

## **Nutrition Services Parent Survey Executive Summary**

In October 2008, parents of Boulder Valley School District students received a brief survey regarding the state of the lunch program. Of 18,697 surveys distributed via email and regular mail in both English and Spanish, 4,232 replies were received. In total, this corresponds to a 22.63 percent return rate.

The survey addressed several areas asking parents to consider their youngest student in school. Areas addressed included:

- Current lunch program participation;
- Potential lunch program participation if quality improved;
- Reasons student doesn't participate in lunch program;
- Importance of various possible lunch program components; and
- Amount extra parents are willing to pay if the quality were improved.

When asked how often their student participated in the Boulder Valley School District lunch program almost 60 percent of parents stated that their students took part in the lunch program one day or less per week, with 1.7 percent of parents declining to answer this question.

If the quality of food served were improved, 75 percent of parents indicated that their students would participate in the school lunch program one or more additional days, with 5.6 percent of parents declining to answer this question.

The top three reasons for lack of lunch program participation parents selected were:

- Student does not like the taste of the menu items offered (54.99%)
- Poor food quality (44.16%)
- Healthy menu items are not provided (36.86%)

When asked about the importance of possible components of the school lunch program, from a list provided, parents electing to respond stated that the following three things are "absolutely necessary":

- food served has a high nutritional value
- daily availability of fresh fruits and vegetables
- tastiness.

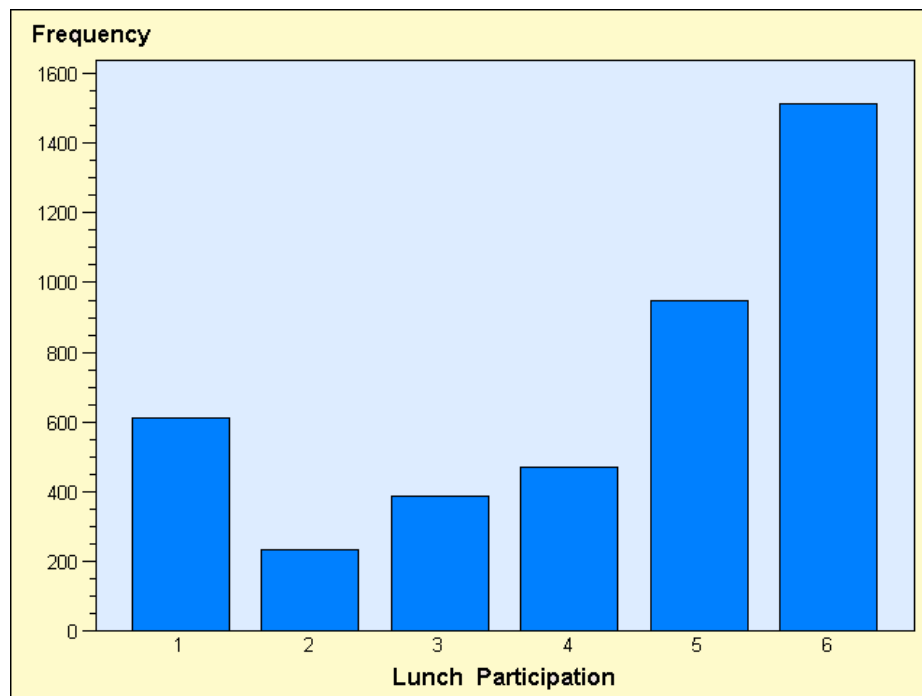
The use of organic ingredients, use of locally produced ingredients, and keeping the purchase price of meals as low as possible were seen as "Important, but not absolutely necessary." Approximately 4.6 percent of parents declined to respond to this question.

When asked what amount they would be willing to pay if the quality of the food were improved, over 70 percent of parents stated that they would be willing to pay an additional \$0.50 or more, with 4.3 percent of parents declining to answer this question. Of those parents responding, approximately 28 percent have students participating in the lunch program two or more days with 47 percent who would participate two or more days a week if the quality of the food were improved.

Questions, tabled results and a visual representation of these results follow:

