



Summer Food Service Program 2019 Evaluation



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INTRODUCTION

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is federally funded by the United States Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service. It provides free breakfast, lunch, supper, and snacks to children in low-income areas (Kansas Department of Education, 2019b). This report evaluates the success of SFSP in Kansas and seeks to identify actionable steps for future program improvement.

From August to December 2019, Kansas Appleseed designed and facilitated a statewide survey of all summer meal sponsors across Kansas. We gathered sponsor insight, feedback, and celebrations to better inform future action for Kansas. The *Recommendations* section includes suggestions for future improvements to the Summer Food Service Program and this survey based on sponsor feedback.

This research was conducted and assembled by Samiyah Para-Cremer in coordination with Kansas Appleseed and the Department of Applied Behavioral Science at the University of Kansas. Kansas Appleseed, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.



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PROJECT OVERVIEW & LOGISTICS

This survey was developed, internally approved, conducted, and analyzed between August 26-December 9, 2019. There are 180 SFSP sponsors across Kansas (Kansas Department of Education, 2019b). This survey contacted and invited feedback from all sponsors between September 6- November 22, 2019.

Purpose & Anticipated Outcomes

For Kansas Appleseed

For Kansas Appleseed, this survey immediately flagged sponsors that will not be returning for Summer 2020. This allowed Kansas Appleseed and the Kansas Department of Education (KSDE) to identify communities that may need additional support to continue SFSP next year. Additionally, the survey augmented Kansas Appleseed's awareness of the successes and identified needs of summer meal sites across the state. This will guide future advocacy to address sponsor identified needs.

For the SFSP Sponsors

For the 180 sponsors of the Summer Food Service Program in Kansas, this survey provided them an outlet to give feedback and anonymously identify concerns and highlights that would be later shared with KSDE in aggregate. In addition to their feedback being addressed, the survey allows for increased technical resources tailored to the needs identified by sponsors in these interviews.

For Kansas

For the state of Kansas, the immediate outcome is to increase KSDE's knowledge of SFSP sponsors' needs and successes. In the long term, this survey combined with Kansas Appleseed's future advocacy and KSDE's increased awareness of sponsors' needs will aid youth across the state by increasing needed resources and support to summer meal sites across the state.

BACKGROUND

The development of the SFSP 2019 Survey involved a literature review of the Summer Food Service Program, Kansas Appleseed's role in SFSP, and the prior SFSP evaluation.

History of SFSP

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is a federally funded program organized by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) (KSDE, 2019b). The program provides free breakfast, lunch, supper, and snacks to all children 18 years old or younger who live in qualifying low-income areas (USDA, 2019). Qualifying sites are those located in areas where 50% or more of the children live in families earning equal or less than 185% of the federal poverty level (KSDE, 2019b). This calculation is typically measured by the number of children in the area who qualify for free and reduced-price school meals (KSDE, 2019b).

SFSP began in 1968 as a pilot program seeking to feed children during the summer months that school is out-of-session (KSDE, 2019b). In 1975, the program was approved for a national launch (KSDE, 2019b). The program grew so popular that in the first five years of its national program, 1.9 million children received meals (KSDE, 2019b). In 2008, there were 2.1 million children participating in the program (KSDE, 2019b).

In Kansas, KSDE (2019) facilitates the training and approval of SFSP sites run by all 180 summer meal sponsors. During 2018, Kansas summer meal sponsors served 384,914 breakfasts, 1,061,611 lunches, 18,272 suppers, and 76,398 snacks (KSDE, 2019b).

Kansas Appleseed's Role in SFSP

Kansas Appleseed has worked to increase participation in SFSP since 2014. In addition to providing technical support and resources to guide sponsors on how to increase youth participation at their summer meal sites, Kansas Appleseed provides research and policy advocacy. SFSP participation across Kansas increased through the work of KSDE, Kansas sponsors, and supportive community organizations. This survey is an extension of a research initiative that Kansas Appleseed began last year, gathering direct feedback from all SFSP sponsors across the state in short phone interviews.

Review of 2018 SFSP Evaluation

In fall 2018, Kansas Appleseed designed and conducted a survey of 128 SFSP sponsors for summer 2018 over the phone and email. The 2018 SFSP asked the following open-ended questions:

- ❖ How do you feel this summer went? (And why?)
- ❖ What worked well for you?
- ❖ What were your biggest challenges?
- ❖ What additional support would you like to have?
- ❖ Are you planning or interested in doing SFSP next year?
- ❖ What kinds of things did you do to reach youth?
- ❖ Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Kansas Appleseed recorded the responses of 103 of these sponsors and then qualitatively coded her notes for frequency of key ideas or words used by sponsors. Of the 128 sponsors, 103 sponsors responded (80% response rate).

The survey found that 71.8% of sponsors expressed high levels of satisfaction with the summer meals sites' performance. Of the elements that worked well, sponsors most frequently mentioned staff, routine, advertisement, location, menu, and supporting programs or activities. Sponsors overwhelmingly cited low participation of youth as their largest challenge. Regarding the future of SFSP, of the 103 sponsors, 99 sponsors expressed interest in continuing with SFSP and 4 expressed that they were not unsure. Finally, no sponsors expressed that they did not intend to continue with SFSP. Most sponsors expressed no interest in additional supports. Regarding advertisement, 17 different types of mediums were identified with the most frequently mentioned including flyers, websites, newspapers, signs, word of mouth, and enrichment activities.

Based on these results and sponsor input, Kansas Appleseed designed the 2019 SFSP survey to include more closed ended questions to ease analysis. Emerging questions from the 2018 SFSP survey were also used to design the 2019 SFSP survey.

METHODS

Survey Design & Approval Process

Kansas Appleseed used an iterative process to design and approve the 2019 SFSP survey. Using the 2018 SFSP survey results, Kansas Appleseed designed the 2019 SFSP survey using both open-ended and closed-ended questions that drew on the most popular responses from the 2018 SFSP Survey. In transitioning the survey to more closed-ended questions, the survey primarily implements a 5-point Likert Scale allowing for more definitive comparisons within the data.

The survey was split the survey into two parts based on feedback from Kansas Appleseed staff. Part One of the 2019 SFSP Survey would be conducted over the phone for a period of about 10-15 minutes. Then, Part Two of the 2019 SFSP Survey would be emailed to sponsors.

Prior to contacting sponsors, Kansas Appleseed sent the survey to KSDE for additional feedback. This internal and external review process resulted in the final 2019 SFSP Survey included in this report.

Participant Selection & Recruitment

All SFSP sponsors were contacted for this survey. In Kansas, there are 180 SFSP sponsors (KSDE, 2019b). Names, emails, and phone numbers for these sponsors were collected via KSDE (2019a)'s Data Central data base. However, this data base was incomplete, consisting of only 152 sponsors. For a complete list, Kansas Appleseed then cross-referenced the databases' list with KSDE (2019b)'s 2019 Summer Food Service Program Locations list. This second list lacked sponsor names and emails, but always included a phone number by which the site could be reached. This resulted in 180 sponsor phone numbers, but included duplicates implying that some sponsors were listed as sponsors for multiple towns. Upon removing duplicates, a list of 171 sponsors remained on the call list.

This survey does not use a Simple Random Sample because it surveys the entire population of SFSP sponsors. Survey participants were recruited through phone call conversations requesting participation in the research. Every sponsor was called a minimum of one time with most receiving at least 2-4 phone calls. Participation in the study was voluntary and no sponsors were paid for their participation.

If contact information for SFSP Sponsors was incorrect, site managers were contacted to request an interview with a representative of their district's SFSP sites. In these cases, only site managers or representatives knowledgeable of all reporting sites were surveyed.

