until 4:00 o'clock without a short rest period, was evident on the part of many teachers. Regardless of how desirable it is to have all teachers assume some responsibility for the lunchroom, administrators should recognize that this is a teaching experience and lighten loads accordingly. This could be done by enlarging the total staff of the school, thereby shortening the school day for all. In some schools persons now overburdened with responsibility could have their load lightened, if through the planning committee, the administrator saw that all shared the lunchroom experiences. Whatever the situation is, the importance of the lunchroom as an educational agency cannot be overlooked and the persons

concerned must continually find ways to make full use of the resources the school lunch can provide.

Since no picture of a school could be complete without the opinions of parents, the following summary gives their responses to a questionnaire regarding the school lunchroom. Chairman of the school lunch committee of the Parent-Teachers' Association, who represent the community, answered the questionnaire. The results of this part of the findings are given in Table V.

CONDITIONS REPORTED BY PARENTS

TABLE VI

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES 27 PARENT-TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION MEMBERS MADE REGARDING THE SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

Types of Answers Made	Number Answering		
	Yes	No	Occa- sion- ally
Items Showing:			
I. Coordination With The Total School Program			
a. Member of planning committee	6	17	3
b. Gives constructive criticism to school	13	10	3
c. Publicity in school paper	7	11	3
Total	26	38	9
II. Development of Health Habits			
a. Observed children drinking milk	18	4	2
b. Observed children eating all food on plate	21	3	3
c. Helped with improving sanitation standards	17	9	0
Total	56	16	5

TABLE VI (Cont'd)

Types of Answers Made	Number Answering		
	Yes	No	Occa- sion- ally
Items Showing:			
III. Appreciation of Aesthetic			
a. Helped make lunchroom more attractive	14	9	0
b. Provided funds for improving appearance	<u>9</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	23	21	1
IV. Encouraged Social Attitudes			
a. Observed improvement in table manners	<u>21</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
Total	21	2	3
V. Fostered Democratic Ideals			
a. Funds provided for needy children	6	16	2
b. Fathers made suggestions for improvement	6	13	3
c. Fathers donated labor	5	15	3
d. Fathers gave financial assistance	<u>7</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	24	59	8
VI. Participation By Community			
a. Study nutrition problems every year	12	12	1
b. Visited lunchroom during meal	21	4	1
c. Visited lunchroom at other times	24	2	1
d. Contributed publicity to newspapers	7	11	3
e. Special program on lunchroom	10	10	0
f. Sponsored visitors day to lunchroom	14	8	3
g. Provided funds for equipment	14	10	0
h. Provided funds for additional help	1	20	0
i. Canned food for lunchroom	7	16	1
j. Donated surplus from garden	5	16	1
k. Volunteer service in lunchroom	<u>6</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	121	126	12

A study of the summary of the responses of parents showed a wide range of conditions.

Thirty-five percent of the parents reported that the school lunch program is being made a part of the total school program. Members of the Parent-Teachers' Association from 23 percent of the schools reported they

were a part of the planning committee.

Development of health habits was frequently reported by the parents contacted. They observed children drinking milk and learning to eat all their food. Sanitary standards were reported as being raised.

A total of 72 percent of the parents reported an improvement in health through the school lunch.

Community members often tried to improve the appearance of the lunchroom. In this study 49 percent reported helping make the lunchroom more attractive and providing funds for improving its appearance.

The area which received the highest percent of favorable comment from the parents was the section on social attitudes. Improvement in table manners were observed by 80 percent of the parents.

Fostering democratic ideals was reported in several ways. Needy children, who were not old enough to work, were provided with meals in 22 percent of the schools according to the parents. Fathers, as well as mothers, had a part in the program. Twenty-five percent reported that fathers made suggestions for improvement, donated labor, and gave financial assistance.

Community participation was shown by this group in a variety of ways. The lunchroom was visited, publicity given to the lunch program, funds were provided for additional labor and equipment, and surplus food was donated and preserved for lunches. Reports from 46 percent of the returns indicated the above was their way of showing interest and participation in the school lunch.

As a result of observations regarding the part community persons have

in the school lunch, many worthwhile activities have been seen. However, there seems to be a tendency on the part of many community organizations to think that actual operation of the program is necessary before real contribution can be made. This, no doubt, is a carry-over from days when the federal program was underwritten by a community organization. There are many fine contributions to be made to the successful operation of the school lunch by the community such as; offer cooperation to school administrator, arrange study groups on nutrition problems suggested by school lunch, evaluate the local program, provide for needy children who are too young to work for meals, and assume responsibility for interpreting the program to the public. Parent-Teachers' Associations will render a great service to their school and community when they find ways to 'cooperate' rather than try to 'operate' in the school lunch.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of this study to determine the educational aspects of the school lunch in fifty-eight Arkansas schools, the following conclusions are indicated:

1. Administrators saw more coordination with the total school program than the teachers and community members reported as being done.

2. Grade school teachers, more than the other groups, observed that health habits had been improved by the school lunch. Administrators reported less change than did the others.

