



Community Eligibility Provision: Successful Implementation Strategies

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Presenters

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Agenda

- Introduction
- Presentation from MT Office of Public Instruction
- Presentation from Metro Nashville Public Schools
- Presentation from Portland Public Schools
- Wrap-up and Q+A





What is the Community Eligibility Provision?

- Allows high poverty schools to serve free meals to all enrolled students for a period of up to **four** consecutive school years
- Individual schools, groups of schools, or entire school districts may elect CEP, provided they meet the participation requirements
- School year (SY) 2014-2015 first year of nationwide availability.



What Makes CEP Different?

- Student eligibility for free meals not determined on individual basis
- Eliminates the need to collect household applications
- Relies on direct certification process and other means of certifying students without an application

CEP Benefits



Students:

- Enjoy free, healthy meals at school
- With universal meal service, there is no stigma attached to a free meal

Parents:

- Do not have to fill out individual household applications
- Do not have to worry about refilling meal accounts, or whether their child has an opportunity to eat at school

Schools:

- Reduces paperwork and administrative costs
- Streamlines meal service operation
- Students spend less time waiting in lines and more time eating; they are less likely to discard food and come to class better nourished and ready to learn



Eligibility for CEP

A school or district must:

- Participate in or agree to participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) **and** School Breakfast Program (SBP)
- Must certify at least 40% of students for free meal benefits through means other than household applications; this is known as the Identified Student Percentage (ISP)
 - $\text{ISP} \times 1.6 = \text{percentage of meals reimbursed at the Federal "free" rate}$

States have made tremendous progress implementing CEP in its first year of nationwide availability. In SY 2014-2015:



Almost **14,000** schools



Over **2,000** school districts



Total enrollment of **6.4** million children



Schools participating in **49** States and DC



Presentation from **Alie Wolf**

Assistant Director
School Nutrition Programs
Montana Office of Public Instruction

Implementing CEP in Montana

Office of Public Instruction
School Nutrition Programs

Alie Wolf, Business Analyst

Combat Childhood Hunger

- 1 in 5 Montana children is at risk for food insecurity
- CEP simplifies the process for children to access healthy school meals





Montana

Statewide CEP Implementation 2014-15

- 81% of eligible school districts adopted CEP
- 38 districts/91 schools, impacting 15,600 students

Direct Certification Rates Establish CEP Eligibility

Direct certification is the process by which students are automatically eligible for free school meals without an application, based on data from another program such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Direct Certification Sources

SNAP, TANF, FDPIR, Homeless, Migrant, Runaway, Head Start and Foster children (Medicaid in some states).

- Direct certification rates (identified student percentages ISP) determine a school or districts eligibility for CEP and sets the percentage of meals that will be reimbursed at the free rate.

Maximize Identified Student Percentages (ISP)

Montana's state level matching system directly certifies eligible students & provides school's identified student percentage (ISP) calculations for CEP eligibility.

- Currently SNAP/TANF are the only sources of programs matched through Montana's direct certification system.
- Additional direct certification sources and extended eligibility determinations can be manually directly certified within the system.
- Improvements to Montana's direct certification system for the 2015-16 SY will incorporate additional direct certification sources.
- Coordinating information with state homeless and migrant staff as well as school officials to strengthen reported data.

Important CEP Dates

April 1st

- The date Identified Student Percentage (ISP) must be established for determining the CEP eligibility and claiming percentages to be used
- School ISP data extracted from report in direct certification system
- Proxy data mailed to schools having an ISP greater than 30%

April 15th

- OPI notify schools of CEP eligibility status
- School level data is confirmed; deadline to correct proxy counts

May 1st

- OPI publish list of CEP eligible district's and schools

August 30th

Interested and eligible district complete Intent to Participate and Addendum forms

Analyze ISP Data

CEP eligibility letters to schools customized

1. Newly eligible to CEP
2. Higher group ISP than previously established
3. Potential changes

District's decision to adopt CEP changes

- Add new eligible sites or eligible sites not participating
- Adopt higher ISP
- Group or re-group school sites