Interview Protocol

All Kansas Appleseed staff and volunteers were trained to follow an interview protocol. This helped standardize interactions with SFSP sponsors and facilitate organized collection of sponsor feedback. Sponsor responses were recorded in Google Forms with additional notes

taken on paper to record qualitative data. These responses were also recorded in Google Forms.

Prior to calling a sponsor, the interviewer customized their call script. This script also included a standardized voicemail for sponsors. Any time a sponsor was called for an interview, the call list was updated with the dates contacted and the notes of the conversation or voicemail that occurred as can be seen in *Figure 1*.

Sponsor	Contact	Email	Phone	Number of Sites	Interviewed? (Y/N)	If yes, follow up email sent?	Dates contacted (+your initials)	Notes:	Does this Site Require Follow-up? Why?
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Figure 1: Call List Format

After an interview had been conducted with a sponsor, the interviewer sent the follow up email. This email included a link for sponsors to access the short follow-up survey. Following this interview protocol facilitated data collection and eased the analysis of data by standardizing the data collection process.

Training of Staff & Volunteers

Staff and volunteers were trained on interval protocol using a Behavioral Skills Training approach by first modeling proper interview protocol. Then, using role-play to shape interviewer performance until a consistent quality achieved using constructive feedback and verbal reinforcement. Interviews were audited and reinforcement was provided on a variable ratio scale to maintain interview quality.

RESULTS

Response Rate

Of the 171 sponsors on the call list, 129 interviews were conducted between September 6-November 22, 2019. This resulted in a 75.44% response rate. All 171 sponsors were contacted a minimum of twice, if not interviewed when first contact was established. Kansas Appleseed needed a sample size of only 119 sponsors to be 95% confident that the average response of the population was captured within the average response of the sample size with an interval of ± 5 . Kansas Appleseed exceeded this minimum sample size requirement by 10 interviews.

Demographic Distribution

No information as to the age, gender, or race of SFSP sponsors was collected. In order to determine if the survey's sample size is an accurate representation of the population, Kansas Appleseed collected data on the site type and population density. Based on the comparison of the research's sample size and the SFSP sponsor population using these factors, the sample size is believed to be representative of the population.

Population Density Comparison

Kansas is primarily rural. The University of Kansas' Institute for Policy & Social Research (IPSR) (2018) classifies 32 Kansas counties as Frontier counties, or counties with a population density of less than 6.0 people per square mile (ppsm).

For a more complete understanding of Kansas's population density, *Appendix A* contains an IPSR (2018) map classifying Kansas counties as:

- ❖ Frontier (less than 6.0 ppsm)
- ❖ Rural (6.0 - 19.9 ppsm)
- ❖ Densely-settled Rural (20.0 - 39.9 ppsm)
- ❖ Semi-Urban (40.0 - 149.9 ppsm)
- ❖ Urban (150.0 ppsm or more)

Using this map, Kansas Appleseed classified each SFSP site as Frontier, Rural, Densely-Settled Rural, Semi-Urban, or Urban based upon the county in which it resides. In *Figure 2*, the number of SFSP site sponsors in the population and in the survey sample are compared by the population density categorization of the sites they oversee.

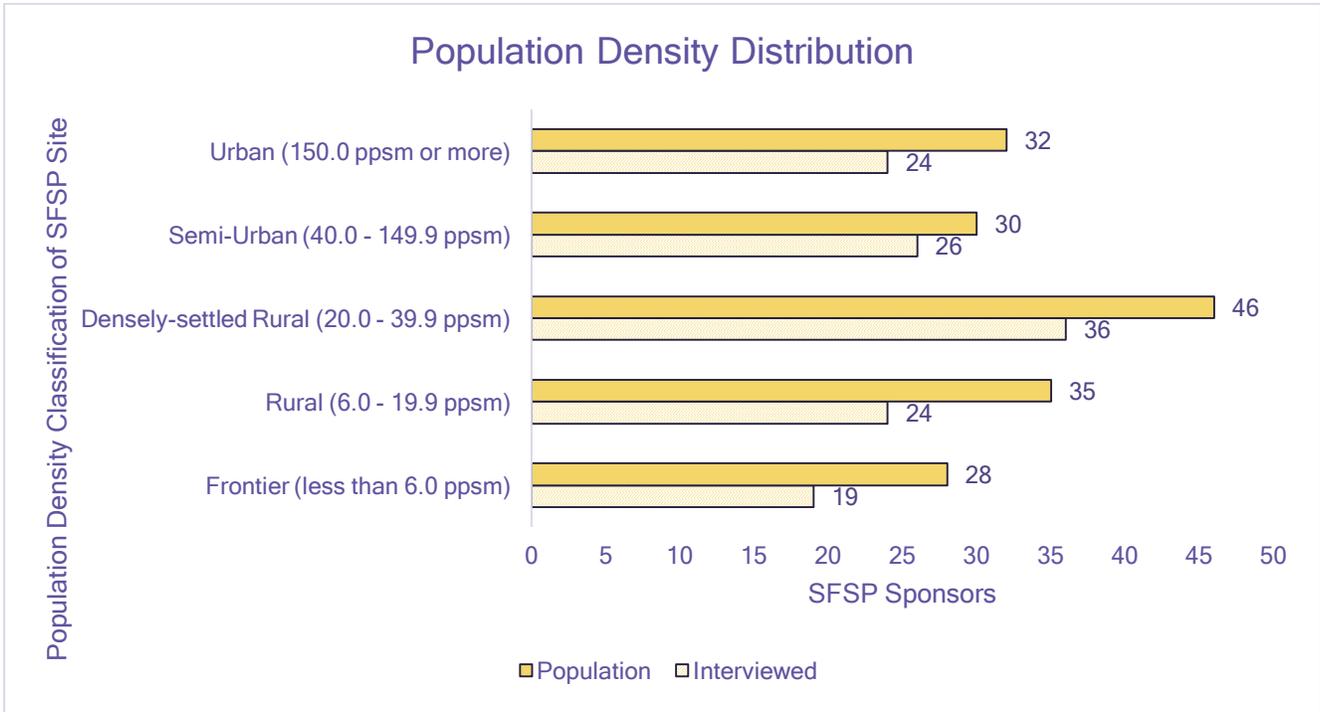


Figure 2: Population Density Distribution Graph

Furthermore, as seen in *Figure 3* and *Figure 4*, the proportions, shown as a percentage, of SFSP site sponsors for each population density concentration are similar between the sponsors interviewed and the actual population of SFSP sponsors in Kansas.

