MODULE 1
Roles and Responsibilities of the School Nutrition Manager
Participant Workbook
Course Overview: *DECIDE to Succeed*

**Course Expectations**

The *DECIDE to Succeed: An Orientation for New Managers* training is mandatory for all new or beginning managers as one part of the certification process required by the Mississippi State Department of Education and the Office of Child Nutrition.

Because the information you get during this course is important, you will be asked to show that you are learning. Please ask questions if you do not understand an assignment. Observing the following rules will help you do your best.

1. Come to class on time and be ready to learn.
2. Listen during class and complete the assignments in your DECIDE workbook.
3. Work with other members of your team during group activities.
4. Participate in class discussion; ask questions.
5. Successfully complete all assessments.

**Graded Assessments**

You will have graded assignments after you finish each module. There are a total of 100 points that you can earn over the week. You need to get 80 points or more to pass the course.

**Case Study Assessments (30 points: 6 cases studies @ 5 points each)**

A case study presents a scenario-based story of a situation or problem that relates to the information presented in the module. You will read the case
study and answer the problem-solving type questions at the end. If you would like, you may discuss the case study with your group or another classmate to improve your understanding of the scenario presented. It is always better to discuss your ideas with others to increase your understanding of the situation or problem. You will be able to use materials supplied in the class to help as you work.

Class Participation (5 points)
This assessment is based on your contribution in completing independent activities, group activities, and participation in class discussion.

Multiple Choice Assessments (65 points)
In addition to case study assessments, there will also be a short multiple-choice quiz after each module. The number of questions varies according to the length of the module. You will also be given a short problem to solve in module 4 on food production. You may use any of the materials supplied in the class to help you find the answers to the questions and/or problems.

After the course is over, a report on your progress will be sent to your School Nutrition Administrator. It will say if you had satisfactory progress or if your progress could be improved through coaching. A report of “Satisfactory Progress” will be made in those areas where you give correct answers to 80% of the assigned activities.
Roles and Responsibilities of School Nutrition Managers

Key Terms and Definitions

**Accountability** – Accountability is an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one’s actions.

**Job Description** – A job description is a list of specific duties and responsibilities that are to be performed on the job.

**Management** – The term management is defined as the act or manner of managing, handling, directing, or controlling an organization.

**Leadership** – Leadership is defined as giving guidance and direction, accepting responsibility, and holding oneself accountable for the success of the organization.

**Operation** – The term operation can be defined as an activity of an organization. Operations can include supervising site employees, oversight of day-to-day activities, ensuring maximum efficiency, and creating desirability for its goods and services.

**School Nutrition Manager** – The school nutrition manager is the person who has direct responsibility for the day-to-day operations at one or more schools.

**School Nutrition Staff** – The school nutrition staff is everyone involved with the school nutrition program, whether full-time or part-time.

**Stakeholders** – The stakeholders in an organization are the individuals or groups of individuals that have concerns or interest in an organization.

**USDA Professional Standards** – Professional Standards are guidelines to assist school food authorities (SFAs) in recruiting, hiring, training, and retaining qualified school nutrition staff and to build employee skills to efficiently operate school nutrition programs.
Decision-Making Process

Determine the Issue
What are my responsibilities to the success of the school nutrition program?

Explain the Issue
The school nutrition manager must have an understanding of the responsibilities in a leadership role to have an effective school nutrition program.

Create Procedures to Address the Issue
Determine what I need to know and do to fulfill my responsibilities as a successful school nutrition manager.

Involve Others: Who and How
1. Foodservice Administrator/School Nutrition Director: Discuss role and responsibilities of school nutrition managers.
2. Employees: Ask for feedback on issues related to program management.

Decide to Succeed: Take Action
1. Take steps to improve leadership qualities.
2. Define my role and responsibilities for the position of school nutrition manager.
3. Take advantage of professional development opportunities to improve my leadership qualities.

