Tips for States/LEAs Considering CEP

✓ Consider and plan for potential issues surrounding the absence of data for other education purposes.

✓ Communicate effectively to all students and households about the nutrition benefits of school meals.

✓ Determine individual schools, groups of schools or LEAs that could participate.

✓ Use the reimbursement calculator to anticipate level of Federal reimbursement.

✓ Consider non-Federal funds available to supplement Federal reimbursement as needed.

Resources

✓ FNS Guidance

✓ Department of Education Guidance

Notification Requirements

By April 15th of each year, LEAs must supply the State agency with a list of schools with:

✓ An identified student percentage of at least 40%

✓ An identified student percentage greater than 30% but less than 40%

By May 1st of each year, the State must publish a list:

✓ With an identified student percentage of at least 40% of their eligibility

✓ With an identified student percentage greater than 30% but less than 40% of their potential future eligibility

✓ Of LEAs who are currently electing CEP

COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED RULE BY JANUARY 3, 2014:

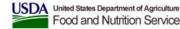http://www.regulations.gov

or by mail to:

William Wagoner
Policy and Program Development Branch
Child Nutrition Division, Food and Nutrition Service
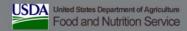3101 Park Center Drive, Room 1212
Alexandria, VA 22302-1594

Supporting and Promoting the Community Eligibility Provision

School Nutrition Association State Agency/USDA Meeting

December 11, 2013

USDA United States Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service

Background

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 provides an alternative to household applications in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs.

The intent of the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) is to improve access to free school meals in eligible high poverty Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) and schools and to eliminate the administrative burden of collecting household applications.

The CEP was phased in over a period of three years in a limited number of States and will be available nationwide beginning July 1, 2014.

Currently LEAs and schools in eleven States are participating, including the District of Columbia, Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, New York, Ohio, West Virginia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, and Massachusetts.

Benefits

- ✓ Lunches and breakfasts are served free to all students.

- ✓ No household applications for free and reduced price meals are collected or certified.

- ✓ No certification means no verification is required.

Eligibility Criteria

Instead of applications, schools use claiming percentages based on the number of identified students for reimbursement in the school. Identified students are primarily certified for free meals through direct certification. LEAs and/or schools must have an identified student percentage of at least 40%.

LEAs multiply the identified student percentage by a factor of 1.6 to arrive at the free claiming percentage. The difference between the free claiming percentage and 100% results in the paid claiming percentage.

The claiming percentage established for a school in the initial year is guaranteed for a period of four school years.

Election and Deadline

LEAs may elect the CEP for all schools in the district, a group of schools in the district or individual schools in the district.

LEAs in CEP are required to inform students and parents that free meals will be offered to all enrolled students.

LEAs are also required to submit documentation no later than June 30 to begin CEP in the School Year (SY) beginning July 1.

"CEP has been great for our kids. The children in the schools that are in this program come from severely disadvantaged households. The ability to offer free meals to every child everyday is great for kids while also presenting our department in a manner that proves that we value the nutrition of children above all else! "

Jeffrey M. Proulx, SNS

Definitions

Identified Students

Students certified for free meals through means other than individual household applications in the School Year prior to implementing the provision. This includes both students who are directly certified (recipients of SNAP, TANF and FDPIR) and categorically eligible (including Foster, Migrant, Head Start, and Runaway children).

Enrolled Students

Students who are enrolled in and attending schools participating in the CEP and who have access to at least one meal service daily.

Identified Student Percentage

The percentage determined by dividing the number of "identified students" as of a specified period of time by the number of "enrolled students" as of the same period of time and multiplying the quotient by 100.