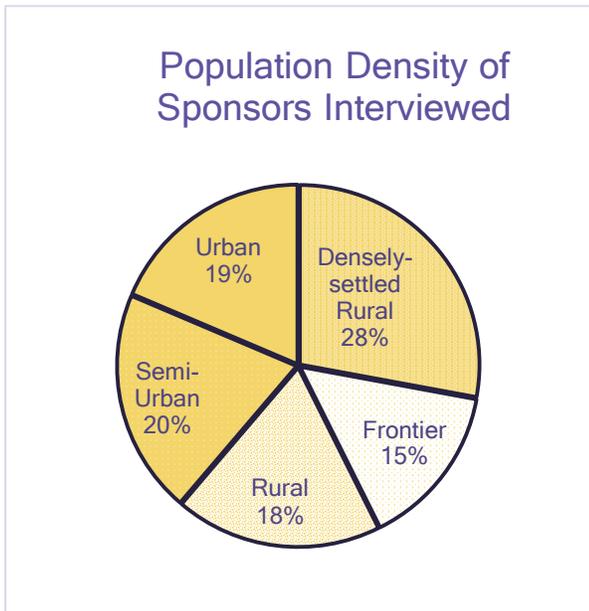


Figure 3: Population Density of Sponsors Interviewed

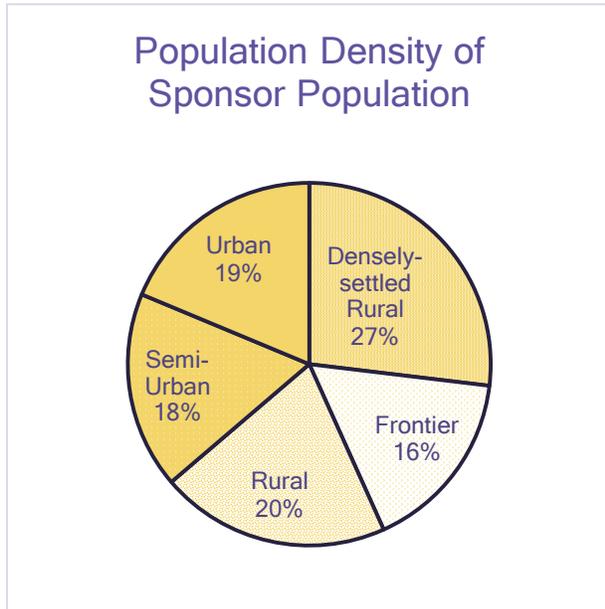


Figure 4: Population Density of Sponsor Population

Using this demographic data, Kansas Appleseed believes that the sample size is a representative sample of the proportion of rural and urban SFSP sponsors across the Kansas.

Sponsor-Type Comparison

The most common SFSP site sponsors in Kansas are Unified School Districts (USD) representing 80% of all SFSP sponsors. However, a site sponsor is not required to be a USD. Across Kansas, churches, nonprofits, community centers, pools, health departments, city governments, public universities, and private schools also sponsor SFSP sites. In Kansas, there are 34 SFSP sponsors not affiliated with a USD.

In *Figure 5*, the population and sample size of SFSP sponsors are compared based on their classification as a USD sponsored or Other site. Given the diversity of non-USD affiliated site sponsors, Kansas Appleseed classified these as Other.

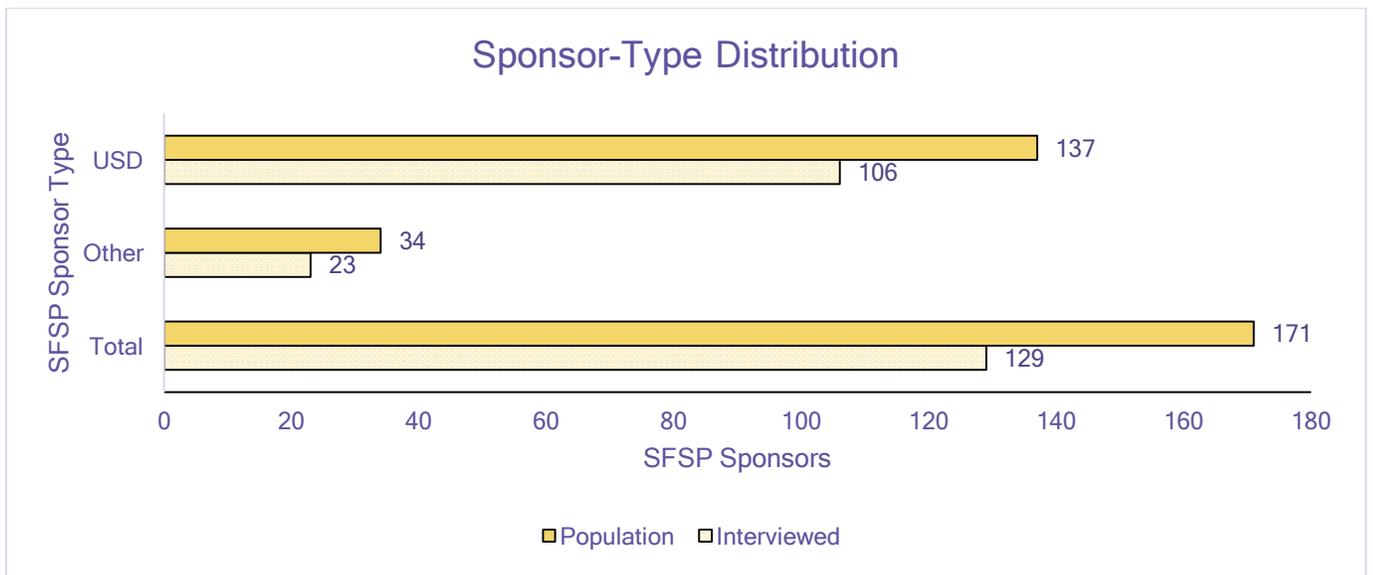


Figure 5: Sponsor Type Distribution

In *Figure 6* and *Figure 7*, the proportion, shown as a percentage, of sponsors interviewed and the total number of SFSP sponsors in Kansas are shown.



Figure 6: Sponsor-Type of Sponsors Interviewed

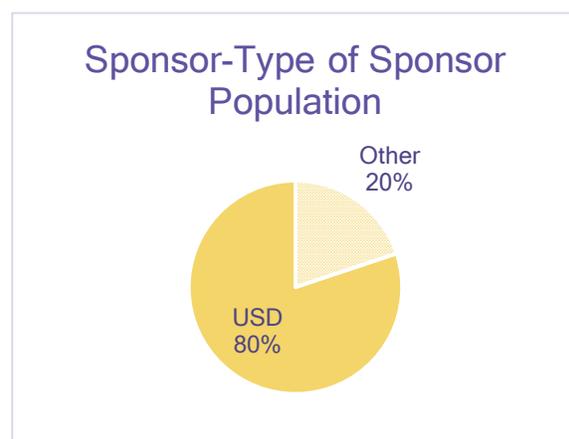


Figure 7: Sponsor-Type of Sponsor Population

Based on these distributions, the distribution of sponsor-type within the sample size is similar to that of the population. However, it is possible that views of non-USD affiliated sites may be slightly overrepresented in the sample size.

Overall SFSP Sponsor Success

A series of questions asked sponsors about their success during the past summers' Summer Food Service Program. Sponsors generally responded positively when asked to rate elements of their programs.

One question asked sponsors "Overall, would you rate youth participation in this year's summer meals as excellent, above average, average, below average, or very poor?" Results were then recorded on a 5-point Likert scale. The distribution is skewed left with a majority (48%) of sponsors rating youth participation as above average or excellent. Only 9% of sponsors responded saying youth participation was below average or very poor.