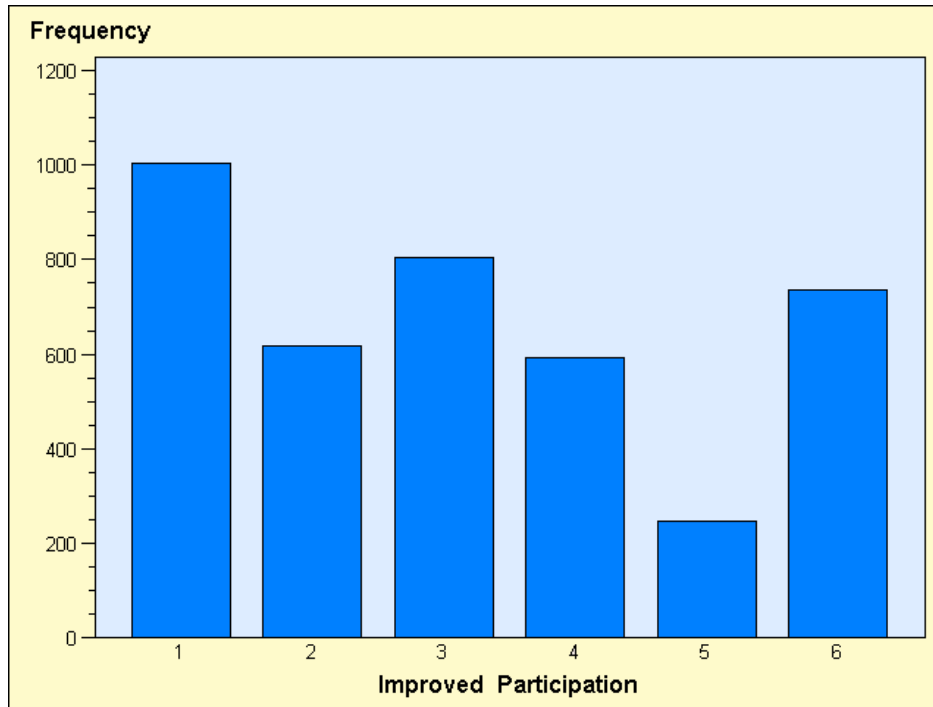
**On average, how often does your student participate in our school lunch program?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
5 days a week (1)	612	14.71
4 days a week (2)	231	5.55
3 days a week (3)	388	9.32
2 days a week (4)	468	11.25
1 day a week (5)	948	22.78
Never (6)	1514	36.39
MISSING	71	



**If the quality of the food were improved, how many additional days per week might your student purchase school lunch?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
0 days a week (1)	1003	25.09
1 day a week (2)	617	15.44
2 days a week (3)	803	20.09
3 days a week (4)	593	14.84
4 days a week (5)	246	6.15
5 days a week (6)	735	18.39
MISSING	235	

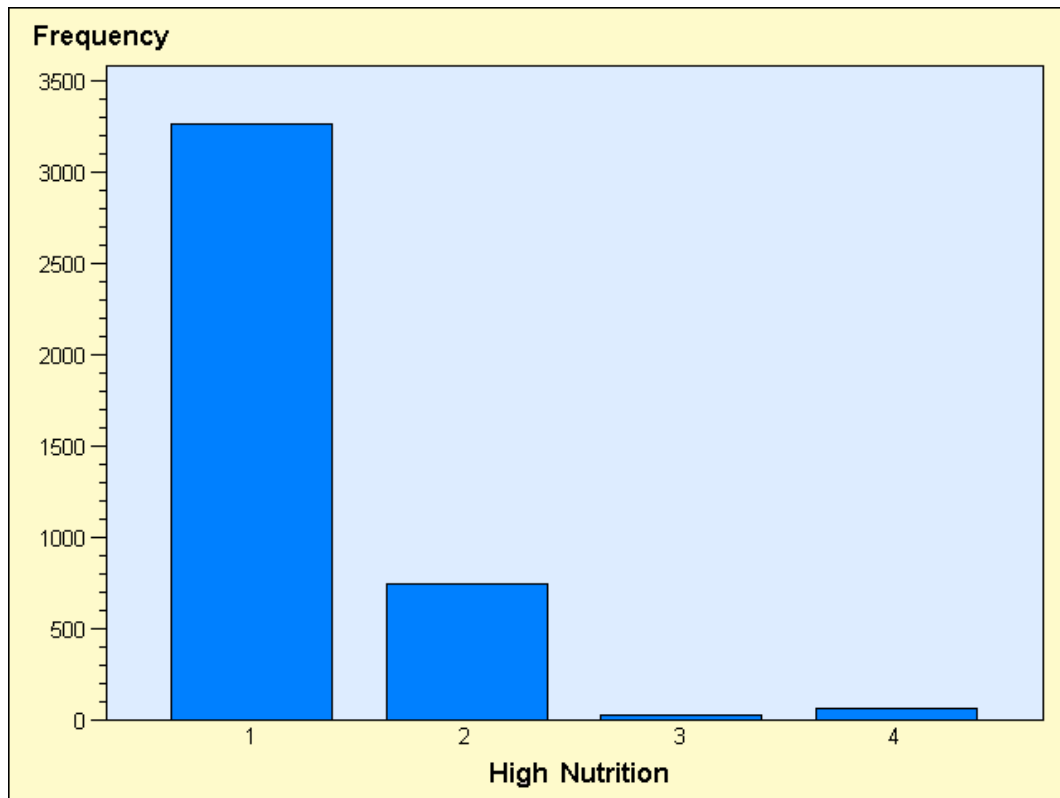


**When your student does not eat hot lunch it is because (please check all that apply):**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage of Total (n =4232)</b>
Portions are too small	243	5.74
The cafeteria line is too long	1259	29.75
Too few menu choices	1022	24.15
Poor food quality	1869	44.16
Healthy menu items are not provided	1560	36.86
Student does not like the taste of the menu items offered	2327	54.99
Food allergies, sensitivities or restrictions	268	6.33

