



APPLICATION INFORMATION
**Community Eligibility Provision of
the National School Lunch and
School Breakfast Programs**



Health and Nutrition Services
Arizona Department of Education

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Introduction

WHAT IS A QUICK GUIDE?

Quick Guides are an abbreviated resource developed by the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) Health and Nutrition Services (HNS) Division. Quick guides are intended to compliment ADE's Step-by-Step Instruction: How-to Guides. They do not count towards Professional Standards training hours.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

This resource is intended for School Food Authorities (SFAs) interested in applying for the Community Eligibility Provision of the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. All regulations are specific to operating Child Nutrition Programs under the direction of ADE.

PURPOSE OF THIS QUICK GUIDE

This guide will outline the process and requirements for SFAs applying for the Community Provision of the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs.



For more detailed training and guidance on implementing and operating the Community Eligibility Provision, please visit HNS' Online Training Library, azed.gov/hns/nslp/training - Special Assistance Provisions: Application and Operation category.



About the Community Eligibility Provision

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The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) is a non-pricing meal service option for schools and school districts that serve low-income populations. CEP allows Arizona's schools and districts serving a higher-poverty population to serve breakfast and lunch at no cost to all enrolled students. This is done without collecting household applications to determine eligibility for School Meal Programs. Instead, schools that adopt CEP are reimbursed using a formula based on the percentage of students categorically eligible for meals at no cost based on their participation in other specific programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and DC-Medicaid Free (DC-M). Arizona Department of Education (ADE) administers the program and is responsible for providing program outreach, oversight, and processing Local Educational Agency (LEA) applications.

Benefits of CEP

Who benefits? Everyone!

✔ Students

Access to a healthy, free breakfast and lunch for all students, no stigma around income eligibility, and less time spent in cashier lines means more time to eat these nutritious meals

✔ Parents

Relieves the burden of providing breakfast and lunch food or money during the school week, and no household application means less paperwork

✔ School staff

Streamlined meal service operation, including not having to count by student eligibility, and well-fed students have been shown to behave and perform better

✔ Administrators

Reduced paperwork and administrative costs, no need to track unpaid meal charges, improved program integrity, incentive to attend over other schools that charge for meals, and more nourished students ready to learn and grow

About the Community Eligibility Provision

Requirements of Operating CEP

What are electing schools required to do during the four-year CEP cycle?

- ✔ Agree to serve free breakfasts and lunches at no charge to all students during the four-year cycle.
- ✔ Agree to count total breakfasts and total lunches served to students daily.
- ✔ Agree not to collect household applications for School Meal Programs.
- ✔ Agree to utilize non-Federal funds if the cost to serve breakfasts and lunch to all students at no charge exceeds the amount received from the USDA reimbursement.



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Eligibility for the Community Eligibility Provision

Eligibility for the Community Eligibility Provision

Schools with an identified student percentage of 25% or higher are eligible to elect CEP next school year.

- Identified students are those students who are eligible for free meals by means other than a household income application.
- The identified student percentage (ISP) is the percentage of identified students divided by the number of students with access to School Breakfast Program or National School Lunch Program.

ISP data reflective of April 1 of the current year must be used to determine next school year’s CEP eligibility.

ISP Calculation

The ISP is calculated using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Identified Students}}{\text{Enrolled Students}} = \text{ISP}$$

Identified Students: A subset of the students who would qualify for free or reduced-price school meals if their households completed school meal applications.

Enrolled Students: Students who are enrolled in and attending schools that participate in CEP and have access to at least one meal service (SBP or NSLP) daily.

LEAs can access April 1 district and school level eligibility by viewing the Annual Publication of Eligible and Near Eligible districts and sites on ADE HNS’ NSLP webpage: www.azed.gov/hns/nslp under the Required State Reporting accordion.

- *The Arizona Department of Education will post this information no later than May 1 annually.*

This data is required to be reported annually by each LEA and will serve as a tool for your school to determine CEP eligibility for the next school year. LEAs have the flexibility to elect CEP for a single site, group(s) of sites, or district-wide. CEP is operated over a four-year period (or cycle). Additionally, the ISP is locked in over the course of the four-year cycle length with no risk of decrease.

- *Please note that a single-site LEA applying to operate the Community Eligibility Provision is considered district-wide.*

Eligibility for the Community Eligibility Provision

CEP Claiming Percentages

The ISP is calculated to set a CEP claiming percentage, which will be utilized over the four-year CEP cycle. To derive the CEP claiming percentage for a single school site, group(s) of sites, or district-wide, the CEP claiming multiplier of 1.6 must be applied to the ISP to derive the percentage of free meal reimbursement.

- For example, an ISP of 55% calculates to 88% of meals served at the free reimbursement rate when the claiming multiplier is applied. This means 88% of the total NSLP and SBP meals claimed will be reimbursed at the federal free rate and the remaining 12% of the total NSLP and SBP meals claimed will be reimbursed at the federal paid rate.

Identified Student Percentage x 1.6 = Federal Free Claiming %

The remaining percentage of meals up to 100% are reimbursed at the Federal Paid Reimbursement Rate.