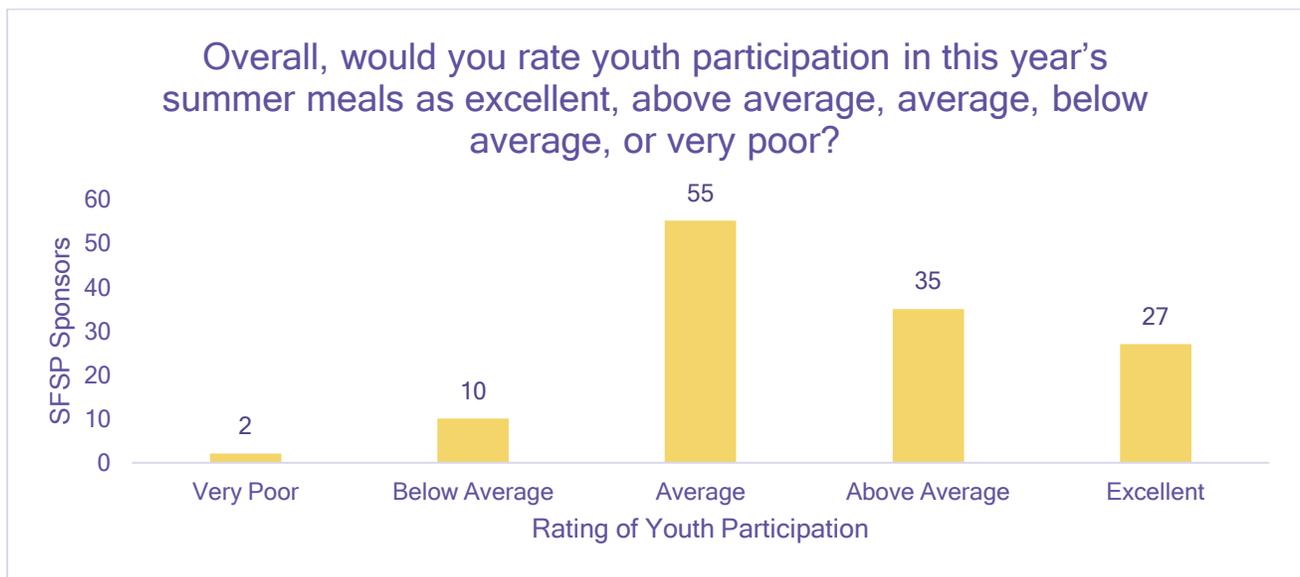


Figure 8: Rating of Youth Participation

Another question asked sponsors "Of the following, which would you say has been the most successful for your summer meals site?" Sponsors then received a list of 6 categories including Volunteers, Community Outreach, Enrichment Activities, Location, Menu, and Planning. These options were electronically randomized to control for response order bias. Kansas Appleseed selected these options based upon the results of the SFSP 2018 survey in which qualitative analysis identified these categories. Any additional justification provided by sponsors as to their chosen responses were recorded. *Figure 9* displays the responses to this question for all 129 interview participants.

Of the following, which would you say has been the most successful for your summer meals site? (Options Provided)



Figure 9: Most Successful Element

Of these categories, some key snapshots emerged based upon the population density of SFSP sites¹:



LOCATION: Most successful for Semi-Urban, Densely-settled Rural, Rural, and Frontier* SFSP site sponsors



PLANNING: Most successful for Frontier* SFSP site sponsors



ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES: Most successful for Urban SFSP site sponsors

A survey question asked sponsors “Are there any other successes that you want to highlight?” These responses were then qualitatively coded for thematic trends. Below, the most common themes are listed with one or two representative examples to demonstrate what each category represents. The most common themes include:

❖ **Community Collaboration**

- Representative Example: “They saw the participation go up significantly! (moved to a library this year) and collaborating with the library and their programs has been awesome (the library's program participation went up too)” - Semi-Urban Sponsor

¹ Frontier site sponsors had a tie for most successful element and are listed twice

❖ **Improvement from Previous Year**

- Representative Example: “A lot of rocky situations with SFSP last year, such as it being difficult to get in touch with SFSP but this summer it was a lot better” - Densely-settled Rural Sponsor

❖ **Contributions of Specific People**

- Representative Example: “They have a lot of teachers helping out with SFSP. The teachers use a lot of Facebook marketing to get the info out to kids and they put the event on the schools' Facebooks” -Frontier Sponsor
- Representative Example: “Volunteers! They had a lot and the churches came together to really support the meals program” -Frontier Sponsor

❖ **Increased Meal Service to New Locations or Times**

- Representative Example: “Extended breakfast at HS to be both Junior High and High School! (made at a more convenient time)”– Densely-settled Rural Sponsor

❖ **Expanded Menus**

- Representative Example: “Volunteers were awesome! The kids loved the new menu (Tacos! Burritos! Taco salad!)” -Semi-Urban Sponsor
- Representative Example: “Made DIY lunchables pizzas that were a major hit. Used microwaves at library!” -Semi-Urban Sponsor

❖ **Enrichment Activities**

- Representative Example: “Enrichment activities were very robust: field trips, crafts, reading, school garden, etc. They were coordinated by the Kansas Reading Roadmap person” -Densely-settled Rural Sponsor

❖ **Transportation to SFSP Sites**

- Representative Example: “The bus routes! They had buses to the trailer parks and different areas” -Densely-settled Rural
- Representative Example: “They started a pilot program for transporting/busing kids to site from in town. They had 4 designated points around the city (to split it into quadrants)” -Rural Sponsor”

Barriers to Success

Questions asked SFSP sponsors to identify barriers or difficulties to their summer meals program. A survey question asked: “Of the following, which would you say has been the most difficult for your summer meals site?” Sponsors were provided with options based upon the results of the 2018 SFSP Survey. Additional information and justifications provided by sponsors was recorded by staff and volunteers. *Figure 10* shows findings based upon the responses of all 129 interview participants.

Of the following, which would you say has been the most difficult for your summer meals site? (Options Provided)

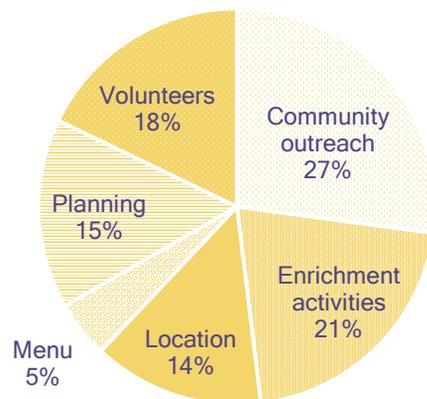


Figure 10: Most Difficult Element

Sponsors identified community outreach as the most difficult aspect of SFSP; however, Enrichment activities and volunteers were consistently mentioned as a difficulty. The option least often selected as a difficult element was menu. Sponsors who selected menu as their most difficult aspect of summer meals cited instances of requiring shelf-stable food or nutrition label requirements.

A survey question asked sponsors “What is a barrier to participation you experienced?” Kansas Appleseed qualitatively coded responses for thematic trends. The most common thematic categories, including one or two representative examples each are:

❖ **Inclement Weather**

- Representative Example: “The Heat- when it gets super hot, the kids don't come out. They only had to be inside 2 days because of rain (nearby to the cafeteria).” -Frontier Sponsor
- Representative Example: “Weather (the rain hurt them this summer) but numbers increased in extreme heat (due to the air conditioning)”-Urban Sponsor

❖ **Navigating KSDE Online Resources**

- Representative Example: “Navigating the KSDE website (password changes, etc.) & barriers with the webinar program (may be disqualified if sponsor can't do the webinar)” -Densely-settled Rural Sponsor

❖ **Location & Lack of Transportation**

- Representative Example: “Being able to find the perfect location & getting the kids there. Transportation- kids not being able to travel on their own to the sites.” -Densely-settled Rural Sponsor
- Representative Example: “Transportation- They don't offer transportation and a lot of rural kids need food but can't make it to the site The kids who go are close or have transportation” -Semi-Urban Sponsor

❖ Stigma

- Representative Example: “Parents: Don't really want to cooperate and remind/encourage kids to go. Some feel prideful or paranoid about free meals, others don't want their kids around other kids. Don't understand the value/nutrition of eating at the site” -Semi-Urban Sponsor
- Representative Example: “Stigma of people thinking it's only for poor kids”- Rural Sponsor

Innovative Strategies

A question asks sponsors “What are the most innovative strategies you used to increase participation?” Most sponsors mentioned similar strategies such as distributing flyers, collaborating with community organizations such as the library or pool, developing creative menus, and advertising with Facebook. These strategies received a lot of support from sponsors and should be considered as best practices. However, a few sponsors mentioned innovative strategies that appeared infrequently or only once in the data. These creative and innovative strategies have found success in some communities and could be useful for other sites. These strategies include:

