

# Community Eligibility Provision CEP

*What is it?*

*How Does it work?*



*What do I have to do?*

*Who can do it?*

# Community Eligibility Provision

Allows a school district, school(s) within the district or groups of schools within the district to claim all meals served at no charge to students.

Number of enrolled students receiving free reimbursable meals based on the Direct Certification list.

All meals are claimed either free or paid, depending on the claiming percentages determined.

No student pays for a reimbursable meal in CEP.

# 7 CFR 245.2 Direct Certification

- *Direct certification:*
- means determining a child is eligible for free meals or free milk, as applicable, based on documentation obtained directly from the appropriate State or local agency or individuals authorized to certify that the child is a member of a household receiving assistance under SNAP, as defined in this section; is a member of a household receiving assistance under *FDPIR* or under the TANF program, as defined in this section; a Foster child, Homeless child, a Migrant child, a Head Start child and a Runaway child, as defined in this section.

# Enrolled Students

- Students who are enrolled in and attending schools participating in the community eligibility provision school and who have access to at least one meal service daily, breakfast or lunch.
- Students who do not have access to either breakfast or lunch due to the times they are attending school would not be included in the count of enrolled students
  - Pre K

# Identified Student Determinations (ISP)

ISP = number of students enrolled in a school identified as receiving free meal benefits because of being listed on the Direct Certification list.

ISP must be at least 25% for an individual school, group of schools, or entire LEA to participate in CEP. 24.99999% does not qualify

**Note:** not all schools in the group or in the LEA if electing for the entire LEA have to meet the 25% threshold

# Definitions

- LEA = Local Education Agency
- Categorical Eligibility = students not on the DC list however the head of Head Start or Liaison of homeless have given you list of eligible students

- LEA or school must have an identified student percentage of at least 25% as of April 1<sup>st</sup> of the school year prior to implementing CEP
- Students certified based on documentation of benefit receipt or categorical eligibility as described in 7 CFR part 245 (e.g. directly certified with SNAP, TANF, FDPIR, categorically eligible – migrant youth, homeless, etc)
  - All students living in the household receiving either SNAP or TANF benefits qualify, as long as one child is DC eligible for SNAP or TANF.
  - Foster, Migrant, Homeless and Head Start do to NOT carry to other household children.

# Claiming Percentage

- USDA changed the qualifier from 40% to 25%
- This means that schools/groups of schools/district that have a minimum of 25% of the enrolled students determined to be qualified for free meals based on the Direct Certification list qualifies.
  - Also eligible: Homeless, Migrant, Head Start
    - If students are not on the DC list the above must be determined by the Schools liaison for these programs.
- As of April 1st, of the preceding year: planning to begin operating CEP  
For SY 2025 - April 1, 2024.



# Just a Few Benefits of CEP

Increases access to school meals for children in high poverty areas

No household applications

Eliminates the administrative burden of verification

Reduced chance of overt identification

- Uses 1.6 multiplier for ISP to increase Federal Funds

# Things to Think About

Potential issues surrounding the absence of application data

Is school meal application data used to distribute other sources of funding? (e-rate, State, Local, etc)

Anticipated level of Federal reimbursement

Non-Federal resources available

# If Selecting to Participate in CEP

- No Child Nutrition Benefit applications collected for 4 years
  - Check schools to dispose of any blank applications
- Must offer both breakfast and lunch
- Meal accountability:
  - Clicker
  - Computer
  - Computer by name
  - Tic sheet

# CEP Claiming Percentages

Identified student percentage (ISP) multiplied by a factor of 1.6 equals the % of total meals served “FREE” will be reimbursed at the Federal free rate

The remaining % of total meals is reimbursed at the Federal paid rate

State of Maine pays the difference between free and paid Federal reimbursement

Any meal costs in excess of the total Federal reimbursement must be covered through non-Federal sources

- Enrollment: number of student currently, April 1<sup>st</sup> enrolled in each school.
- DC: students eligible for free meals based on the Direct Certification List

	DC eligible students	213 /
	Enrolled students	374
	ISP	.596519
	Convert to Percentage	59.65%
1.6 multiplier	ISP / 1.6 multiplier	91.12% Free Claiming
		8.88% Paid Claiming

# Total Meals Served

- When calculating the number of free and paid meals to claim, if the total does equal the total number of meals served:

Meals Served	Claiming Percentage	# Meals to Claim	Adjusted Meals to Claim
1,000	57.55%	575.50	576
	42.45%	424.50	224

- Number of Paid meals is always adjusted, up or down.

# Bedrock Community Schools

	Enrolled	DC	ISP
Rubble School	374	213	56.95%
Flintstone Middle School	258	113	43.80%
Bedrock High School	313	75	23.96%
GROUP OF SCHOOLS:	945	401	42.43%


**ISP \* 1.6 Multiplier = Free Claiming Percentage: 67.89%**

# Procedures - Documentation

- LEAs intending to elect CEP for some, or all schools must:
  - Superintendent must Email [david.hartley@maine.gov](mailto:david.hartley@maine.gov) by June 30<sup>th</sup> of year prior to starting
  - Must include the schools to participate
  - An agreement will be returned to Superintendent to complete and return.
  - A signed agreement will be returned with instructions for documents needed.



# Documentation - CNPweb

- Documents submitted to validate percentage will be done in CNPweb
  - Select SY 2024 and your District
  - Select “E-Reviews”
  - Select “Other Process”
  - You will see a folder on the far right:  < it.