District's return Intent to Participate form with their elected decision

Communicating CEP to Schools

Guidance to schools considering CEP

- Weave CEP into routine phone calls and discussions during on-site reviews
- Developed CEP Fact Sheet
- Technical assistance with schools using the CEP reimbursement calculator tool
- Follow-up phone calls to eligible districts – joint efforts through partnering agency Montana Food Bank Network

Trainings

- CEP and direct certification emphasized during fall administrative trainings
- Joint training sessions presented with Title 1 staff on Implementing CEP and procedures CEP district's can use to determine Title 1 allocations
- CEP training slides posted to state's website



Presentation from **Braina Corke**

Assistant Director
Nutrition Service
Metro Nashville Public Schools

Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Nutrition Services



BRAINA CORKE
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
JUNE 10, 2015

Benefits of CEP



- Students' perform better in school when they have eaten.
- Behavior problems are decreased.
- It helps reduce administrative costs related to collecting and processing applications.
- Reduces stigma because all students are eating meals at no cost, regardless of their income status.

Community Eligibility by the Numbers



- District ADP gained about 19,000 (19,183) total meals per day from 74,382 to 93,565 or 25.8% over prior year
- District ADP breakfast meals increased from 26,094 to 36,307 (10,213 per day) or 39.1% with the BIC additions in elementary schools contributing to the gains
- District ADP lunch meals increased from 48,288 to 57,258 (8,970 per day) or 18.5%
- High schools experienced the largest total meal ADP % increase gaining 59.5% over last year or about 6,600 additional meals per day
- Middle schools experienced about a 19.6% total meal ADP % increase or about 3,900 additional meals per day
- Elementary schools experienced about a 20.3% total meal ADP % increase (about 8,700 additional meals per day) however breakfast ADP (due in part to BIC), across all elementary sites jumped about 33%

Benefits BIC



- Students start their day off better.
- Extends the learning day.
- The students are in their seats ready to learn as soon as the bell rings.
- It reduces tardiness and discipline issues.
- Provides an opportunity for teachers to develop relationships.

Breakfast in the Classroom



- BIC schools experienced a prior year increase of 41% in breakfast ADP
- Breakfast ADP at BIC sites in 13-14 averaged 12,104 meals and in 14-15 averaged 17,117 meals
- Some BIC sites experienced significant enrollment increases which were also a contributing factor to their breakfast ADP gains
- District ADP was about 36,300 breakfasts with BIC sites representing about 48% of the total
- 34% of sites served by Nutrition Services utilize BIC (47 sites)
- 30 sites experienced up to 50% ADP growth over prior year after implementing BIC and 15 sites showed over 50% ADP prior year growth
- ADP at BIC sites ranged from 100 breakfast meals to 850 breakfast meals

A la carte Decreased



- A la carte revenue dropped from \$18,746 daily to \$12,234 daily or a 34.7% decline
- A la carte meal equivalents decreased from 5,768 ADP to 3,651 ADP or 36.7% due to the decrease in a la carte sales

Thank you





Presentation from **Kristie Young**

Financial Analyst
Nutrition Services
Portland Public Schools

Implementation and Grouping

- Determine the break-even point
- Include stakeholders in the decision to implement CEP
- Identify all directly certified students
- Increased participation
- Grouping



Housekeeping Items & Q +A

Helpful CEP Resources from USDA

- Important Dates coming up:
 - **August 31st**: Extended deadline for CEP elections
 - **Mid-year CEP elections** may be approved by State Agencies **throughout the remainder of School Year 2015-16**
- Community Eligibility page on the USDA FNS website:
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/community-eligibility-provision>
- **Includes:**
 - Policy guidance
 - Program requirements/information
 - Reimbursement estimator tool
 - Grouping tool
 - CEP guidance from other Federal agencies



Questions?

Comments?