3. All groups, except the managers, agreed that more could be done to promote aesthetic appreciation than is now apparent.

4. Social attitudes were developed by the lunch program to a greater extent than are other areas, according to the survey.

5. Democratic procedures were encouraged by providing work experiences; however, students were not included in planning and needy students were not provided for by community groups.

6. Community participation had not been developed extensively. The community was not included in planning for the program. Few parents visited the lunchroom, however, requests were received for recipes.

7. Quiet relaxation periods after lunch were not provided in a majority of situations.

8. Home economics instructors reported actual planning of meals and marketing rather than supervising the managers in this detail.

9. Homemaking students did not appear to use the school lunch as a basis for teaching simple nutrition through displays, posters and demonstrations.

10. Using the school lunch as a means of teaching nutrition in the community by the home economics instructor did not appear to be widely done.

It is believed that these conclusions indicate trends in present practices and point the way toward making revisions in the supervision of the program. The information of this study indicates that such revision should deal with the following problems:

1. Developing ideals of the effective school lunch program with administrators, in order that they may see the wide spread of possibilities in their own situations in using all available resources to provide a functioning school lunch program.

2. Providing for appropriate materials teachers could use in formulating specific objectives for and with students.

3. Developing ideas to be used with homemaking teachers at state conferences to promote nutrition education through the school lunch.

4. Revising the present training program for school lunch personnel to prepare them to assume their full share of responsibility for the effective use of the school lunch.

5. Developing specific materials which Parent-Teachers' Associations can use to become aware of their relationship and possible contributions to the school lunch program.

6. Making spot surveys over the state to determine eating habits of Arkansas children and using these results as concrete evidences for creating interest in the school lunch as an educational program.

7. Encouraging publicity at a local level through the county papers and by visitors' day in the lunchroom to promote community awareness of the program.

8. Increasing publicity of lunch program at a state level to promote interest in interpreting the program as an educational device.

9. Cooperating with other state agencies to provide an instructional program for all teachers.

10. Coordinating instruction in teacher training institutions in order that teachers will have necessary information to coordinate effectively the school lunch and the instructional programs.

These problems may be grouped as those: (1) to promote interest in the school lunch as an educational device, (2) to provide materials for instruction, (3) to revise present training program for school lunch personnel, (4) and to cooperate with other educational agencies in interpreting and training for the sharing of responsibility by cooperating personnel. The major responsibility for meeting these problems rests with the supervisory staff of the School Lunch Service, Arkansas State Department of Education.

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APPENDIX

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
School Lunch Service
Division of Vocational Education
Little Rock, Arkansas

February 21, 1949

Your school has been selected to participate in a study of the value of the school lunch as an educational device in the school. Your school has been fortunate in having a school lunch and those connected with it are in a position to help us know the real educational value of the program. For this reason, your cooperation is asked in checking the enclosed questionnaire on your part in the program. Will you check each question as it applies to your position?

A stamped envelope is enclosed for your convenience in returning the questionnaire. May we have it returned by March 12? Thank you for your assistance in making this study of Arkansas schools possible.

Yours truly,

Ruth Powell, State Supervisor
School Lunch Service

RP:rl
Encl.

SCHOOL LUNCH SURVEY
School Administrator

Directions: Check each item as it applies to your position in your school:

School _____	Yes	No	Occa- sion- ally
1. Do you believe that your school lunch program is functioning as a part of the total school program?			
2. Do you have a school lunch planning committee?			
3. Do all the teachers assume some responsibility for the successful functioning of the school lunch program?			
4. Are teachers aware of the many responsibilities for integrating the school lunch with their regular class work?			
5. Are meetings held to discuss school lunch problems with:			
1. School board members?			
2. Faculty?			
3. Student body			
4. Community members?			
6. Do any of the students assist with any of the following:			
1. Planning of menus?			
2. Preparation of food?			
3. Serving of food?			
4. Marketing?			
5. Clean-up following meal?			
7. Do students wash hands before going to lunchroom?			
8. Do you receive suggestions from the students about?			
1. Menu ideas			
2. Ways of improving the serving of food?			
3. Improvement of appearance of lunchroom?			
9. Do students assume any responsibility for showing the lunchroom to visitors?			
10. Do students show they know the value of good grooming and agreeable manners at lunch?			
11. Is any provision made for serving the younger children before older ones are admitted to the lunchroom?			
12. Do you have a play period after lunch?			
13. Is there a supervised quiet recreation period after lunch?			

-2-

	Yes	No	Occa- sionally
14. Are lunches provided for those students unable to pay by:			
1. Civic club?			
2. Work in lunchroom?			
3. P. T. A.?			
4. Church groups?			
5. Others?			
6. Free?			
15. Is the lunchroom as attractive as possible with due consid- eration for time, facilities and personnel involved?			
16. Do you invite parents to eat a meal in the lunchroom?			
17. Do many parents visit the lunchroom?			
1. 10%?			
2. 20%?			
3. 50%?			
18. Are the facilities of the school lunch program available for use by:			
1. School groups?			
2. Community groups?			
19. Are civic organizations served typical school lunch menus at the regular dinner meetings?			

