



**SUMMER MEALS SPONSOR SURVEY
REPORT 2017**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was written and compiled by Hunger Free Oklahoma.

This survey could not have been accomplished without the partnership of the members of the Childhood Food Security Coalition and each of the sponsors who took the time to provide feedback on their experience with the Summer Food Service Program.

Thank you to the Oklahoma State Department of Education for distributing this survey to sponsors.

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PARTNERS

OK Childhood Food Security Coalition

The mission of the Childhood Food Security Coalition is to facilitate sharing of best practices, foster networks and connections for childhood nutrition programs, and promote and develop innovative solutions to increase capacity building and promote public outreach.

The Oklahoma State Department of Education is charged with determining the policies and directing the administration and supervision of the public school system of Oklahoma.



Hunger Free Oklahoma works to bring a unified, statewide voice to the issues and solutions surrounding hunger, with a goal to ensure all Oklahomans have access to affordable, nutritious food. Hunger Free Oklahoma is leveraging the power of collaboration to solve hunger in Oklahoma by improving systems, policies, and practices.

KEY FINDINGS

44

Percent of sponsors who served summer meals for 11-25 days. 33% of sponsors served meals for 40+ days

89

Percent of sponsors who were either "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the summer meals program overall

88

Percent of sponsors who plan to sponsor in 2018. 67% do not plan to increase their sites

- ♦ A majority of sponsors offered activities for children in addition to the summer meals (86%).
- ♦ The most prevalent forms of outreach were sending information home through schools (78%) and promotion through social media (78%).
- ♦ Of the aspects of the summer meal program process, site approvals and claims reimbursement had the highest satisfaction, and the application process and training had the lowest satisfaction.
- ♦ The largest perceived barrier to sponsor program efforts was low participation.
- ♦ The largest perceived barrier to child participation was the lack of transportation to meal sites.
- ♦ Sponsors report that their chosen tactic to increase participation is increased advertising to families (74%).

ABOUT THE SURVEY

The Summer Meals Sponsor Survey is a yearly survey and report that began in the fall of 2017 as a follow-up to the summer 2017 program year. The purpose of this survey is to identify successes that should be replicated each year, barriers that must be overcome, and evaluate innovative ideas for program improvement. The information obtained from the survey will help to identify areas of potential growth for the program in order to feed as many children as possible. The information gathered will also help to better understand where sponsors need additional support and resources to increase participation, increase sites, and better serve students.

METHODOLOGY

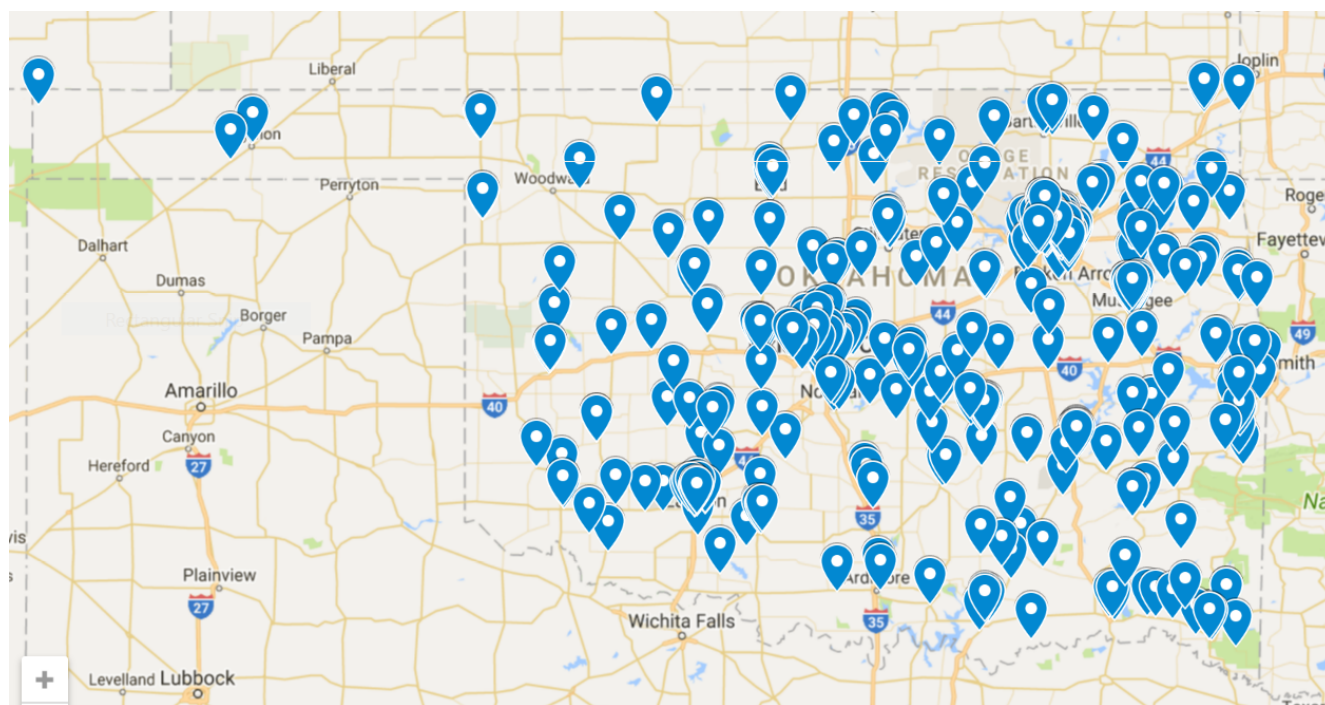
Hunger Free Oklahoma partnered with the Oklahoma State Department of Education to execute this survey. The sample group consisted of 182 sponsors who sponsored one or more summer meal sites in 2017. An initial email was sent to all current sponsors with two follow-up reminder emails. The survey was distributed to a total of 182 sponsors - 102 completed the survey resulting in a response rate of 56 percent. The majority of sponsors were schools, nonprofits, and Indian Tribal Organizations. The survey was comprised of a series of questions regarding sponsor experiences, challenges, successes, and ideas for next summer. This survey and report were modeled after previous surveys designed and distributed by Texas Hunger Initiative and No Kid Hungry.



