

Community Eligibility Provision



What is the Community Eligibility Provision

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) allows eligible schools to serve free breakfasts and lunches for all students without collecting household income applications. Participating schools do not collect household income applications and no longer track and collect unpaid meal charges. This may mean less paperwork for districts and families and greater participation.

The CEP uses the percentage of Identified Students in a school to determine eligibility and how much federal reimbursement each school receives. Identified students are those certified for free meals without a household income application.

These Identified Students (and any extended eligible students) are counted at each school and reported to the School Nutrition Unit every April. By comparing the number of Identified Students to the number of enrolled students, each school is assigned an Identified Student Percentage or “ISP”.

A school, group of schools, or school district may qualify for CEP as long as their individual or combined ISP is above 40%.

The ISP is then multiplied by 1.6 to calculate a Free Claiming Percentage. This percentage equals the total meals served that will be reimbursed at the federal free rate. The Free Claiming Percentage is established in a base year and may be used for up to four years.

For More Information

More information about CEP and required data reporting can be found on the Provisional Programs webpage:

<https://www.cde.state.co.us/nutrition/provisional-programs>

CEP Implementation

1. Sponsors submit Identified Students and total enrolled students as of April 1 in the Colorado Nutrition Portal each April
2. School Nutrition informs sponsors of CEP eligibility
3. Sponsors notify School Nutrition of their plan to participate by June 30
4. Sponsors complete paperwork and submit ISP documentation to School Nutrition for validation
5. School Nutrition and sponsor determine CEP grouping, if needed
6. School Nutrition calculates Free Claiming Percentages
7. Sponsors notify the public and families of the availability of free meals
8. Sponsors serve meals at no charge to all students at CEP schools
9. Sponsors count the total number of reimbursable meals at the point of service
10. Sponsors claim meals using the established Free Claiming Percentage



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