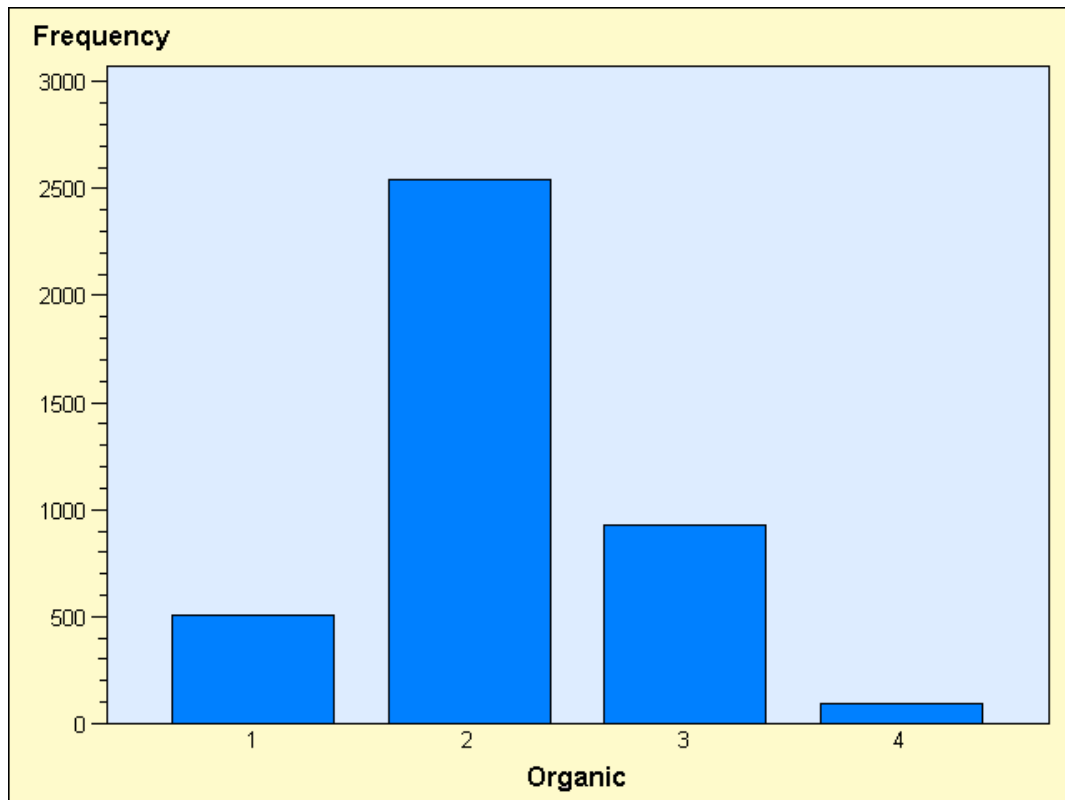
**Please rate the importance of possible components of a school lunch program:  
Food served has a high nutritional value**

<b>Response</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Absolutely necessary</b>	(1)	3264	79.59
<b>Important, but not absolutely necessary</b>	(2)	750	18.29
<b>Not important to consider</b>	(3)	26	0.63
<b>Do not know or do not have enough information</b>	(4)	61	1.49
<b>MISSING</b>		131	