ABOUT SUMMER MEALS

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) was enacted by Congress to ensure children have access to quality food at least twice per day when school is out. Many children are part of the Free and Reduced Meals Program during the year, which provides them with breakfast and lunch at little or no cost. When school is out of session, children who depend on free meals, are often left without consistent access to food. The Summer Food Service Program is critical for providing healthy meals for children during the summer when they may otherwise go without.

SUMMER MEALS IN OK



THE DISCUSSION

DEMOGRAPHICS

All of the respondents had sponsored a site in the summer of 2017. Out of the total respondents, 73% were school sites, 20% were nonprofits, 4% were Indian Tribal Organizations, 2% were camps and 1% was categorized as “other.” Within the “other” category, Upward Bound and church were identified.

SUMMARY FINDINGS

Overall, Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sponsors reported a positive experience with the summer meals program and most plan to continue sponsoring next summer. Many sites reported low participation as a primary barrier, and lack of transportation was found to be a significant inhibitor of children accessing summer meals. Sites found that offering additional activities or programming to children increased participation. This research is providing insight and guidance as Oklahoma looks towards increasing SFSP participation in 2018 and beyond.

ANALYSIS

The data shows that a majority of the summer meal sites served food for 11 to 25 days and the majority of sponsors were school districts. This may indicate that many sites are tied to summer school or other temporary school activities. However, a large number of sponsors were serving for 40 or more days – a majority of the summer. This is encouraging as it indicates that sponsors are moving in the direction of serving food for the entire summer.

Lack of transportation is one of the greatest barriers to children and families accessing summer meals. Within the “other” category, a majority of responses indicated that there was a lack of engagement and participation by children as well as lack of involvement from the community. This may be connected to the lack of transportation. If children are unable to get to a summer meal site, then they are unable to participate in the program. Many sponsors are exploring a “food truck” or “mobile meals” model to increase their reach.

Activities for children was the highest reported additional service offered by the summer meals sites. According to the USDA, offering activities in addition to meals is a best practice and can improve engagement of children and families and investment in the program.

NEXT STEPS

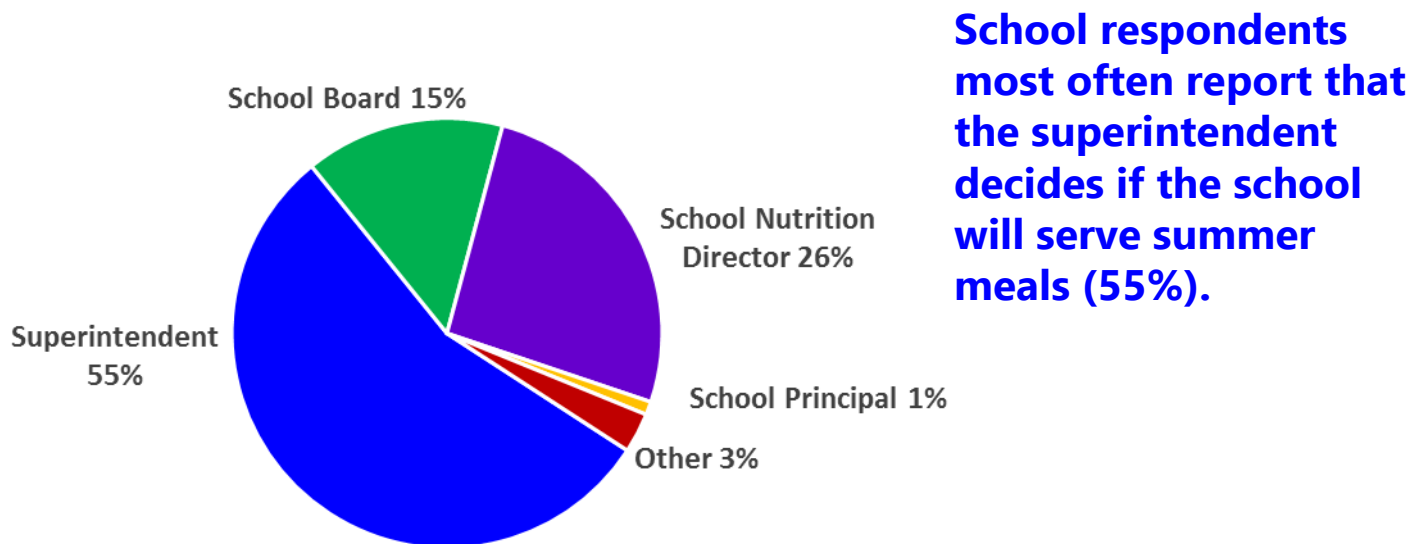
We recommend that future surveys include questions to better understand the relationship between summer school and the number of food service days and barriers preventing serving more days. As the survey grows and continues into future years, the Coalition will be able to better understand the trends in SFSP Sponsor Participation and measure the success of efforts to increase sites, sponsors, and participation. The Childhood Food Security Coalition meets monthly on the last Friday of the month to work on improving SFSP outcomes and outcomes for children across the state. For more information on the Coalition and its work, please contact Paula Wackenheim at 505-862-1291 or Richard Comeau at 918-264-0212.