Evaluate Success
Discuss my role and responsibilities with the School Nutrition Director to determine my strengths and weaknesses.
Section 1: Role of the School Nutrition Manager

**Objective:** Describe the roles and responsibilities of a school nutrition program manager.

**Group Activity**

**Responsibilities of a School Nutrition Manager**

**Instructions:**

1. Use the sticky notes in front of you to write a specific responsibility of a school nutrition manager in each of the two categories. Write one responsibility managers have for *overseeing daily operations* and one responsibility managers have for *setting and ensuring high standards are met*.

2. When you finish writing the two responsibilities, compare your list with other members of your group and eliminate duplicates; write the final list for each category on sticky notes.

3. Place your sticky notes on the appropriate flip chart.
Section 2: Responsibilities for Decision-Making

Objective: Recognize the importance of decision making on the operation of the school nutrition program.

Group Activity

A Typical Day in the Life of a School Nutrition Manager

Instructions: Read the case study below. Think carefully about each issue that must be handled by the manager as you read. When you finish reading, analyze the manager’s day and complete the questions at the end of the case study.

Case Study: Lynn Johnson, manager at Oak Lane Middle School, walks into her school office an hour earlier than usual. The school is returning from a 3-day weekend due to a Monday holiday. She has a number of things on her “To Do” list, primarily finishing the past week’s production book entries. Several emergencies occurred during the week that caused Lynn to delay completing the production book until this week and she wants to get an early start.

Murphy’s Law seems to apply as her day unfolds. (Murphy’s Law states: Anything that can go wrong will go wrong). Let’s take a look at the issues that are complicating Ms. Johnson’s day:

a) Dropping her things on her desk, Lynn notices the message light blinking. It’s from the maintenance department alerting her to please check the temperature of the kitchen refrigerator. When they checked late Saturday, the temperature was 48 degrees. Lynn checks the refrigerator and it is 55 degrees. She heads to the phone to call her director to request a work order and to ask if she should use the ground beef for today’s spaghetti; if not what should she serve?

b) Before she can dial her director, the phone rings; it is Jessie, one of the cooks. Her kids are sick with the flu, and she can’t come in today. This means Lynn must call a substitute due to the menu requirements.
c) While Lynn is talking to Jessie, the message light starts blinking indicating a new message. It’s the mother of a child who attends the school. She leaves a message explaining to Lynn that her son has food allergies, loves spaghetti and meatballs, and wants to know if there are eggs in the meatball recipe. Can Lynn call her as soon as possible?

d) While Lynn is listening to the mother’s message, Miss Jones, a teacher, dashes into her office. She only has a minute as she has to get to her room. She would like a refund from the bottled water vending machine. She lost her money twice. She has the company’s number posted on the machine to call for refunds, but she doesn’t have time to call. She tells Lynn to please have the refund ready when she comes by during her lunch period.

e) Before Lynn can respond to the teacher, the cashier bursts into the office in full blown panic mode. The POS system is not working and breakfast begins in 30 minutes. Will Lynn call the central office and have them send someone immediately? She adds that she can check breakfast manually, but there is no way she can check lunch without the POS system working.

f) The phone rings again. It’s the school nutrition director; the superintendent wants to meet with the director and all managers to review the school district’s charged lunch policy. The director asks Lynn to write down her recommendations for changes and attend a meeting with the superintendent at 3:00 p.m. this afternoon.

g) As Lynn is hanging up the phone, the school principal drops by and tells her a parent called to say that her child came home complaining the food was cold several times in the last two weeks. Can Lynn take a minute this morning to drop by his office to talk about the complaint?

Think about the various issues that Lynn must address and complete the following activities. In activity number 2, you may number the situations 1-7 in importance with 1 being at the top of the list, but justify your reasons for the order in which you addressed the issues.

1. What is the most critical thing Lynn needs to do right now?
2. How do you think Lynn should prioritize the rest of her day? List the situations in order of how you think Lynn should handle them starting with the most critical thing and ending with least critical thing on the list.
Individual Activity

Job Description

Instructions: Read the job description below and make notes about how the areas on the job description compare with your school's job description, responsibilities listed in the job description that are not required in your school, and responsibilities the managers in your school have that are not listed on this job description. When you finish, answer the three questions at the end of the job description.

