

# USDA



## Community Eligibility Provision

*Partial District Implementation*

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## 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



## 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
- SNAP, TANF, FDPIR, or based on status as migrant youth, homeless, foster child, or Head Start

# CEP Benefits



## Students:

- Enjoy free, healthy meals at school
- With all meals served at no charge, 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)
- ISP multiplied by 1.6 is the percentage of meals reimbursed at the Federal “free” rate; all other meals reimbursed at “paid” rate

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



Over 14,000 schools



About 2,200 school districts



Total enrollment of 6.8 million children



Schools participating in 49 States and DC



## Partial District Implementation

- For many districts, partially implementing CEP is the most financially viable option
- CEP's flexibility to allow different groupings of schools, or even individual elections, makes this possible
- Partial district implementation can be a good way to “try out” CEP before expanding service to more schools

# Grouping Example

- In this example, three schools are grouped together by their LEA:

	<b>Identified students</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>ISP</b>
<b>School 1</b>	60	120	50%
<b>School 2</b>	38	100	38%
<b>School 3</b>	150	200	75%
<b>Group of schools</b>	248	420	59%

$$\frac{\text{Total identified students for group (248)}}{\text{Total enrollment for group (420)}}$$

# Advanced Grouping Example

	Identified students	Enrollment	ISP
School 1	60	120	50%
School 2	38	100	38%
School 3	150	200	75%
School 4	54	150	36%
School 5	84	280	30%
School 6	150	250	60%
<b>Group of schools</b>	<b>536</b>	<b>1100</b>	<b>48.73%</b>

$$\frac{\text{Total identified students for group (536)}}{\text{Total enrollment for group (1100)}}$$

# Advanced Grouping Example

	Identified students	Enrollment	ISP
School 1	60	120	50%
School 2	38	100	38%
School 3	150	200	75%
School 4	54	150	36%
School 5	84	280	30%
School 6	150	250	60%
Group of schools	414	720	57.5%

$$\frac{\text{Total identified students for group (414)}}{\text{Total enrollment for group (720)}}$$



# Bring the Right People to the Table

**Include all stakeholders in conversations about CEP!**

- School administrators/board members
- School food service staff and/or food service vendors
- Title I and State Educational Agency contacts
- State nutrition/education contacts
- PTA representatives
- Other groups that may be impacted by CEP



# Clear Communications are Important!

- When partially implementing CEP, it is important to communicate to households:
  - That meals served at CEP and non-CEP schools are the same
  - That CEP is most financially viable in schools that serve needy students
  - That CEP saves the school district time and money by streamlining meal service



# Flexibilities and Resources from USDA

- Partially implementing districts may create a single household income form for CEP and non-CEP schools (Q78 in SP16-2015)
- USDA Grouping calculator assists with grouping decisions
- USDA reimbursement calculator will help you identify your breakeven point

# Community Eligibility Provision

Successfully Feeding More Kids

Sandy Huisman, MS, RD, LD  
Director Food and Nutrition  
Management



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# About Des Moines Public Schools

- Enrollment: 32,500
- 70% Free/Reduced
- 13 Provision 2 Schools
- Direct Certification 51% district wide.
  - School with highest % of identified students is 85%
  - School with lowest % of identified students is 5%

# Implementation

- First Year, 35 CEP schools
- Total average % identified students greater than 62.5%
- This year, adding one high school, one elementary and one alternate program.
- One grouping will be at 97% reimbursement
- This year our district implemented an online registration process. A household economic survey is requested for all households. Data used for Title I and fee waiver.

# Positive Changes



- Increased participation: 23% at breakfast, 11% at lunch
- Allowed expansion of Breakfast in the Classroom from 15 schools to 27
- Reduced time spent processing application
- Faster meal service lines at Elementary Schools
- Increased Revenue
- Able to increase labor hours/benefits and amount spent on food
- Decreased negative balances



# **LOS LUNAS SCHOOLS**

*Every Student Matters. Every Moment Counts.*

Angela Haney, SNS

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Nutrition Services

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# Visit us online at USDA's CEP Resource Center

- Important dates coming up:
  - **August 31<sup>st</sup>**: 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
  - *Coming soon*: CEP guidance manual

# We want your feedback!

*Please keep  
in touch to  
share your  
best  
practices,  
challenges,  
and concerns*





**Questions/Comments**