A young boy with short dark hair, wearing a bright green t-shirt, is smiling broadly at the camera. He is sitting at a red table. In front of him is a white plate with a meal consisting of brown rice, broccoli, and white pasta. He is holding a red plastic fork. In the background, the back of a girl with long, wavy blonde hair is visible, also sitting at the table. The setting appears to be a school cafeteria or a community meal program.

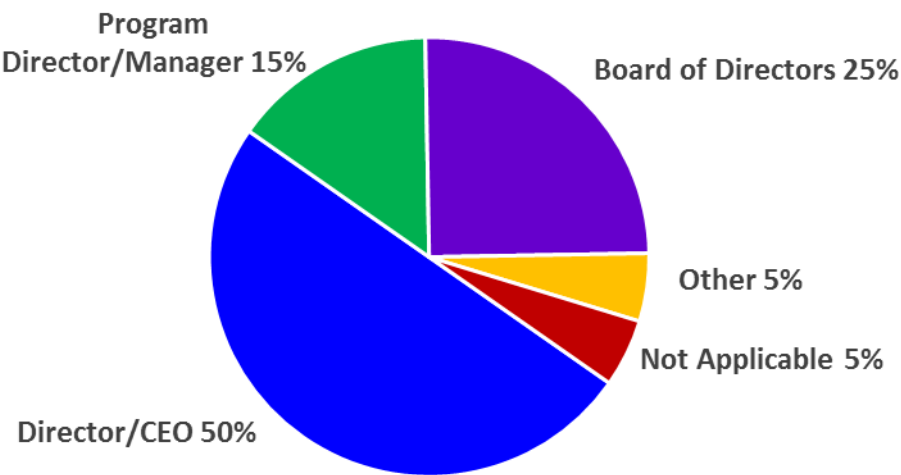
THE RESULTS

WHO DECIDES WHETHER OR NOT YOUR ORGANIZATION/ AGENCY PROVIDES SUMMER MEALS?

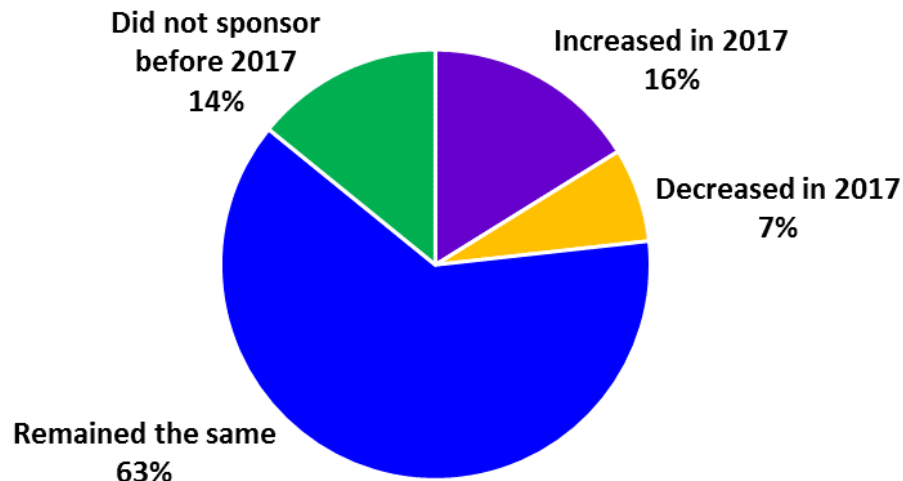


“ We appreciate the opportunity to provide our students with meals during the summer. We feel it is part of our community obligation and we know our children are receiving well balanced meals.

Half of non-school respondents reported that the Director/CEO decides if their organization/agency will serve summer meals.

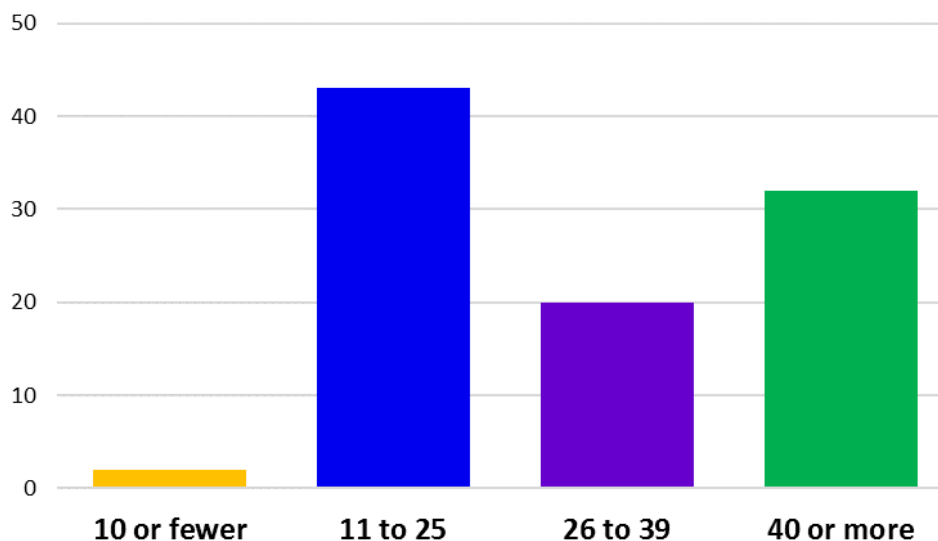


HOW DID THE NUMBER OF SITES YOU SPONSORED IN 2017 COMPARE TO 2016?