Job Description

School Nutrition Manager

| Job Title: | School Nutrition Manager |
| Contract Length: | 180 days |
| Supervises: | School Site Nutrition Staff |

Reports To: School Nutrition Directors

Hours: 6:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Salary: TBD

JOB GOAL:
Perform managerial and supervisory duties operating a school food service operation that complies with state and federal standards and implementing School Board Policies.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS:
1. High school diploma or GED equivalent
2. Three years' work experience in school food service or food service management
3. Successful completion of Food Safety training and certification
4. Functional skills in reading, writing, and basic mathematics
5. Willing to complete the Manager Orientation course and annual recertification classes as required by the Office of Child Nutrition.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS:
1. Preference for the position of School Food and Nutrition Services Manager is given to applicants with a minimum of (1) year of school food service management experience.
2. Preference will be given to applicants experienced in working with computer technology and electronic media (email).

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:
1. Follow instructions and complete tasks efficiently.
2. Practice effective communication skills when speaking with school administration, FNS district office, and food service staff.
ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:
Role and Responsibilities for Program Management
1. Maintain program integrity and accountability through practice and documentation.
2. Implement and model high professional standards.

Nutrition Integrity and Menu Planning
1. Ensure all meals served meet current meal standards, and meal pattern requirements, including working with health professionals in providing meals to special needs students.
2. Provide appealing, healthy meals that encourage meal consumption.

Procurement
1. Generate accurate food and supply orders based on food forecasting procedures and inventory.
2. Ensure district receiving, storage, and inventorying procedures are followed.

Food Production and Service
1. Maintain high standards of control for quality of food production including use of standardized recipes.
2. Ensure effective use of USDA Foods.
3. Maintain accurate food production record of planned menus, menu components, amount of food produced, food served, and food discarded.
4. Oversee cashiering activities involving the collection of monies and recording of daily receipts.
5. Respond to food safety issues, including food recall, in an expedient and effective manner.

Personnel Management
1. Create an atmosphere for employee productivity and satisfaction in the workplace.
2. Provide on the job staff training that promotes program excellence.
3. Assist school administration in evaluating employee performance in accordance with local district policy.
4. Promote teamwork.

Marketing and Customer Service
1. Work with School Nutrition Director to implement a marketing plan to create an atmosphere that attracts customers including students, teachers, administrators, and other support staff.
2. Provide an environment conducive to protecting the health and well-being of customers through high levels of sanitation standards.
1. How the job description below compares with the job description of managers in your school district.

2. Are there responsibilities listed in the example that are not required of managers in your school?

3. Are there responsibilities in the job description for managers at your school that you do not see listed in the job description below?
Section 3: Professional Requirements

Objective: Demonstrate professionalism and leadership in the management of the school nutrition program.

Individual Activity

Review Professional Standards for Managers

Starting July 1, 2015, managers must complete training each year for a specified number of hours. The state Office of Child Nutrition sponsors the training and must track hours for each manager.

- Possible topics include
  - training in administrative practices,
  - identification of reimbursable meals at point of service,
  - nutrition and meal standards,
  - health and safety standards,
  - and any other topics as determined by the Office of Child Nutrition to address School Nutrition Program integrity or other critical issues.

This means that after you complete the new manager’s orientation, you must also complete annual training each year to be certified as a school nutrition manager in Mississippi. As a manager, you will be expected to have good management skills and be an effective leader, and to meet USDA Professional Standards requirements.
**Individual Activity**

**Leadership Self-Assessment**

This self-survey will provide you with feedback as to your feelings of leading others. Rate yourself on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being a definite Yes and 1 being a definite NO. Be honest about your answers as this survey is only for your own self-assessment.