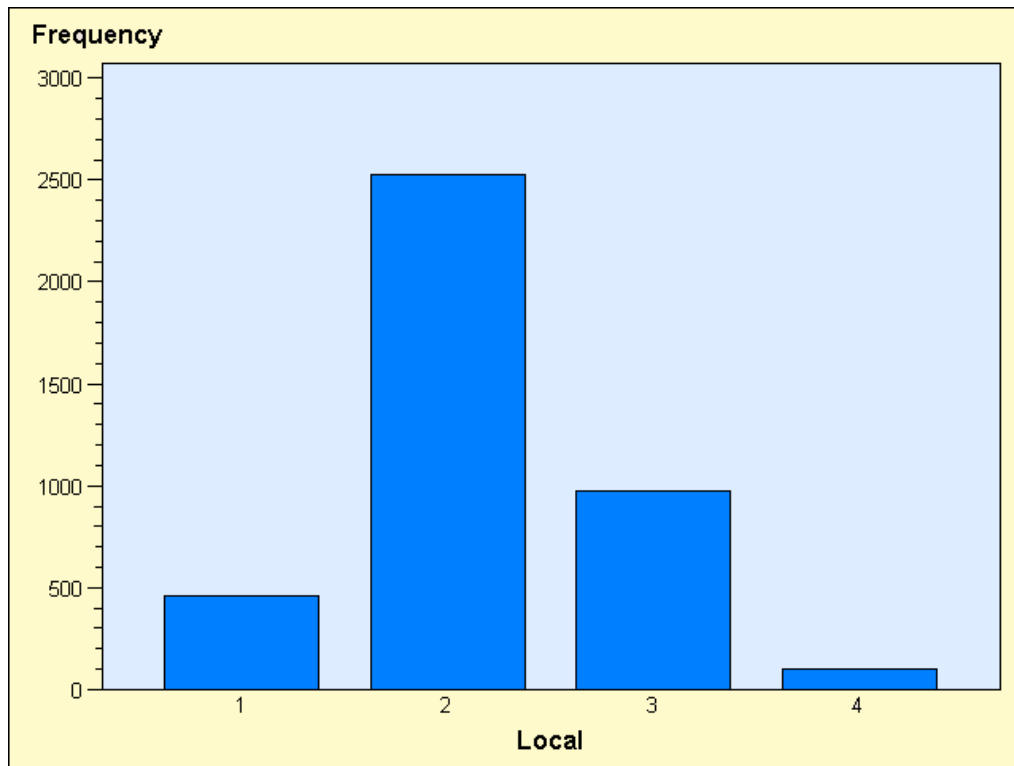
**Please rate the importance of possible components of a school lunch program:  
Use of organic ingredients**

<b>Response</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Absolutely necessary</b>	(1)	504	12.39
<b>Important, but not absolutely necessary</b>	(2)	2542	62.49
<b>Not important to consider</b>	(3)	925	22.74
<b>Do not know or do not have enough information</b>	(4)	97	2.38
<b>MISSING</b>		164	



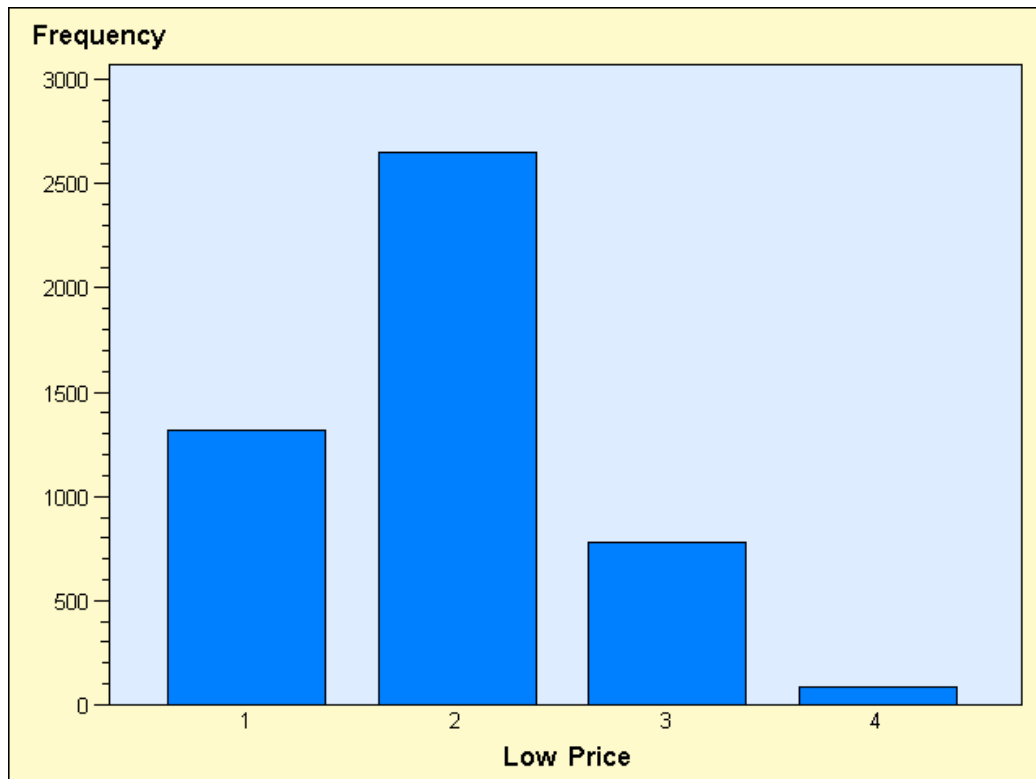
**Please rate the importance of possible components of a school lunch program:  
Use of locally produced ingredients**

<b>Response</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Absolutely necessary</b>	(1)	458	11.29
<b>Important, but not absolutely necessary</b>	(2)	2527	62.29
<b>Not important to consider</b>	(3)	974	24.01
<b>Do not know or do not have enough information</b>	(4)	98	2.42
<b>MISSING</b>		175	