Most respondents maintained their number of meal sites in 2017 (63%).

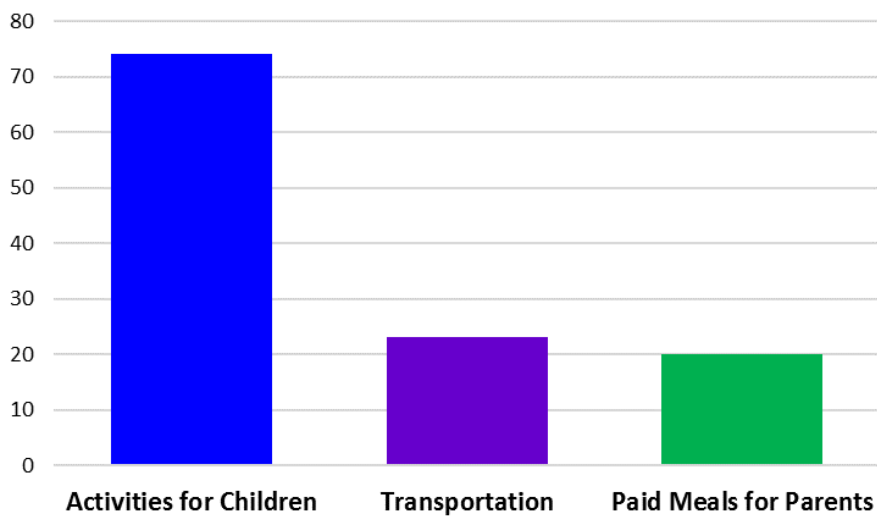
HOW MANY DAYS WERE SUMMER MEALS SERVED IN 2017?



Respondents most often report that they served summer meals for 11-25 days (44%).

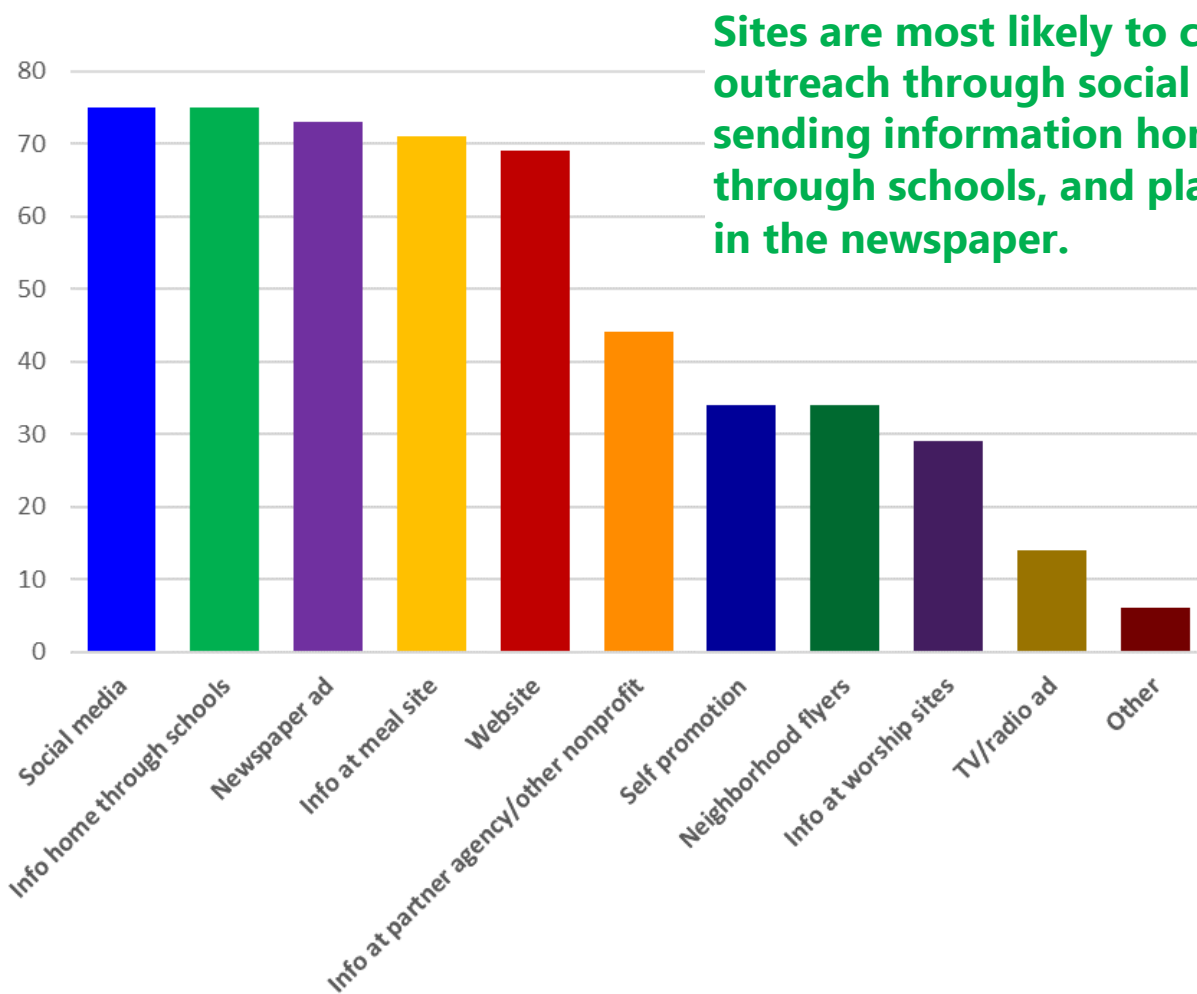
“One of the sites increased participation from 3-5 students to over 30 daily with activities. The children loved it so much, they did not want to go home and this turned into an outreach for the neighborhood to help each other's children with meals at supper time.”