SCHOOL LUNCH SURVEY
School Lunch Manager

Directions: Please check each item as it applies to your position.

	Yes	No	Occa- sionally
1. Are you a member of the school lunch planning committee?			
2. Are you using student help in the lunchroom?			
3. Are you able to give assistance to students as they work?			
4. Does each student assist in keeping tables clean by returning their dishes to be washed?			
5. Do you encourage students to try new foods?			
6. Do you teach the students to eat new food by:			
(1) Using new foods?			
(2) Using new recipes?			
(3) Having variety in the meals?			
(4) Serving a small amount for first time?			
7. Does the plate of food you serve always look appetizing with:			
(1) Food not too juicy?			
(2) Food with pleasing colors?			
(3) Servings of food kept separate			
8. How are your meals served:			
(1) All food put on plate before students come to lunch?			
(2) Food put on plates as students go along serving line?			
(3) Filled plates on tables before students come to lunch?			
9. Do you set a good example for lunchroom manners by:			
(1) Wearing clean uniform?			
(2) Smiling as you serve?			
(3) Speaking kindly and softly?			
10. Do you have requests for recipes of food served at school?			

SCHOOL LUNCH SURVEY

Home Economics Instructor

Directions: Check each item as it applies to your position

School _____	Yes	No	Occa- ionally
1. Are you a member of the school lunch committee?			
2. Is the school lunchroom under your supervision for:			
1. Planning menus?			
2. Checking menus planned by others?			
3. Purchasing and obtaining all food?			
4. Checking market orders planned by others?			
3. Are you given opportunity to make suggestions for improving:			
1. Food preparation standards?			
2. Working facilities?			
3. Standards for serving food?			
4. Cleaning practices?			
5. Storage and care of food supplies?			
6. Marketing practices?			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			

Grade School Instructor

Directions: Check each item as it applies to your position.

School: _____

	Yes	No	Occa- sion- ally
1. Are you a member of the School Lunch Committee?			Y
2. Do you use the school lunchroom for teaching social habits?			
3. Do your students wash hands before eating lunch?			
4. Do you encourage students to eat new foods by:			
1. Using class activity to teach about new foods?			
2. Being willing to eat them yourself?			
5. Do your students try to make the lunchroom more attractive by:			
1. Bringing cut flowers and potted plants?			
2. Arranging exhibits?			
3. Planning table decorations for special occasions?			
4. Making posters?			
6. Do you teach good citizenship habits in relation to the school lunchroom?			
7. Have you seen evidence of progress made by your students in learning to:			
1. Drink milk?			
2. Eat vegetables?			
3. Eat all food on the plate?			
4. Leave table clean?			
5. Enjoy eating in a group?			
8. Have you developed activities pertaining to the school lunch in the following studies?			
1. Language Arts?			
2. Social Studies?			
3. Art			
4. Music			
5. Math			
6. Health			

SCHOOL LUNCH SURVEY

Grade School Instructor

Directions: Check each item as it applies to your position.

School: _____

	Yes	No	Occa- sion- ally
1. Are you a member of the School Lunch Committee?			Y
2. Do you use the school lunchroom for teaching social habits?			
3. Do your students wash hands before eating lunch?			
4. Do you encourage students to eat new foods by:			
1. Using class activity to teach about new foods?			
2. Being willing to eat them yourself?			
5. Do your students try to make the lunchroom more attractive by:			
1. Bringing cut flowers and potted plants?			
2. Arranging exhibits?			
3. Planning table decorations for special occasions?			
4. Making posters?			
6. Do you teach good citizenship habits in relation to the school lunchroom?			
7. Have you seen evidence of progress made by your students in learning to:			
1. Drink milk?			
2. Eat vegetables?			
3. Eat all food on the plate?			
4. Leave table clean?			
5. Enjoy eating in a group?			
8. Have you developed activities pertaining to the school lunch in the following studies?			
1. Language Arts?			
2. Social Studies?			
3. Art			
4. Music			
5. Math			
6. Health			

STATE OF ARKANSAS
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL LUNCH SERVICE
DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
LITTLE ROCK

November 24, 1948

The School Lunch Service is anxious to provide the best possible kind of supervision for the schools of Arkansas. Certain schools have been selected to cooperate in a study which will appraise the educational values of the school lunch program.

The purpose of the study will be to discover what the strengths and weaknesses are and to furnish a guide for improvement of supervision.

Will you please indicate on the enclosed card whether you are willing for your school lunch program to be a part of this study?

Would you like to receive a copy of the results of this study?

Yours very truly,

Ruth Powell, State Supervisor
School Lunch Service

RP:rl

Please return the enclosed card before December 10, 1948.

STRATHMORE PAPER

100% RAG U.S.A.

MORE PARCHMENT

100% RAG U.S.A.

TYPED BY: FLOREINE E. ADAMS