Circle the number which you feel most closely represents your feelings about the task.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I enjoy working on teams.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I am able to speak clearly to others.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>I enjoy relating to others on a personal basis.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>I am good at planning.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>I can explain rules and regulations.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>I feel comfortable asking for advice.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I enjoy collecting and analyzing data.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>I am good at solving problems.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I am comfortable writing memos to others.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>I can delegate work to others.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>I am effective in handling employee complaints</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Giving directions is comfortable for me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>I know how to develop goals and carry them out.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>I am comfortable implementing new rules.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>I enjoy evaluating employees and giving feedback.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>If I make a mistake, I admit it and correct it.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>I am good at resolving conflict at work.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>I believe in diversity in the workplace.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>I thrive on change.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>One of my greatest desires is to be a leader.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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</table>

Adapted from Performance Juxtaposition: Leadership Self-Assessment; available at [http://nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/self.html](http://nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/self.html). This survey is a learning tool; not a research tool, so it has not been tested for validity. However feedback from users indicates it is fairly accurate.

**Score the survey by adding the numbers that you circled.**
## Individual Activity

**Strengths and Opportunities for Growth**

**Instructions:** List at least five strengths and five areas where you would like to grow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Opportunities for Growth</th>
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Section 4: Stakeholders in the School Nutrition Program

Objective: Identify the stakeholders in the school and community that have special concerns in school nutrition programs.

Individual Activity

Benefits of Cooperating with School Departmental Stakeholders

Instructions: Select three departmental stakeholders in your school and list three benefits of establishing a spirit of cooperation with the stakeholder. Specify the stakeholder’s position (i.e. principal).

____________________________________________________________

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## Individual Activity

### Accountability Checklist for Manager Roles and Responsibilities

**Instructions:** Use the following checklist to assess accountability performance in your school related to roles and responsibilities of the school nutrition manager.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accountability Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Score = 5 Full Implementation</th>
<th>Score = 3 Considerable Implementation</th>
<th>Score = 1 Limited Implementation</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prominently displays the &quot;And Justice for All&quot; poster in a location that enables program participants to read the text of the poster without obstruction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintains a copy of job descriptions for each staff position.</td>
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<td>Follows policies and procedures issued by the school district.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provides orientation training for new employees.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Follow district policy on professional training standards.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communicates the school district policy on days allowed for fundraising.</td>
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<td>Maintains documentation for the school nutrition program as required by the local, state, and federal governments.</td>
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<td>Goes to professional development training to improve leadership and management skills.</td>
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<td>Monitor access to free potable water during lunch and breakfast to ensure availability to all children.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Keeps a copy of the school wellness policy available to ensure compliance with federal and state regulations.</td>
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</table>

**Total Score:**

Score: 50 total points: 70% = 35 points; 80% = 40 points; 90% = 45 points; 100% = 50 points
If you scored 100%, that is excellent - keep up the good work. A score of 45 to 49 points is great – you are almost there. A Score of 40 to 44 is good, but you should look at the areas of lower scores and decide on a plan of improvement. If you have a score of 39 or less, work with your director to develop an action plan to improve the accountability performance for those indicators that have less than score of 5.

**Summary**

In summary, remember, the best leaders are those who

- communicate clearly and concisely
- plan for an effective workflow
- motivate everyone to give his or her best all the time
- provide support for the staff that allows professional growth
Case Study Assessments

Instructions:

You will be given a case study assessment at the end of each module by your instructor. The case studies include common situations that may arise in any given school. A background description of the school/school district referred to in some of the module case studies refer is provided below to help you answer the questions at the end of each case study. You may need to refer back to this scenario for each module’s case study assessment.

Background for all Case Study Scenarios

The Kent County School system is a small school district in Anywhere USA. The district has four schools, a high school, a middle school, and two elementary schools. The district has an approximate enrollment of 3400 students with the following distribution.

Brandon Heights Elementary: 620
Magnolia Elementary: 585
Pleasant Valley Middle School: 1150
Bethel High School: 1050

Kent County is a lower middle income community with approximately 68% of the student population receiving either free or reduced price meals. Parents are very involved in their children’s lives, and this involvement spills over into the schools. Parents are active in PTO meetings and participate as volunteers in many school functions such as field day events. Representatives from each PTO attend school board meetings on a regular basis and are often on the agenda to discuss a concern about school standards and other student related issues.

Nancy Nunez was recently hired as the new director of the School Nutrition Department. Nancy has a strong food service background having been raised in a
family of restauranteurs, so she appreciates food and its social aspects. She is also committed to the health and well-being of school children.