- *CEP claiming percentages totaling over 100% will be reimbursed 100% at the Federal Free Rate.*

Assessing Eligibility

To be eligible for CEP, an LEA, group of schools, or individual school must:

- ✓ Ensure that at least 25 percent of enrolled students are identified students;
- ✓ Participate in both the NSLP and SBP; and
- ✓ Offer lunches and breakfasts to all enrolled students at no charge.



Application Information for the Community Eligibility Provision

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Community Eligibility Provision Application Deadline

The application deadline to elect CEP for the following school year is **June 30**.

- Applications received after June 30 will not be considered.
- LEAs must receive ADE approval prior to operating CEP.

Community Eligibility Provision Application and Instructions

Complete and submit the following required application documents to [ADE's CEP Application Webform](#) when applying for CEP:

Required Document	Form Instructions
Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Participation Form	This is the contract between the LEA and ADE for CEP participation of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Programs (SBP). Enter the LEA legal name in paragraph 1. CNPWeb contains the legal names and CTDS for each NSLP site. A current authorized signer listed on the Food Program Permanent Service Agreement must sign and date this form.
Addendum – Community Eligibility Provision	This is a semi-permanent document that outlines policies and procedures for sites operating CEP. Fill in the grey areas of the form. CNPWeb contains the legal name and CTDS for each NSLP site.
CEP Eligibility Worksheet	This form must be completed to reflect each NSLP site applying to operate CEP. CEP can be elected for an individual school site, for group(s) of sites or districtwide. For each CEP electing site, the site name, site CTDS, site-level identified student count and site-level enrollment count must be entered into the CEP Eligibility Worksheet on the appropriate participation tab(s). All information must be reflective of April 1 . Instructions to complete this worksheet are available on the first tab of the Excel workbook.

Application Information for the Community Eligibility Provision

Community Eligibility Provision Application and Instructions

Required Document	Form Instructions
<p>Identified Student Supporting Documentation and Enrollment Records</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource: ISP Calculation Worksheet 	<p>The identified student percentage used to apply for CEP is self-reported, and therefore must be validated prior to approval. Data to support the identified students and site level enrollment counts listed on the CEP eligibility worksheet must be sent to ADE upon request. Note, student data is protected by federal and state laws; therefore, Biscom secure file transfer of data are required to be utilized for any student information submitted to ADE. Gather documents to support the identified student count and enrollment listed on the CEP eligibility worksheet and await the secure file delivery email from ADE. DO NOT EMAIL STUDENT INFORMATION. The supporting identified student and enrollment documents that must be uploaded to ADE via the ADE provided Biscom link are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrollment list(s) for each applying site. Enrollment must be reflective of April 1. Label the enrollment file as [Enrollment or Site Name]; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrollment list(s) should include the student’s name, address, date of birth, SSID, and how they were identified. Ensure all unique populations (e.g., Head Start, preschool, etc.) and extended students are included in enrollment list Direct Certification match lists for each applying site; Direct Certification match lists must be reflective of April 1; Label Direct Certification files as [DC for Site Name] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure partial matches are designated. List or notation of SNAP/TANF/DC-M Free/FDPIR extended household members for each site; Notice to Provider Foster letters for each site; Official Head Start roster(s) for each site. Food Distribution on Indian Reservation (FDPIR) participation letters or FDPIR Intertribal Tribal Organization signed and dated lists indicating participation for each site.

Application Information for the Community Eligibility Provision

Community Eligibility Provision Application and Instructions

Required Document	Form Instructions
Identified Student Supporting Documentation and Enrollment Records Continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• McKinney-Vento Homeless list signed and dated by school liaison for each site.• Migrant Education Program list signed and dated by school liaison for each site.• Runaway student list signed and dated by school liaison for each site.



Additional Resources for the Community Eligibility Provision

Additional Resources for the Community Eligibility Provision

LEAs are *highly* encouraged to utilize the following resources for support and additional information when applying for and implementing the Community Eligibility Provision:

- [No Kid Hungry CEP Calculator](#): The CEP Calculator enables school nutrition staff to compare the expected annual revenue under both CEP and standard NSLP (standard counting and claiming) for the district and each school. Additionally, it allows a customizable financial analysis by manipulating expected breakfast and lunch participation rates by school to show the impacts on revenue in real time. Lastly, it will help optimize revenue with CEP by using strategic grouping powered by the CEP grouping tool, Meals Count.
- [CEP Slider Tool](#): Enter your Identified Student Percentage (ISP) to estimate free and paid claiming percentages under the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). The ISP for a school, group of schools, or school district, multiplied by the CEP multiplier (1.6) determines the percentages of meals reimbursed at both the federal free rate and paid rates under CEP.
- [USDA's Community Eligibility Provision Resource Center](#): The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) resource center provides extensive resources for parents, teachers, and school officials at the local, state and federal levels to better understand CEP and its benefits, along with useful tools to help facilitate successful implementation of the provision.
- [FRAC's Community Eligibility Webpage](#): FRAC's CEP Webpage houses basic information about CEP, reports with data demonstrating the impact of CEP, and various additional resources for families and operators.
- [ADE HNS' Training Library - Special Assistance Provisions: Application and Operations](#): HNS' Training Library has a suite of trainings to assist through the application and implementation of CEP.
- [USDA's Manual: Community Eligibility Provision: Planning & Implementation Guidance](#): A thorough overview of the requirements associated with operating CEP.
- [CEP Monthly Federal Reimbursement Estimator](#)

Thank you!

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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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