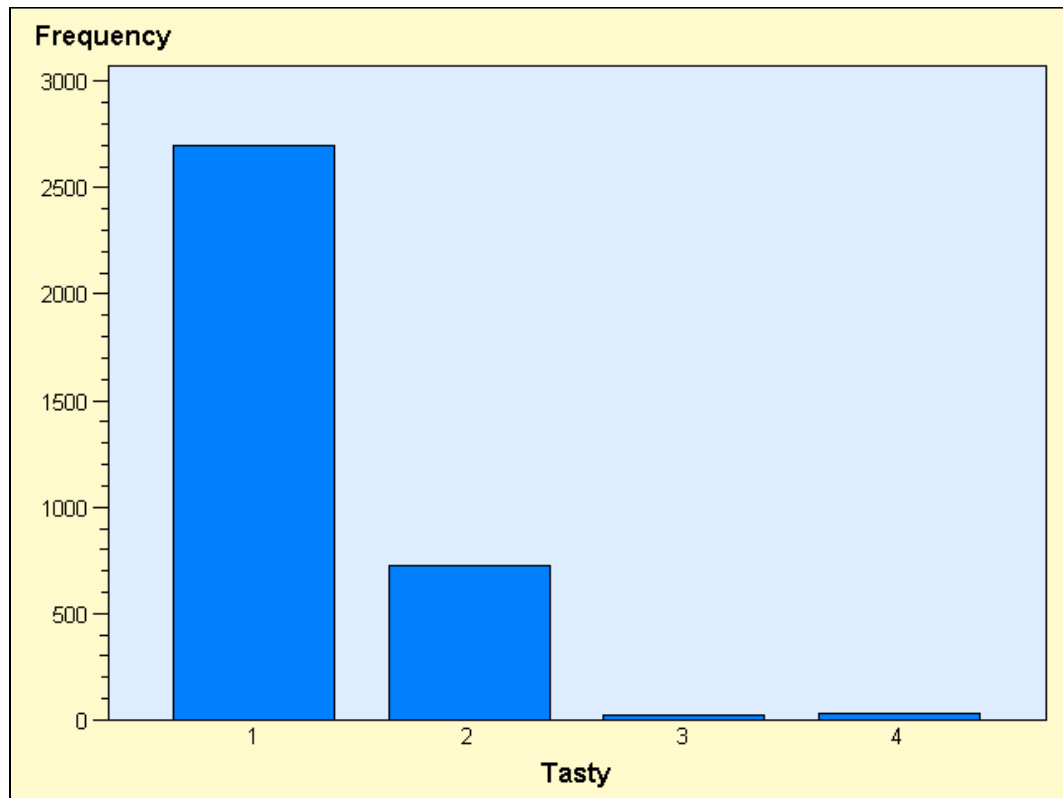
**Please rate the importance of possible components of a school lunch program:  
Keeping the meal purchase price as low as possible**

<b>Response</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Absolutely necessary</b>	(1)	1101	27.29
<b>Important, but not absolutely necessary</b>	(2)	2210	54.77
<b>Not important to consider</b>	(3)	652	16.16
<b>Do not know or do not have enough information</b>	(4)	72	1.78
<b>MISSING</b>		197	



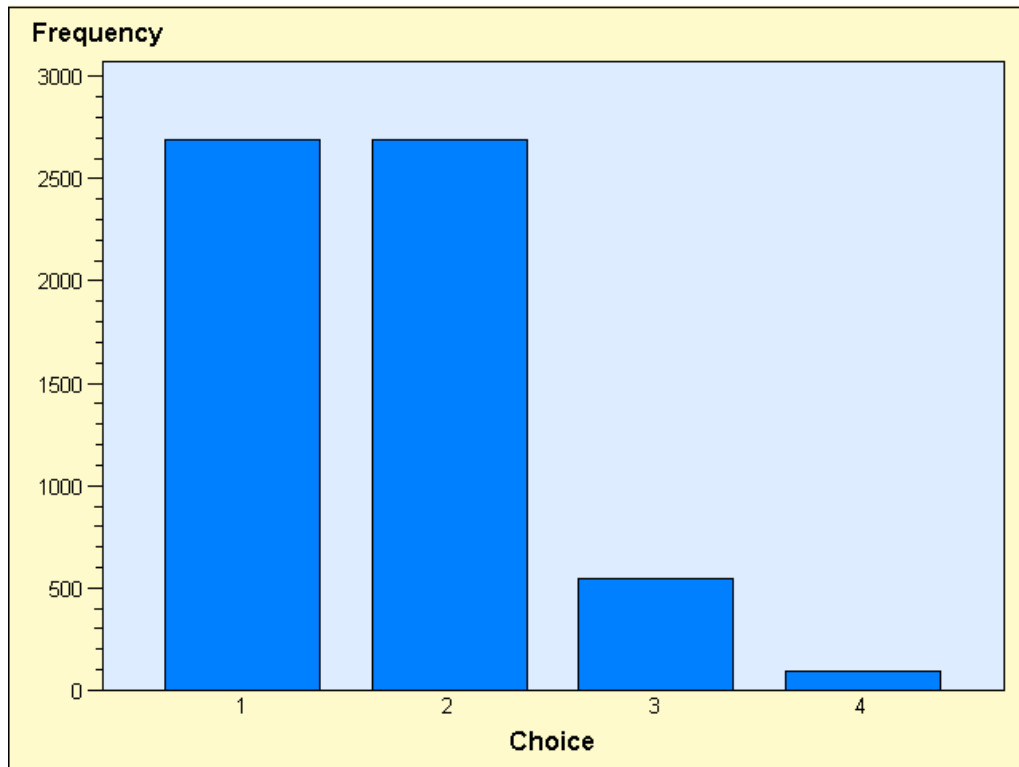
**Please rate the importance of possible components of a school lunch program:  
Tastiness**

<b>Response</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Absolutely necessary</b>	(1)	3148	77.42
<b>Important, but not absolutely necessary</b>	(2)	850	20.91
<b>Not important to consider</b>	(3)	29	0.71
<b>Do not know or do not have enough information</b>	(4)	39	0.96
<b>MISSING</b>		166	



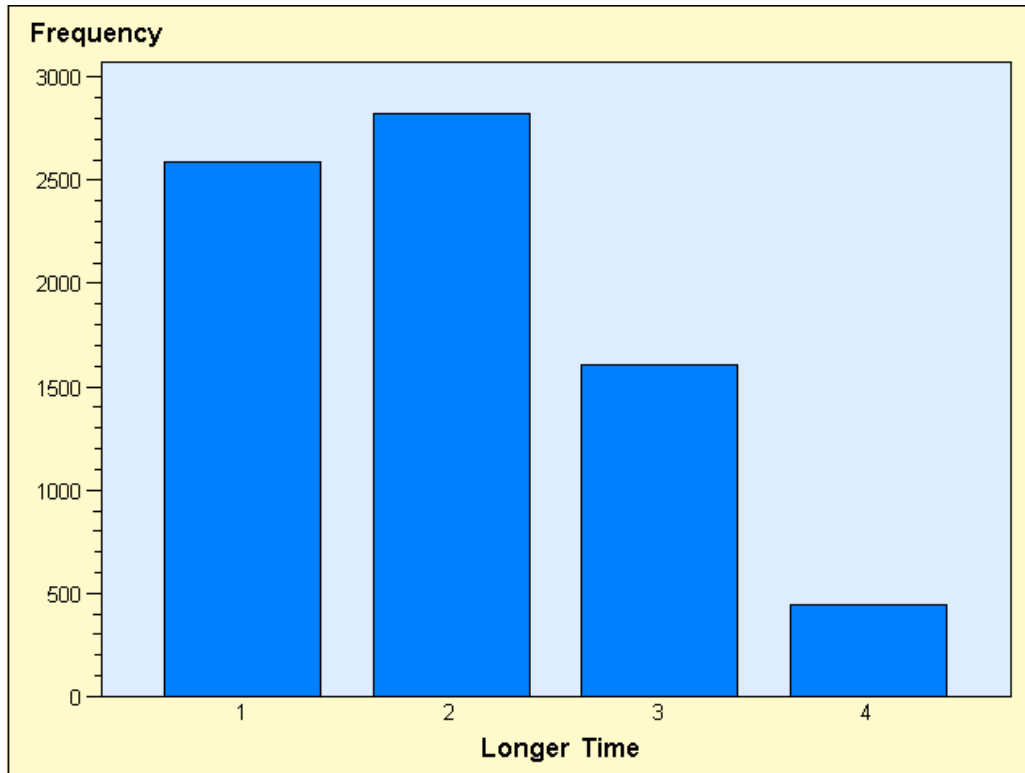
**Please rate the importance of possible components of a school lunch program:  
Choice of entrees**

<b>Response</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Absolutely necessary</b>	(1)	1795	44.70
<b>Important, but not absolutely necessary</b>	(2)	1794	44.67
<b>Not important to consider</b>	(3)	363	9.04
<b>Do not know or do not have enough information</b>	(4)	64	1.59
<b>MISSING</b>		216	



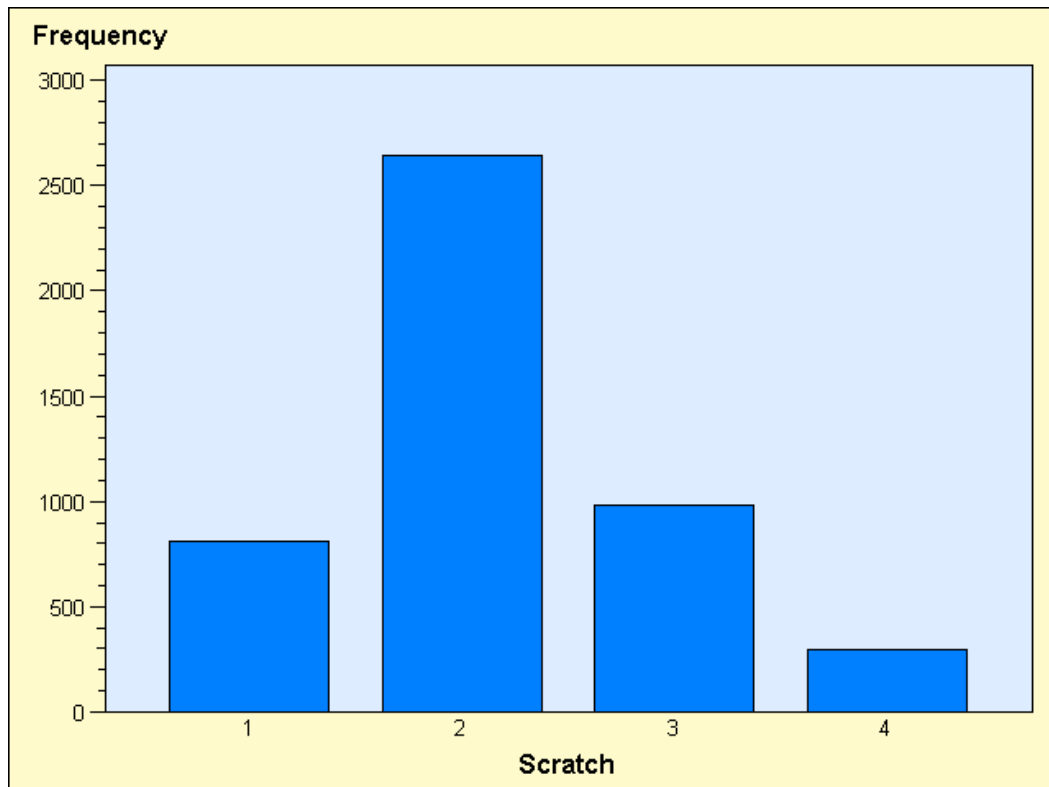
**Please rate the importance of possible components of a school lunch program:  
Longer time for lunch period**

<b>Response</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Absolutely necessary</b>	(1)	1381	34.67
<b>Important, but not absolutely necessary</b>	(2)	1507	37.84
<b>Not important to consider</b>	(3)	858	21.54
<b>Do not know or do not have enough information</b>	(4)	237	5.95
<b>MISSING</b>		249	



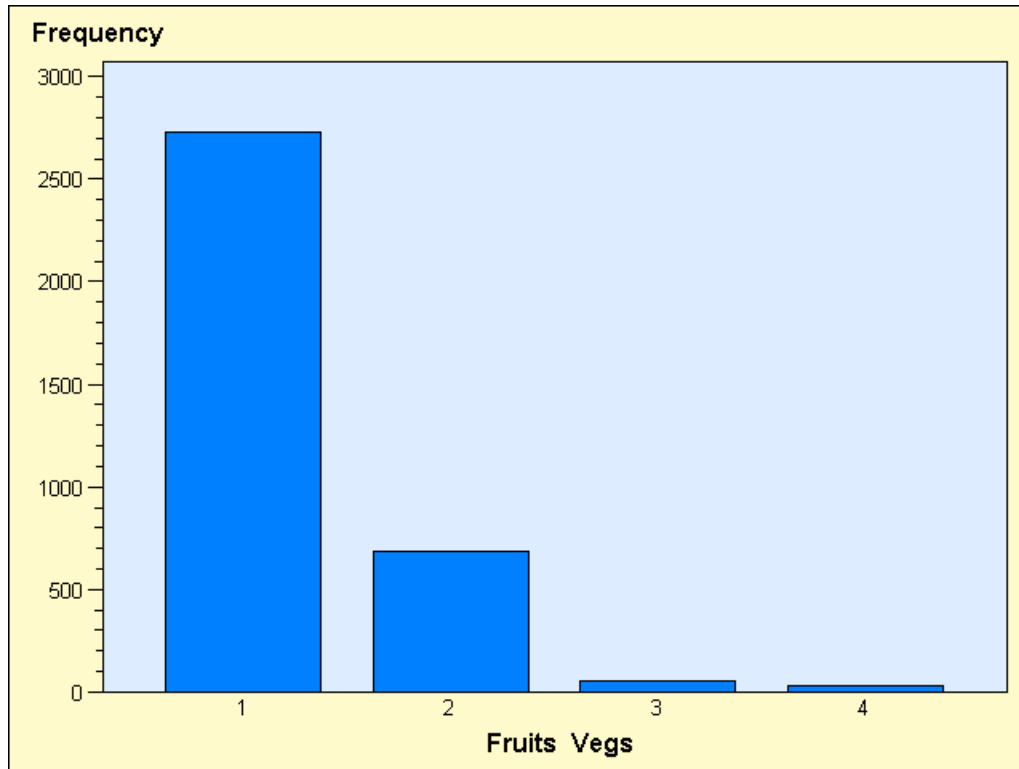
**Please rate the importance of possible components of a school lunch program:  
Scratch-cooked meals**

<b>Response</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Absolutely necessary</b>	(1)	676	17.14
<b>Important, but not absolutely necessary</b>	(2)	2202	55.85
<b>Not important to consider</b>	(3)	818	20.75
<b>Do not know or do not have enough information</b>	(4)	247	6.26
<b>MISSING</b>		289	



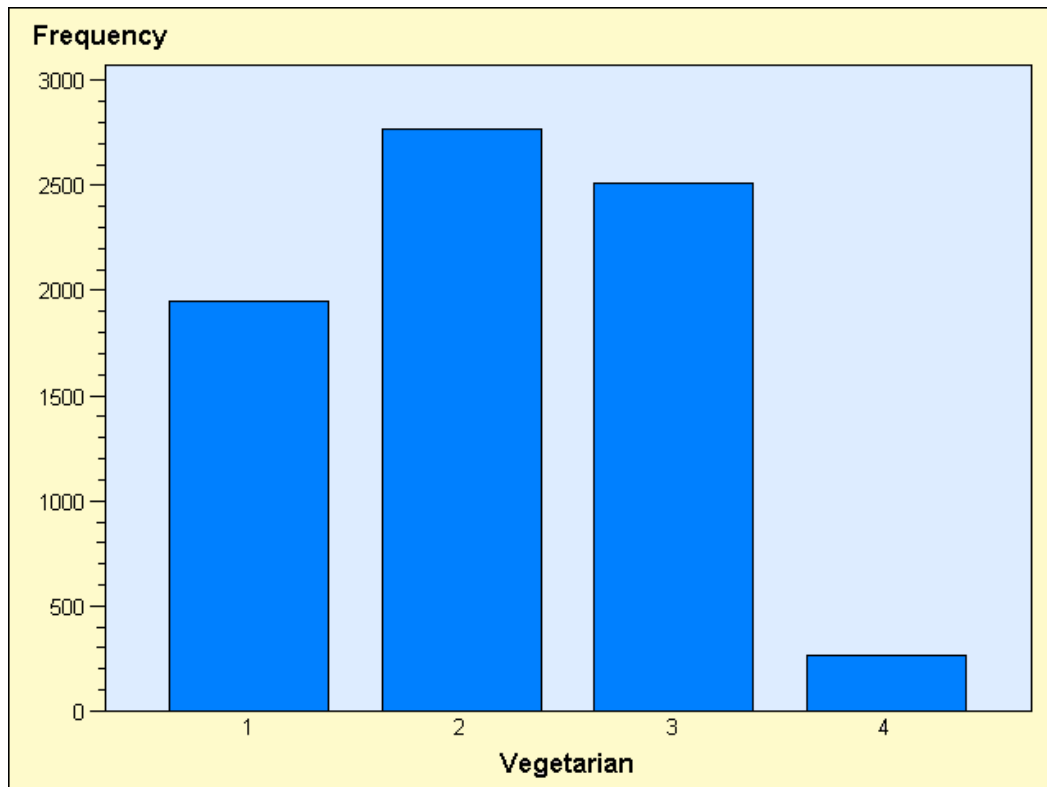
**Please rate the importance of possible components of a school lunch program:  
Daily availability of fresh fruits and vegetables**

<b>Response</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Absolutely necessary</b>	(1)	3182	77.93
<b>Important, but not absolutely necessary</b>	(2)	799	19.57
<b>Not important to consider</b>	(3)	65	1.59
<b>Do not know or do not have enough information</b>	(4)	37	0.91
<b>MISSING</b>		149	



**Please rate the importance of possible components of a school lunch program:  
Vegetarian menu options**

<b>Response</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Absolutely necessary	(1)	1041	26.06
Important, but not absolutely necessary	(2)	1476	36.95
Not important to consider	(3)	1338	33.49
Do not know or do not have enough information	(4)	140	3.50
MISSING		237	



Currently the district charges \$2.50 for an elementary school student lunch and \$2.75 for a middle and high school student lunch. If the quality of the food served through the school lunch program was improved how much more would you be willing to pay for lunch?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
\$1.00	(1) 1411	34.83
\$0.75	(2) 394	9.73
\$0.50	(3) 1083	26.73
\$0.25	(4) 484	11.95
\$0.00 (the current amount)	(5) 679	16.76
MISSING	181	