DID ANY OF YOUR SITES PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING SERVICES?



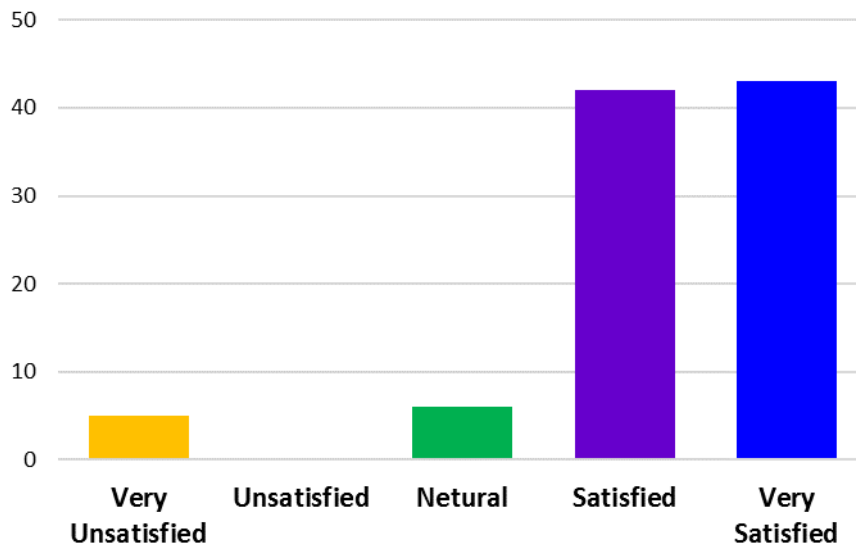
Summer meal sites most often provide additional activities along with summer meals (86%).

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF OUTREACH DID YOUR SITE CONDUCT?



Sites are most likely to conduct outreach through social media, sending information home through schools, and placing ads in the newspaper.

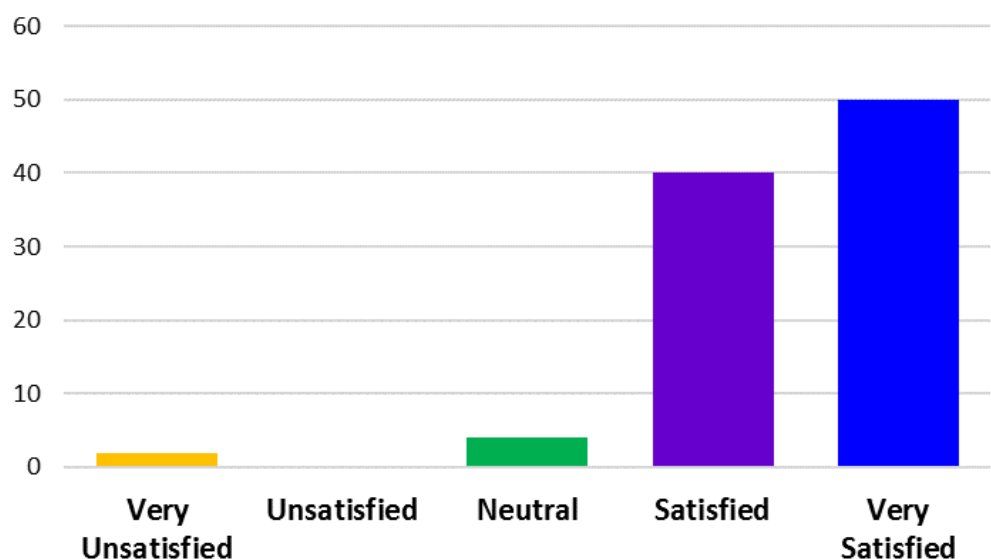
OVERALL, HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR SATISFACTION WITH THE SUMMER MEAL PROGRAM?



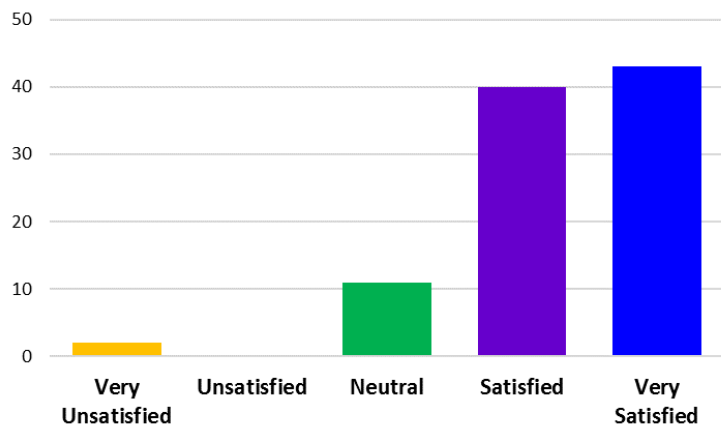
Most respondents report being satisfied or very satisfied with the summer meal program.

THE FOLLOWING GRAPHS SHOW HOW SATISFIED RESPONDENTS WERE FOR VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE SUMMER MEALS PROGRAM.

HOW WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE PROCESS FOR CLAIM REIMBURSEMENT?

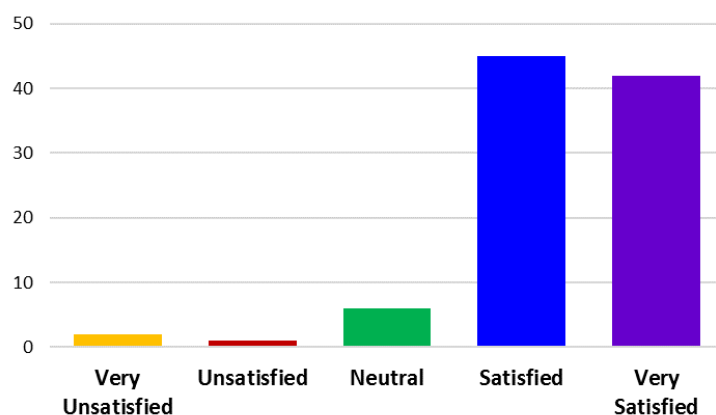


HOW WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION?

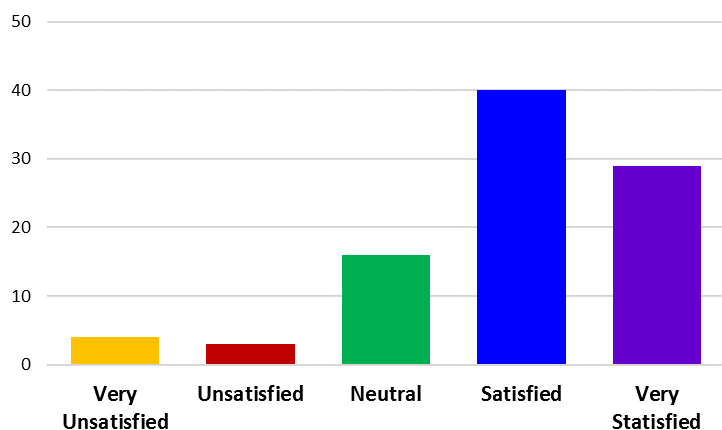


Overall, sponsors were most satisfied with the process for claim reimbursement at 52%, technical assistance from the State Department of Education at 45%, and site approvals and inspections at 44%.

HOW WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH SITE APPROVALS AND INSPECTIONS?

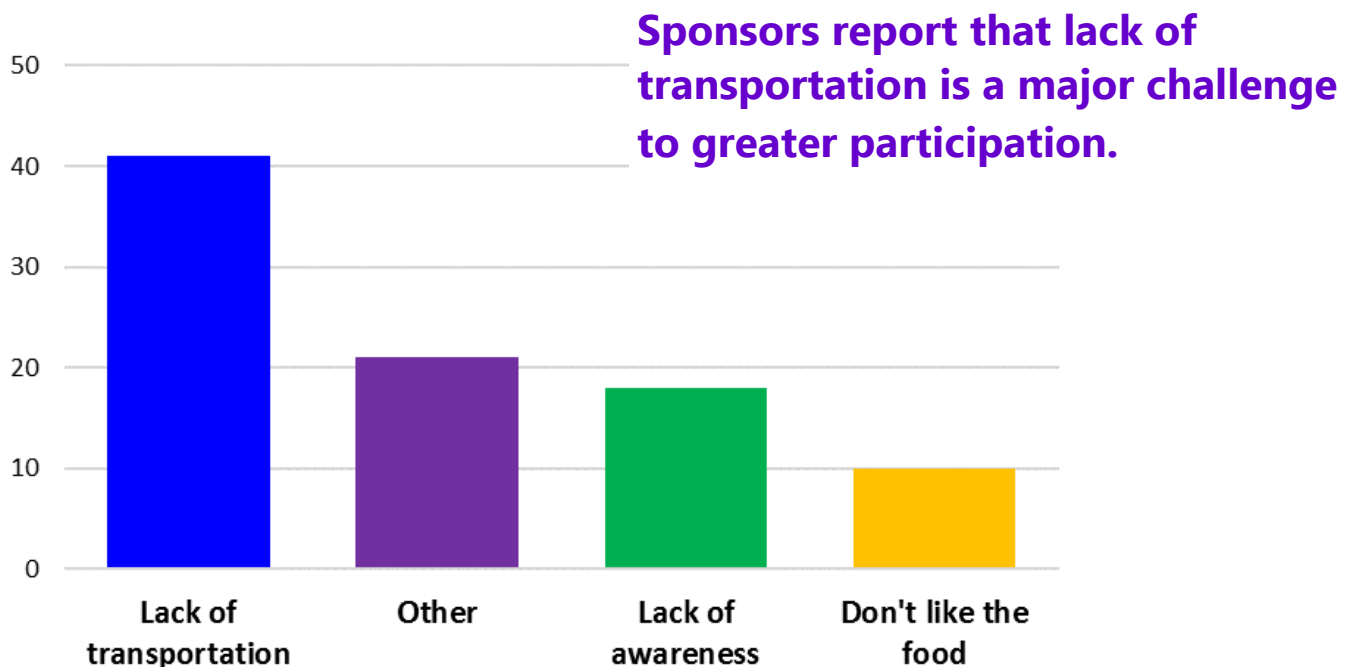


HOW WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE APPLICATION PROCESS?



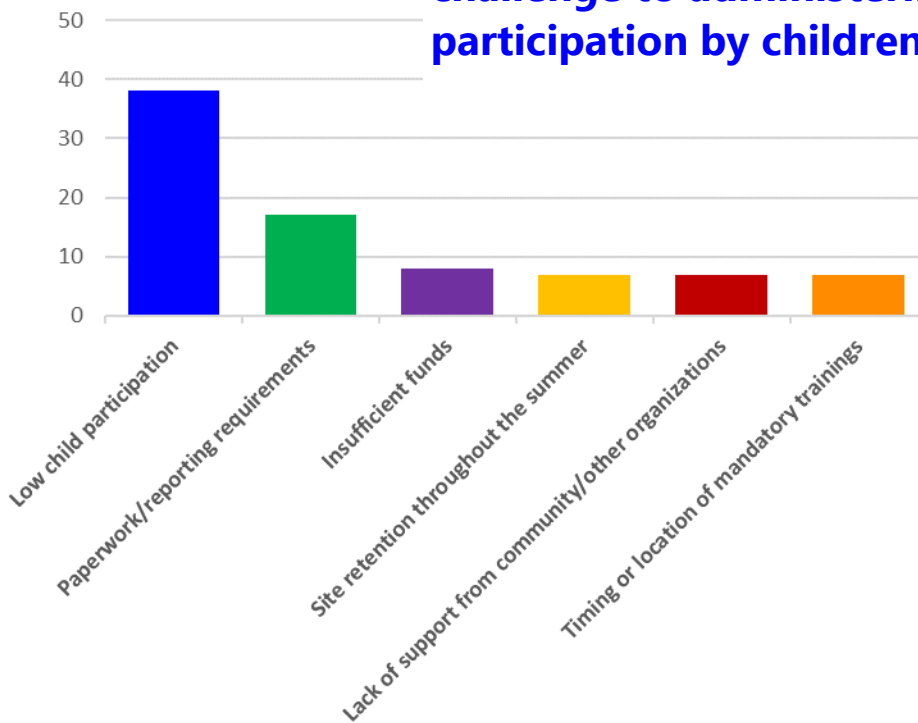
“Wonderful program for student enrichment. We were able to obtain additional DoD Fruit & Veg Program dollars to enhance the amount of fruit/veg provided during meal service. Provided fresh/chilled water to students for breakfast and snack meals. Noted increase in student water consumption from 2016 to 2017 program. Incorporated student athlete positive interactions with SFSP attendees as well as OSU Extension Office nutrition/fitness activities.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ARE CHALLENGES THAT YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED IN THE SUMMER MEALS PROGRAM?



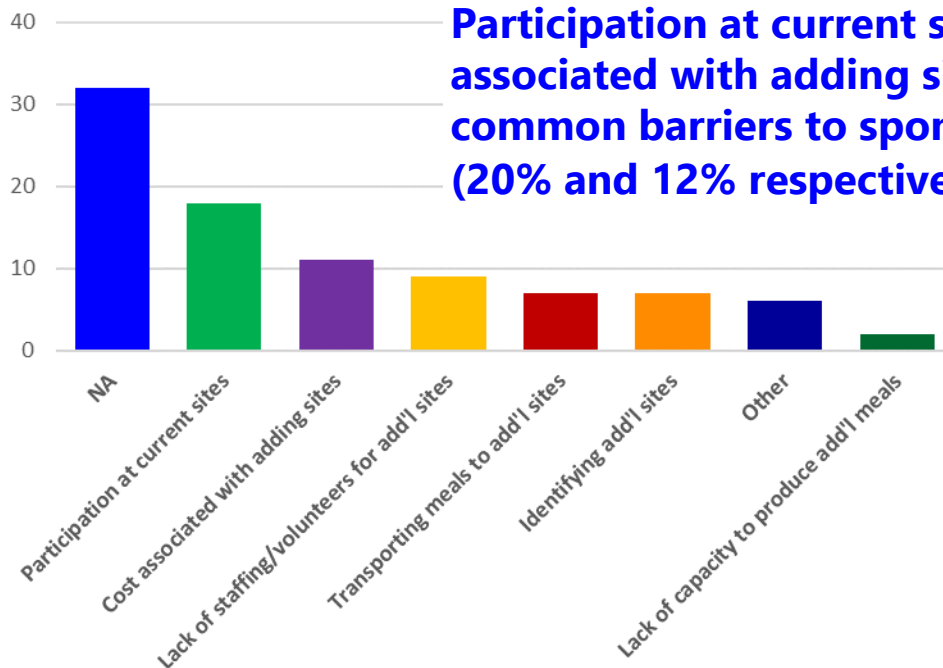
WERE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING FACTORS CHALLENGES TO ADMINISTERING YOUR PROGRAM?

Most sponsors report that their greatest challenge to administering the program is low participation by children (68%).