- ❖ Feeding parents at-cost meals (or raising donations to serve parents for free) - Densely-Rural Site Sponsor
- ❖ Providing budget board games at the meal sites. Chess was exceptionally popular - Densely-Rural Site Sponsor
- ❖ Asking grocery store to place SFSP flyers in every patron’s bag – Frontier Site Sponsor
- ❖ Incentivizing youth attendance
 - Incorporating with small dollar store prize raffles once weekly (Every day in attendance is worth one raffle ticket) -Rural Site Sponsor
 - Marking a plate once a week before serving. Kids must eat all food on the plate to see if they are the winner. Winning plate receives a small dollar store prize - Semi-urban site Sponsor
 - Providing the top 3 most frequent participants with a prize at end of summer (Attendance works as a point system where top point earners win the prizes) - Urban Site Sponsor
- ❖ Including a copy of the menu on the community flyers and posters -Rural Site Sponsor
- ❖ Incorporating fun activities like karaoke or a talent show- Semi Urban Site Sponsor
- ❖ Collecting data on most popular menu items during summer meals and adjusting menu to youths’ preferences – Urban Site Sponsor
- ❖ Providing transportation to the SFSP site -Densely-Settled Rural Site Sponsor

While these strategies may not work for every meal site, the techniques may be adapted as needed.

Planning & Capacity

A series of questions asked SFSP sponsors to consider their planning protocol and organizational capacity. One question asked SFSP sponsors “When did your site first begin planning for this summer’s program?” The results of the 129 participating sponsors’ answers to the question are included in *Figure 11*. The majority (82%) of sponsors began their planning in January/February 2019 or March/April 2019. It is important to note that late

February or early March is when KSDE begins to send out training information and require paperwork to participate in SFSP for the summer.

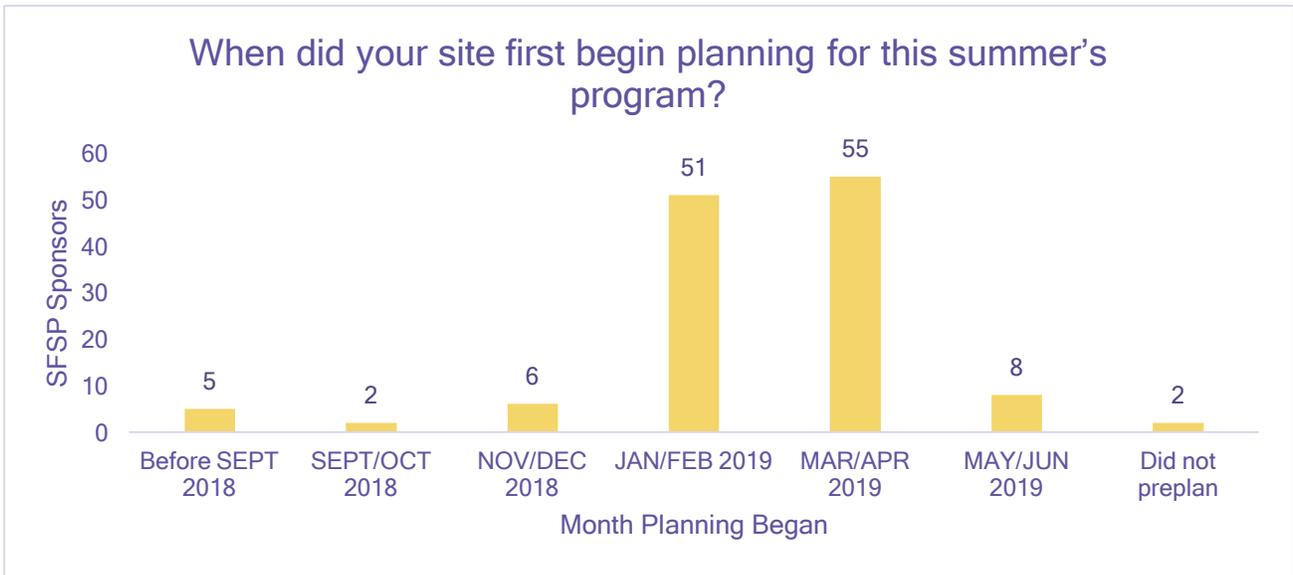


Figure 11: Initial Planning

Of note, those sponsors who explained that they begin planning before September 2018 expressed that they plan year-round or that they began planning immediately following the 2018 Summer Food Service Program. Those Sponsors who answered that they did not preplan often were in programs that underwent an unexpected change in leadership immediately before or during the summer meals program or they began late into the summer serving a few weeks in July.

The following questions begin to ask SFSP Sponsors about their organizational capacity. A survey question asks, “How many meals did your site serve per day?” This question was often confusing to sponsors and should be modified for future surveys. The intent of the question was to ask if sponsors were offering the community’s youth more than one meal (breakfast, lunch, snack, or supper) per day. Overall, nearly 66% of sponsors served more than two meals daily. However, this percentage is slightly skewed right based upon the high numbers of Urban SFSP sites serving more than one meal daily. *Figure 12* shows results by the population density classification of SFSP sites.

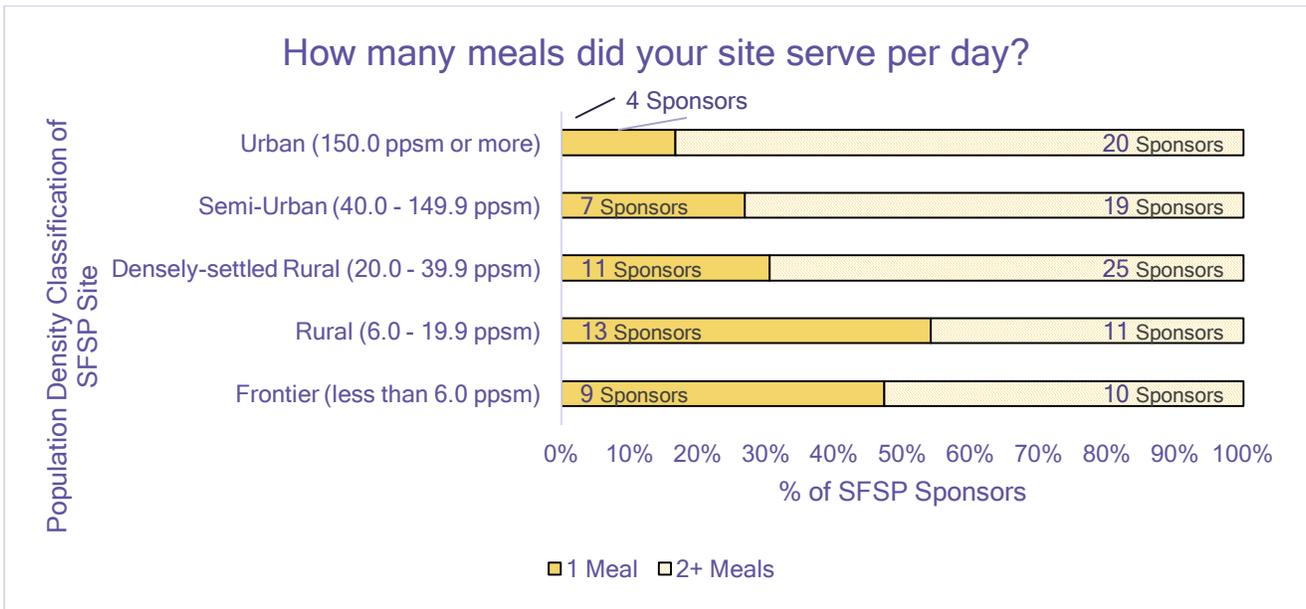


Figure 12: Number of Meals Served by Population Density

One unexpected finding is that 50% or more of Urban, Semi-Urban, Densely Rural, and Frontier SFSP sites offer at least two community meals daily. In order to gain a better idea as to how many SFSP sponsors were considering increasing the number of meals served from one to two or more meals daily, a question was presented to only the 44 sponsors who responded that they serve one meal daily. This question asks “Has it been a consideration to serve two meals a day? Yes or no?” The majority of sponsors (75%) responded no, they had not considered it. This response was not uniform across population density classifications of SFSP sites. *Figure 13* displays participant responses of the SFSP sponsors currently serving one meal daily separated by their sites’ classification as Frontier, Rural, Densely-settled Rural, Semi-Urban, or Urban.

