Focus Group Planning
- Recruited districts in multiple states
  - School foodservice directors
  - School administrators
- Included diverse demographics
- Obtained parental consent for student participation
  - Coordination by district officials
  - Encouraged participation

Conducting the Focus Groups
- Moderator guide was used with set of questions for each group
- Moderators had experience in conducting focus groups
  - Provided introduction of project and researchers
  - Reviewed participants’ rights and obtained assent/consent
  - Discussed ground rules
  - Conducted follow-ups to one-word responses
  - Provided opportunities to respond to meaningful, probing questions
- Assistant moderators took contextual field notes
- Focus groups were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim

Data Analysis
- Each research team identified themes utilizing the Constant Comparative Method (Glaser)
- Summary of districts’ characteristics
- Description of observations in the school meal environment

Lessons Learned/Impact
- Talking with students using a semi-structured format increased researchers’ understanding of students’ and school nutrition professionals’ experiences
- Focus groups provided:
  - An outlet for students and school nutrition professionals to voice their perspectives and opinions
  - An opportunity to understand students’ decisions about milk and could be used as a format to address other school nutrition factors
- The protocol format used for this study may be useful in identifying action steps to improve the nutrition environment which can lead to less plate waste and better food choices.