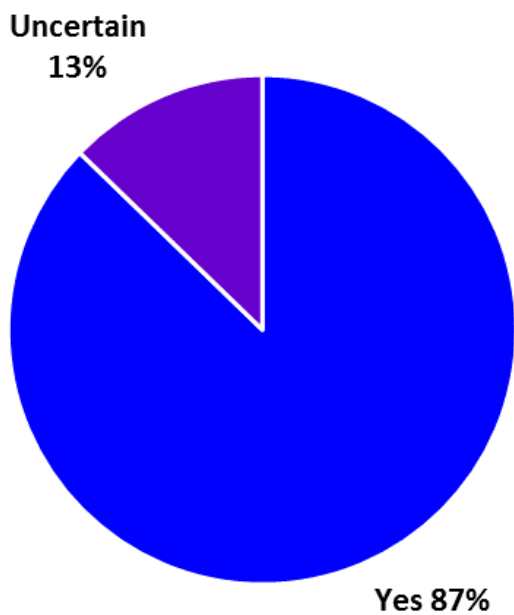
WHAT IS THE PRIMARY BARRIER TO INCREASING THE NUMBER OF SITES?

Participation at current sites and the cost associated with adding sites were the most common barriers to sponsors increasing sites (20% and 12% respectively).¹



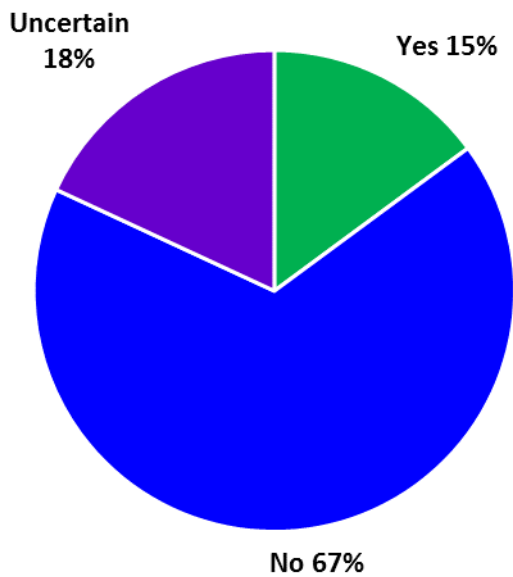
¹35% of respondents chose "not applicable." Future surveys will need to identify why this question is not applicable to better understand the implications of adding sites for sponsors.

DO YOU PLAN TO SPONSOR SUMMER MEALS PROGRAMS IN 2018?



Most respondents plan to continue as sponsors in 2018.

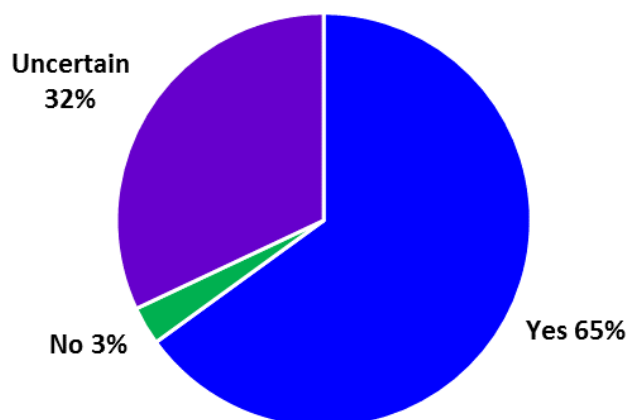
DO YOU PLAN TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF SITES THAT YOU SPONSOR?



Of those who plan to sponsor in 2018, most respondents do not plan to increase meal sites.

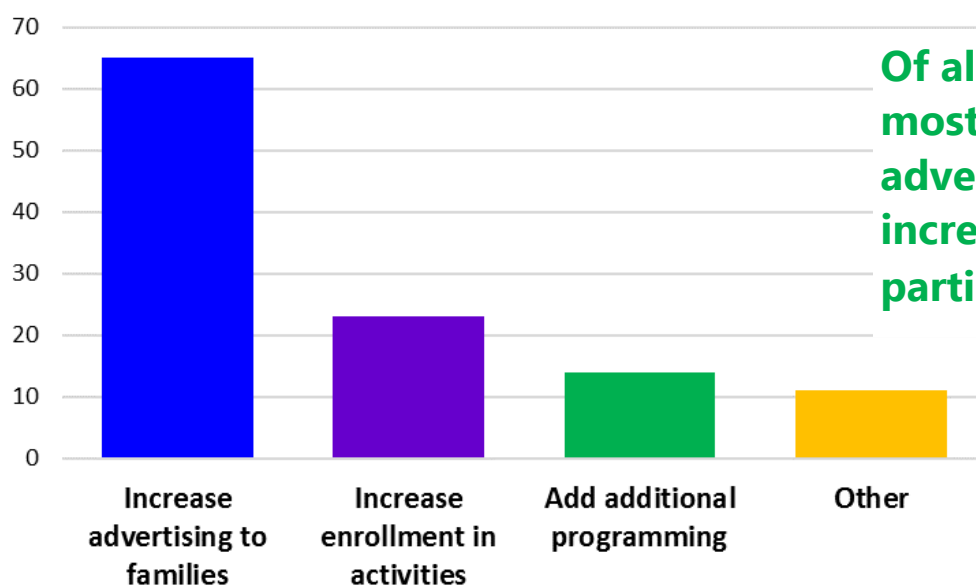
“ When leaving my first site on the last day of feeding, a grandma who always brings in her two grandsons told me how much she appreciated us this summer. During the summer, she is jobless and barely gets by day-to-day so the meals made a big difference for her. That was a very humbling affirmation that we were truly helping people.

IN 2018, DO YOU PLAN TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN SERVED AT YOUR SITES?



Over half of the respondents plan to increase the number of children served at their sites (65%).

WHAT TACTICS WILL YOU USE TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION?



Of all the sponsors, most will use advertising to increase participation.

OK Childhood
Food Security
Coalition