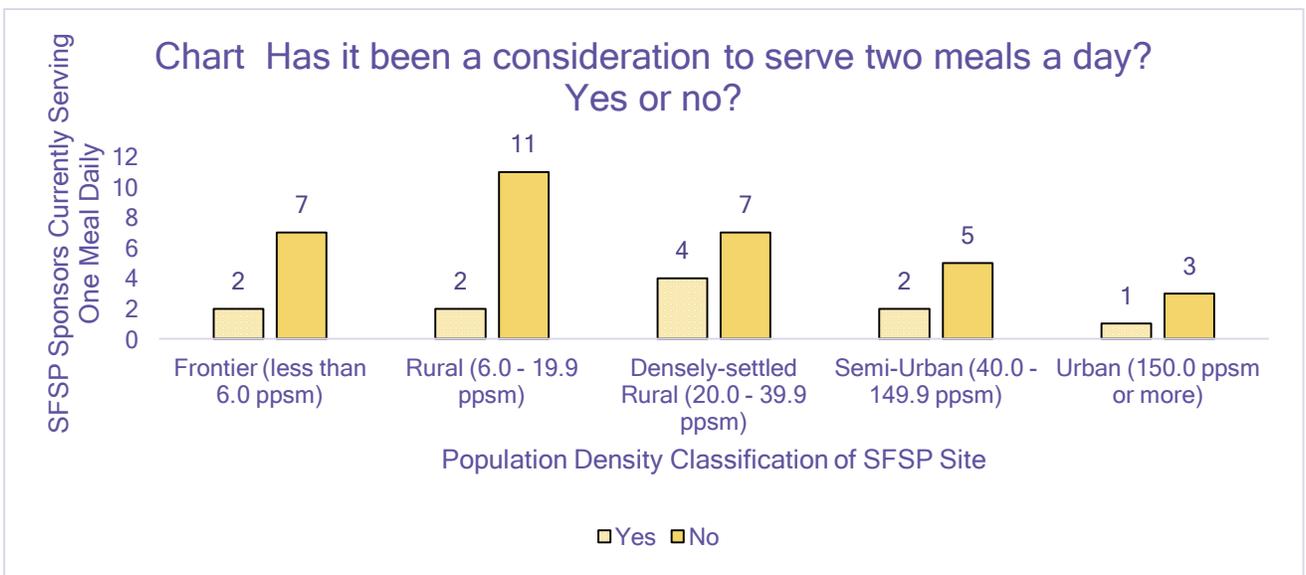


Figure 13: Sponsors Considering Expanding Meal Service by Population Density

Kansas Appleseed did not include a question asking for sponsors to explain their response to the question regarding serving two meals a day; however, if SFSP sponsors provided additional justifications for their response. This information was recorded by volunteers and

staff. Justifications provided for not expanding meal service are ranked below by category and frequency of response.

- ❖ **Youth would not attend additional meals (13)**
 - Lack of accompanying community activities during those times (4)
 - Youth would not wake up in time for summer breakfast service (3)
 - Lack of perceived community need (3)
 - General (no additional information provided) (3)
- ❖ **Lack of capacity (7)**
 - Lack of staff or volunteers willing to cover additional service times (3)
 - General (no additional information provided) (2)
 - Sponsor is currently considering a different expansion (i.e. increasing sites, numbers, locations, etc.) (1)
 - Lack of resources (i.e. money, time, etc.) (1)
- ❖ **Lack of community support for second meal (1)**
- ❖ **Interested in increasing service but did not realize it was an option (1)**

Another question asked SFSP sponsors “During which months does your site offer summer meals?” Volunteers and staff then selected a combination of May, June, July, and August based upon when sponsors explained they started their summer meal service. Of note, sponsors serving meals during May and August often serve meals for a few days to a week during those months as a way of covering meal delivery within a week of the end or beginning of the community’s school year.

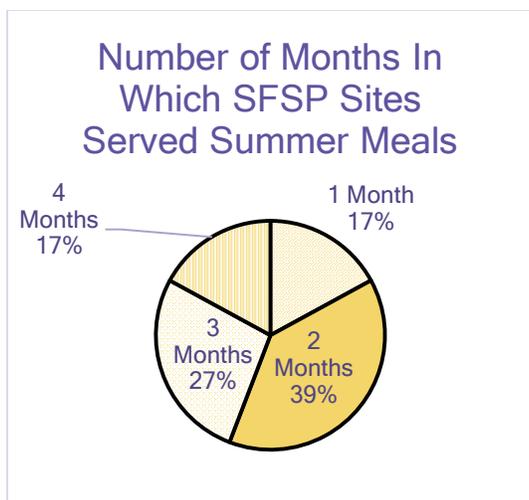


Figure 14 to the left displays the number of months SFSP sites served summer meals based upon the number of months selected by sponsors. Figure 15 (next page) displays the number of months in which summer meals were served by the population density classification of the different SFSP sites. Of note, Densely-settled Rural SFSP sites are highlighted as an outlier for representing 45% of the SFSP sites during all four summer months.

A survey question asked sponsors “Why does your site serve meals during those months in particular?” Although answers varied substantially, the following responses are included in the report to provide context for the outlier:

- ❖ “As soon as school gets out (the following Monday) to 3rd of August (a few weeks before school starts). The main reason is so they could feed the kids that can’t eat. They ran long this year in order to cover the drivers ed kids too. They saw a major drop in August (maybe 20 kids that last week)”

- ❖ “Because of the need! One site has a daycare too (they provide meals all year long for the daycare but use SFSP during summer). YMCA camp [SFSP site] starts immediately. They do breakfast and lunch for them.”
- ❖ “July slows down, but other months had a lot of traction!”
- ❖ “Last week in May and first week in August (covers time the times kids aren’t in class). School likes to have a week off in between both.”
- ❖ “Memorial Day to August. They did surveys and people still asked for the meals in July so they kept going (switched from breakfast and lunch in a shorter time period to just lunch for longer time period + snacks)”
- ❖ “Start day after school ends and stop day before school begins”
- ❖ “Started pretty immediately after school ended for the [summer] Camp. Only served 2 days in August so cooks could have a break.”
- ❖ “They try the entire summer in order to meet the need. Most kids are home alone during the summer (wanted greatest benefit for the community)”
- ❖ “Tuesday after Memorial Day to the Friday before school starts. Trying to cover last day to first day (no Saturday, Sunday, or 4th of July)”

Number of Months When Summer Meals Served: % (# sponsors)					
Population Density of SFSP Site	1 Month	2 Months	3 Months	4 Months	Grand Total
Frontier	21% (4)	42% (8)	21% (4)	16% (3)	100% (19 sponsors)
Rural	13% (3)	42% (10)	33% (8)	13% (3)	100% (24 sponsors)
Densely-settled Rural	17% (6)	36% (13)	19% (7)	28% (10)*	100% (36 sponsors)
Semi-Urban	27% (7)	35% (9)	23% (6)	15% (4)	100% (26 sponsors)
Urban	8% (2)	42% (10)	42% (10)	8% (2)	100% (24 sponsors)

Enrichment Programming

Some questions asked sponsors about enrichment activity offered at their sites. One of these questions asked sponsors “Did your site offer youth any enrichment programming?” Of the 129 sponsors, 105 sponsors (81%) offered some form of enrichment programming. When separating the responses by population density of SFSP sites as displayed in *Figure 16*, we discovered that 100% of Urban sites offer some form of enrichment programming, an outlier among the sponsors interviewed. As a reminder, this percentage is that of the sample size and has a margin of error of $\pm 5\%$ when applied towards the overall population average of SFSP site sponsors.