- Next you will see:



Attach Documents

E-Review Documents

Upload Document(s)

OK

- Hit the “Upload Document(s)”, find documents on your computer.

# Documentation

- Files uploaded must be name what the document is:
  - Enrollment, DC, etc
- Submit to the State agency documentation by June 30th of the year prior to starting CEP
- Ensure documentation demonstrates school or LEA meets the Identified Student Percentage threshold as of April 1st of the prior school year to starting CEP
- Include your calculation for ISP.

# Documentation needed

- As of April 1<sup>st</sup>
  - Enrollment – excel or similar program – NOT pdf, google docs
    - Include all enrolled student names
    - Identify students' eligibility and reason: DC/SNAP, application
    - For students on the DC list, what is the reason, S, T, F, H, M
    - List of Head Start students from head of program.
    - School student attends
    - Students not on the DC list living in a household with a DC eligible student, the home address must be included to show the connection.
  - Documentation must be kept by the district; it can be requested to be reviewed during an Administrative Review

# Enrollment

Last Name	First Name	Eligible	Reason		School	
CRUZ	Bartholomu	F	application		Main St School	
Huffner	Bruce	P			Capitol School	
Jones	Betty	R	application		Rubble School	
Randero	ALEXIS	F	DC		Rubble School	123 Jones St, Monkston
REYES	Brooke	F	application		Main St School	
Smith	Bobby	F	DC - Family		Capitol School	123 Jones St, Monkston
SYRJALA	Brandon	R	application		Capitol School	
VEILLEUX	Barbara	P			Dead End School	

- Family Connection
- Dated March 30, 2024

# Direct Certification List

## Date of Download

DHS Case ID	State Student ID	Fiscal Year	Case head First name	Case head Last name	Student First Name	Student Last Name	Student DOB	Enrollment Start	Enrollment End	District	DHS Town Name	Snap/Tanif	Date Added	Report Date
99999999B	123560	2024	ZAZOOSA	ACKERLY	BROOKLYN	ACKERLY				Celtic Public Schools	Dublin	B	1/30/2024	1/30/2024 4:37
99999999B	546489	2024	CHRISTINA	LEVASSEUR	RAI-LYNN	WARD		7/1/2023 0:00		Celtic Public Schools	Dublin	F	7/4/2023	1/30/2024 4:37
99999999B	235688	2024	SONIA	VALENTIN	Tessa	Baker		7/1/2023 0:00		Celtic Public Schools	Lucan	H	1/30/2024	1/30/2024 4:37
99999999B	982539	2024	BODEAN	BYTHER	Nevaeh	Danico		9/1/2023 0:00		Celtic Public Schools	Swords	M	9/19/2023	1/30/2024 4:37
99999999B	897158	2024	ALLISON	PHILOOF	CONAN	PHILOOF				Celtic Public Schools	Cun Laoghaire	B	1/30/2024	1/30/2024 4:37
99999999B	569896	2024	LEXIS	RANDERO	ALEXIS	RANDERO				Celtic Public Schools	Monkstown	B	7/25/2023	8/29/2023 4:36
99999999B	656565	2024	TRAVIS	XANDU	MAKYNLEE	XANDU		9/11/2023 0:00	12/13/2023 0:00	Celtic Public Schools	Hermon	B	9/19/2023	9/26/2023 4:37
99999999B	100235	2024	JAMIE	TRUSTER	TOBIAS	TRUSTER				Celtic Public Schools	Bangor	B	8/22/2023	1/30/2024 4:37
99999999B	456321	2024	MEAGAN	DAVIDSONER	GAIGE	DAVIDSONER		7/1/2023 0:00		Celtic Public Schools	Bangor	B	7/4/2023	1/30/2024 4:37

# State Agency Concurrence

The State agency must review documentation submitted by the LEA to ensure the LEA/school:

Meets the minimum identified student percentage

Participates in both NSLP and SBP

Has a record of administering the meal program in accordance with program regulations

# Reviewing the DC list annually

- Local educational agencies and schools currently operating Provision 2 or Provision 3 in non-base years, or the community eligibility provision, as permitted under [§ 245.9](#), are required to conduct a data match between Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program records and student enrollment records at least once annually.
- School participating in a Special Provision must do DC data matches, in none first/base years, and notify families of DC eligibility
- Strongly suggested it is reviewed at a minimum of three times a year.

# Public Notification/Release

- At the beginning of the school year families and the media must be notified of the school(s) operating CEP to include the fact children will be eating at “no charge”
  - Sample media release on Child Nutrition web page.



# Information online

- Maine Child Nutrition Home Page:  
<https://www.maine.gov/doe/schools/nutrition>
- Programs
- Scroll to: Lunch Program
  - Select “Special Provisions”

# No longer wish to use CEP

- CEP participation is a local decision
- A district may drop out of CEP at any time.
- If stopping CEP mid year, the district has 30 days to collect and process applications, and complete verification.
- If a district decides to drop CEP it is recommended it change with the beginning of the next SY.

# Medicare Expansion

- Maine has applied to participate in the Medicare Expansion Grant starting in SY25
- This means students that receive Medicare would be included on the DC list. Listed as Medicare Free or Reduced
- Schools will want to requalify for CEP after this increase to take advantage of the higher ISP, including the Medicare Free students

# Medicare Expansion

- This could make districts qualify for
  - Summer Feeding
  - CACFP After School
- Increase funding from USDA for reimbursable meals

