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United States
Department of
Agriculture

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Food and
Consumer
Service

Reply to
Attn. of: SP-99-04

Subject: Numbers of Free and Reduced Price Eligible Children for
Title I Purposes in Provision 2 and 3 Schools

To: STATE AGENCY DIRECTORS - Colorado ED, Iowa, Kansas,
(Child Nutrition Programs) Missouri ED, Montana OPI,
Nebraska ED, North Dakota,
South Dakota, Utah and
Wyoming ED

The Department of Education's (DOE) Title I Program is an enrichment program that allocates funds to local education agencies (LEAs) based on school attendance areas' rank order of poverty. One of the criteria that LEAs may use to measure poverty is the percentage of children eligible for free and reduced price school meals under the National School Lunch Program. Previously, obtaining this data on an annual basis was not a widespread problem because few schools were participating in Provision 2 and there was no Provision 3.

However, recently the number of schools opting for Provision 2 and the new Provision 3 has increased. As a result, there is a corresponding increase in the number of schools which do not make annual free and reduced price eligibility determinations. Schools participating in Provisions 2 and 3 are generally schools with high concentrations of needy children and therefore could be ranked high for allocation of Title I funds. Consultation between our National Office and DOE Title I officials confirms that Provision 2 and 3 schools may use the base year percentages of students eligible for free, reduced price and paid meals for Title I ranking purposes in the base year and subsequent years. In other words, the base year percentages of children eligible for free, reduced price and paid meals would be applied to total enrollment to determine how many students in the school would generate Title I funds for the school should the school be one selected to receive Title I funds.

State Agency Directors

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It is our understanding that DOE has dealt with this issue on a case by case basis and has not issued written policy. Child Nutrition State agencies should direct any questions regarding Title I's acceptance of this information to State education officials administering Title I.

If you have any questions, please contact our office.

Ann C. De Groat

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Regional Director

Child Nutrition Programs