Did your site offer youth any enrichment programming?			
Population Density of SFSP Site	Yes	No	Grand Total
Frontier	84% (16)	16% (3)	100% (19 sponsors)
Rural	71% (17)	29% (7)	100% (24 sponsors)
Densely-settled Rural	78% (28)	22% (8)	100% (36 sponsors)
Semi-Urban	77% (20)	23% (6)	100% (26 sponsors)
Urban	100% (24)*	0% (0)	100% (24 sponsors)

Figure 14: Enrichment Programming Offered by Population Density

The next question asked the 105 sponsors offering some form of enrichment programming to youth “What kind of enrichment programming did your site offer youth?” Sponsor responses were then classified into the four categories of Educational Activities, Physical Activities, Artistic Activities, and Movies/Games. These categories were selected based upon the results of the 2018 SFSP Survey. Additional details about the enrichment activities were collected by volunteers and staff and recorded as supplemental data. Of SFSP sponsors providing enrichment programming at their sites, 74 sponsors (70%) offered enrichment activities in two or more of these categories.



Educational Activities: 73% of SFSP sponsors partnered with organizations to provide some form of educational activities (i.e. summer school, nutrition classes, cooking classes, gardening classes, bike safety classes, reading, etc.)



Physical Activities: 51% of SFSP sponsors partnered with organizations to provide some form of physical activities (i.e. sports camps, summer weightlifting, swimming, basketball, etc.)



Artistic Activities: 26% of SFSP sponsors partnered with organizations to provide some form of artistic activities (i.e. coloring books, karaoke, band camp, arts & crafts, etc.)



Movies or Games: 21% of SFSP sponsors partnered with organizations to provide some form of artistic activities (i.e. chess, movies, board games, card games, scavenger hunts, etc.)

Additionally, a small number of SFSP sponsors worked with summer school programs, the Boys & Girls Club, day care programs, and vacation bible schools to offer youth field trips.

Requested Support

A question asked sponsors “Do you feel like you’ve received sufficient training, communication, and/or guidance to succeed as a summer meals site?” and requested they rank their opinion on a 5-point Likert scale with the options of Agree, Somewhat Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, and Disagree. Of the 129 sponsors interviewed, 115 sponsors (89%) selected Agree. Those SFSP sponsors who did not select Agree, responded that they Somewhat Agreed (8 sponsors or 6%), Neither Agreed nor Disagreed (5 sponsors or 4%), or Disagreed (1 sponsor or <1%).

The follow-up question presented SFSP sponsors with the opportunity list additional resources and training that could improve their summer meals program. The question asks “Briefly, what could we do in the future to improve your experience as a summer meals site?” Although some sponsors did not suggest any future changes, many sponsors mentioned multiple changes that would improve their experience in the future. In general, sponsors most often called for the sharing of ideas and strategies between SFSP sponsors across the state. Included within these ideas, sponsors frequently asked for technical support for community outreach, menu development, and enrichment activities. Sponsors also frequently asked for the relaxing of SFSP restrictions and other protocol.

The most frequently requested supports include:



Community Outreach Ideas: 23% of SFSP sponsors requested support with community outreach including but not limited to: ways to increase community buy-in and awareness (requested 10 times), reusable posters and advertisement materials (requested 9 times), and increased advocacy (requested 4 times).



Protocol Changes: 20% of SFSP sponsors requested changes in SFSP protocol including but not limited to: reducing restrictions (requested 13 times) and increasing training on paperwork, strategies, and new regulations (requested 6 times).



Enrichment Activities: 12% of SFSP sponsors requested support with finding *cost-effective or free* activities that work with different size groups, can be used in a variety of indoor or outdoor settings, and are popular with the youth (requested 16 times)



Technical Support: 10% of SFSP sponsors requested technical support including but not limited to: menu development of kid-friendly & healthy meals (requested 4 times), help with program expansion (requested 4 times), and resources specific to non-USD affiliated sites (requested twice).



Money: 9% of SFSP sponsors requested grant or funding resources to improve their SFSP program (requested 11 times)



Volunteer & Staff Recruitment: 8% of SFSP sponsors requested ideas for recruiting and maintaining volunteers and staff for their summer meals program (requested 10 times)

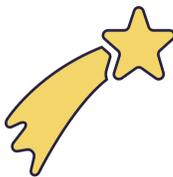


Transportation: 4% of SFSP sponsors requested ideas and resources for cost-effective or free transportation of youth from rural areas to SFSP site locations

Future of SFSP

A survey question asked sponsors “Would you rank your likelihood to do SFSP next summer as: Highly likely, Likely, Unsure, Unlikely, or Highly unlikely?” Sponsor responses were recorded using a 5-point Likert scale. Of the 129 sponsors interviewed, 115 sponsors (89%) responded that they are highly likely to do SFSP in Summer 2020. No sponsors (0%) replied that they were unlikely or highly unlikely to do SFSP next summer.

The main findings are:



Program Sustainability: 126 sponsors (98%) are highly likely or likely to continue SFSP for Summer 2020



Need for Increased Rural Supports: 3 sponsors (2%) are unsure if they will continue SFSP. All three sponsors currently serve vulnerable Frontier, Rural, or Densely-settled Rural communities

DISCUSSION

The 2019 SFSP Survey expanded upon the findings of the 2018 SFSP Survey. The survey could be further refined. The recommendations section provides a few suggestions as to how to further improve future SFSP evaluations. The primary goals were to provide an outlet for SFSP sponsor concerns and to guide future Kansas Appleseed advocacy to actionable next steps supporting SFSP.

The 2019 SFSP Survey is likely a representative sample of SFSP sponsor opinion across Kansas. With feedback provided by 129 of all 171 sponsors across Kansas, Kansas Appleseed can be 95% confident that these findings contain the average of Kansas' SFSP sponsor opinions with an interval of ± 5 . This is important because some of the recurring themes emerging from this survey's findings can be easily remedied through the development of future SFSP resources, trainings, and advocacy. Below, Kansas Appleseed summarizes the key findings and discusses their possible implications or solutions.

Lack of Sponsor-to-Sponsor Communication

One of most frequent requests for future supports was for the dissemination of successful strategies used by some sponsors across the state to all sponsors. Further, some of the most frequently requested areas of support such as community outreach, enrichment activities, and technical support were listed as many sponsors' most successful areas. These were also commonly cited as the most difficult component for SFSP sponsors. From these findings, the Kansas Appleseed concludes that improved communication between sponsors via an online public forum, listserv, or Facebook group may dramatically improve SFSP performance across the state. With these resources, site sponsors could easily share resources and strategies in areas that they have found success. It also would facilitate the guidance of newly opened SFSP sites by connecting them with more established site leaders across the state whom could answer questions or provide advice.