Nancy reports directly to the business manager, Mr. Conrad, who supports the nutrition program, but is mostly interested in number crunching and the bottom line. When Nancy was hired, it was with the understanding that increasing participation in the nutrition program was a priority along with keeping the students happy with the quality of food offered in the program. Mr. Conrad is also concerned with employee turnover. The school nutrition department experienced a higher than usual turnover for school site managers the last two years.

The following list provides the names and number of years of experience for managers in the Kent County School Nutrition Program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Sites</th>
<th>Manager</th>
<th>Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bethel High School</td>
<td>Sarah Oaks</td>
<td>New Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasant Valley Middle School</td>
<td>Jennifer Walker</td>
<td>One year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandon Heights Elementary School</td>
<td>Shonda Harper</td>
<td>New Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnolia Elementary School</td>
<td>Pam Smith</td>
<td>Five years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After several months into the school year and growing complaints, the board decided Ms. Nunez needed the help of a consultant to improve the School Nutrition Program’s food quality. They selected Chef Boudreaux, a consultant with an excellent reputation in the community as a chef. He was asked to work with a new manager, Shonda Harper, at Brandon Heights Elementary School as his first assignment.
Module 1 Case Study Assessment

Roles and Responsibilities of School Nutrition Managers

The school nurse at Magnolia Elementary School (K-6) recently approached Pam Smith, a five year manager of the school nutrition program, with a concern about the number of students coming to school hungry. The nurse explained that she is seeing more and more children in her office with symptoms that suggests the students are not eating breakfast and indeed, when she questioned the students about what they had eaten that morning, the answer was most often “nothing.”

Pam replied that she had noticed breakfast participation was only about 35% of the school’s average daily attendance and that she was aware that some students were not eating breakfast at home or school. The manager asked the school nurse, “Any idea how many of our students are not eating breakfast?”

The nurse responded, “Not really. Some of the teachers tell me it is two or three in their classes. Other teachers think the number could be higher.”

“Thanks for the information,” said Pam. I will talk with the school nutrition director, Nancy Nunez, and my staff about what we can do to increase the number of students eating breakfast and get back to you.

After discussions with the school nutrition director and her staff, Pam determined that only about 55% of the students eligible for free meals were eating breakfast as opposed to 87% eating lunch. The rate was much worse for students eligible for reduced-price meals and paying students. Only about 10% of paying students were eating breakfast and 30% of the students eligible for the reduced-price meals were eating breakfast.

Pam also learned from the principal that some bus schedules did not allow students riding buses enough time to go by the cafeteria to eat breakfast. Students riding
buses that arrived after 7:30 were required to go straight to the classroom so they would not be tardy, since classes started at 7:45 am.
Pam decided to give a short survey about the breakfast program to students and was surprised to find that many students knew very little about the breakfast program or the variety of food choices available for breakfast.

When Pam discussed her concerns with Ms. Nunez, the director suggested that it would be a good idea for the four managers in the district to meet with her and develop a plan for increasing the number of students eating breakfast in all the schools. Ms. Nunez told Pam that as a new director, she had chosen to attend the DECIDE to Succeed workshop for new managers and really liked the decision-making model as a way to solve problems that occur at the school site. She suggested they use the model to devise a plan to tackle the participation problem.

Ms. Nunez emailed the four district managers a copy of the model and asked each manager to complete the information under each heading in the model and bring it with them to a managers meeting to use in developing a plan to increase breakfast participation in the schools.

**Assignment:** Use the DECIDE model to identify and explain the issues identified in the case study and suggest possible solutions to the problems discussed. Tell how you would involve the other stakeholders in solving the problem, and what actions should be taken. In the last step of the process, decide how you will evaluate your success. Use the DECIDE process in your Participant Workbook as a guide to help you complete the assignment.
DECIDE Process: A Decision-Making Model

Determine the Issue:

Explain the Issue:

Create Procedures to Address the Issue:

Involve Others: Who and How
Module 1
Role and Responsibilities of the School Lunch Manager

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Participant Workbook

Decide to Succeed: Take Action

Evaluate Success: