QUESTIONs TO ASK FOOD SERVICE MANAGEMENT COMPANIES (FSMC’S) DURING AN RFP PROCESS

PERSONNEL/PUBLIC RELATIONS

Who will be the on-site manager and what are that person’s qualifications?

What will the impact be on existing food service staff?

The Food Service Advisory Group must be established and maintained by the SFA. What responsibility will the FSMC have in regard to this group?

Are the marketing and promotions costs included in the management or support fee, or are the costs billed to the district?

Who controls the a la carte selections that are offered?

What is the company policy on providing nutrition education?

How will these costs be paid?
  - Travel, conferences, mileage
  - Membership dues in professional organizations
  - Continuing education/tuition
  - Consultants
  - Advertising

OPERATIONS/REGULATIONS

Who creates and verifies the nutrient content of the weekly/monthly menu?

Will a 6 week menu cycle and the components that are required be provided by the FSMC?

Operations/Regulations Continued

Who owns the food and supply inventory? When does the district own the food...when it's delivered or when it's served?

What is the company's daily food safety (HACCP) process? Who performs verification of the process?

How will audit costs be paid for? Who arranges the audit?

FINANCE

What do the total fees paid to the management company cover?
  - Corporate overhead?
  - Management fees?
  - Payment of salaries for the administrator and office staff?
  - Payment of wages for managers and staff?
  - Payment of fringe benefits?

To what extent are these fees negotiable?

Are the fees a flat monthly amount or based on cents per meal? If based on cents per meal, how are a la carte sales converted to meal equivalents?

What is the markup on products purchased directly from the management company? Is it negotiable?

Will the company provide monthly and year-to-date operating reports, by building location, together with a summary statement for all locations?
Finance Continued

Did you know that PDE has a FSMC contract that LEA’s are required to utilize?

The Standard Terms and Conditions section of this contract points out that:
- The School Foodservice Authority (SFA) is responsible for ensuring that USDA procurement and commodity regulations are adhered to.
- SFA’s must process free and reduced applications.
- SFA’s must verify free and reduced applications.
- SFA’s must complete the required annual on-site reviews.
- School districts remain legally responsible for the conduct of the food service program.
- Any manufacturer rebates are required to go to the school district.
- The SFA shall ensure that all state and local regulations are being met.
- The FSMC must comply with all wage and hours of employment requirements of federal and state laws, including providing Workers Compensation coverage.

FOOD SERVICE OPERATION RESOURCES

Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials  
www.pasbo.org  •  717-540-9551
School Nutrition Association of Pennsylvania  
www.snapa.org  •  800-929-7737
School Nutrition Association  
www.schoolnutrition.org  •  800-877-8822
Pennsylvania Department of Education  
www.pde.state.pa.us  •  800-331-0129
Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture  
www.pda.state.pa.us  •  717-787-2940
National Food Service Management Institute  
www.nfsmi.org  •  800-321-3054
United States Department of Agriculture  
www.usda.gov

We also acknowledge the contributions of consultant Frank Rinaldi for many of the questions included in this brochure.

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