Widespread Incorporation of Enrichment Activities

This process found that 81% of all sponsors provide some form of enrichment activities with 100% of Urban SFSP sites offering enrichment programming. This is a promising statewide advancement in an area of best practice. The next step should be the diversification of enrichment activities. Only 21% of SFSP locations offered games or movies as a form of enrichment activities. The sponsors who did incorporate these elements stated they saw substantial success from providing board games bought from a thrift store or showing movies that they could incorporate at a very low-cost. Prior to the completion of this report, KSDE had not yet published final SFSP participation statistics for the sites across Kansas. However, once that data is published, a regression analysis using SFSP participation statistics and the results could confirm if enrichment activities are linked to increased participation statistics and if this correlation is statistically significant.

Barriers to Expanding Number of Meals Offered

A question asked sponsors who were serving one meal daily if they had considered expanding to serve twice daily. Of those sponsors providing additional justification for why they had not increased meal service, the overwhelming response was that youth would not

come to a meal service at an earlier time. This suggests two main takeaways: 1) Sponsors may not all know that snack and supper are options for summer meals and 2) Enrichment activities likely need to be incorporated into an expanded meal service as “Lack of accompanying community activities during those times” was the most frequent supplementary reason for sponsors’ explanations as to why youth would not show up to a different meal time. More education and technical support are likely necessary to address these issues.

Path to Expanding Number of Months in which Meals Offered

One surprising result of the survey was that 44% of sponsors are providing summer meals for more than two months during the summer. Even more surprising, of the Densely-settled Rural SFSP site sponsors, 28% of them (10 sponsors) serve meals during all four summer months. This was nearly twice the proportion of sponsors serving all four months in the other population density classifications. While the reasons for this expansion are not currently clear, Kansas should highlight the successes of these Densely-settled Rural SFSP sites. The state should also conduct more in-depth interviews with these sponsors to discover what strategies they use to support the expansion.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2019 SFSP survey successfully gathered feedback and opinions from 75.4% of the SFSP sponsor population in Kansas. The importance of continuing this survey in future years cannot be understated. The survey allows sponsors to independently and confidentially voice their successes and concerns for the future of the program. For example, as mentioned repeatedly by sponsors, they are satisfied by the communication they have with KSDE but lament the lack of sponsor-to-sponsor communication allowing them to share information and strategies without the use of an intermediary. An annual survey highlights these ideas to ensure Kansas Appleseed continues to provide socially valid and effective SFSP advocacy.

Actionable Next Steps

Based on the results and the feedback of sponsors, Kansas Appleseed staff, and volunteers, we recommend the following as immediate results moving forward:

- ❖ **Highlight the Success of SFSP Sponsors:** Based upon previous estimates from the 2018 SFSP survey, Sponsors have made substantial improvements in the areas of enrichment activities. We should highlight the advances and successes of all sponsors. Additionally, Kansas Appleseed should highlight the success of Urban SFSP site sponsors whom have a remarkably high rate of enrichment activity incorporation at their sites and Densely-settled Rural SFSP site sponsors whom have a high rate of providing summer meals for all 4 months.
- ❖ **Conduct a Regression Analysis:** Kansas Appleseed can expand the research by running correlation analyses between self-reported use of enrichment activities and the number of meals served. These analyses could also be used to determine if type of enrichment activity has any statistically significant effect on SFSP site performance.
- ❖ **Creation of a Sponsor-to-Sponsor Communication Forum:** One of the most immediately actionable outcomes of this survey is identifying Sponsor request for connection to other SFSP sponsors to share strategies, ideas, and ask each other questions. Kansas Appleseed can create a sustainable contribution to program improvement by facilitating the creation of this forum. Sponsors then can modify and advance it to meet their needs, providing a direct and constant communication loop.
- ❖ **Sharing the Results of the Survey:** SFSP Sponsors routinely asked to receive an email updating them as to the results of the survey upon its completion. Kansas Appleseed can aggregate the survey's findings and develop a list of strategies that emerged from these interviews. These materials can then be shared directly with SFSP Sponsors.

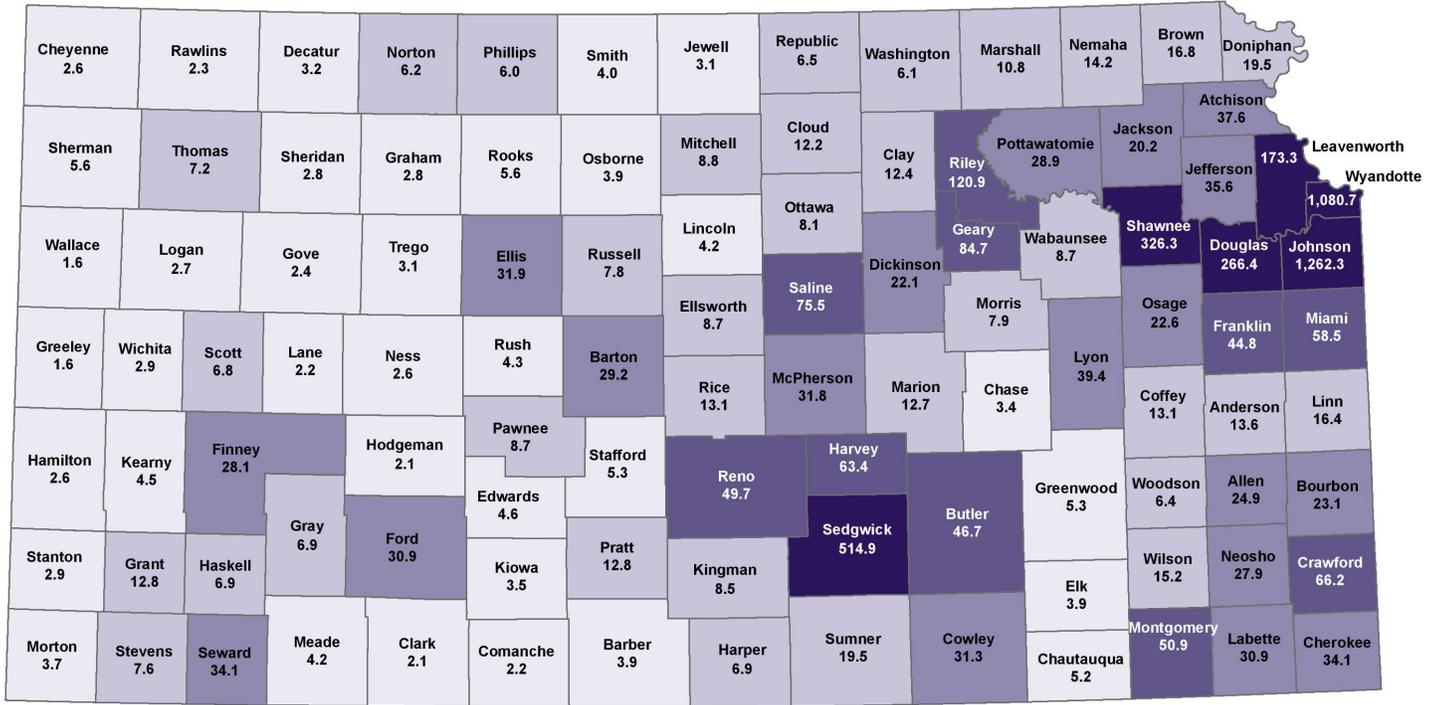
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APPENDIX A: POPULATION DENSITY MAP

Depicts population density map referenced in report (IPSR, 2018).

Population Density Classifications in Kansas, by County, 2018



Source: Institute for Policy & Social Research, The University of Kansas; data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates, Vintage 2018.

Population Density by Classification*
(persons per square mile)

State: 35.6

- Frontier (less than 6.0 ppsm)
- Rural (6.0 - 19.9 ppsm)
- Densely-settled Rural (20.0 - 39.9 ppsm)
- Semi-Urban (40.0 - 149.9 ppsm)
- Urban (150.0 ppsm or more)

* Kansas Department of Health and Environment classifications.