4/10/12

Free and Reduced Information for 2012-2013

Dear Free and Reduced Contacts,

We have some free and reduced information that we wanted to pass along to you.

**Free and Reduced Packet**

Each year, the CDE Office of School Nutrition (OSN) sends out our prototype F&R application after we receive the prototype from USDA. We have not yet received this information, but we will keep you posted.

**Approval Form for Online Applications**

Again this year: CDE OSN has a form for districts to complete if they wish to begin using a system that allows for the submission of F&R applications online. This form, updated for 2012-2013, can be located on our website at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdenutritran/nutrfreeandreducedmaterials.htm>. Please note: This form must be submitted, and approval must be issued from CDE OSN, before districts may begin using online application systems.

Districts that had an approved online system in 2011-2012 will receive an individual email with an online system renewal form to complete for 2012-2013.

**Provision 2**

Provision 2 is an option in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs whereby districts take applications one year; establish percentages of free, reduced, and paid; and then apply these percentages to meals served during three subsequent years in order to determine meal counts by type for the reimbursement claim. In this option, meals are served free of charge to all students. If you are interested in this, please see our Provision 2 memo for 2012-2013, which has been posted at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdenutritran/nutrimemos.htm>.

**Direct Certification**

We anticipate that the Direct Certification system will be open around the beginning of July for 2012-2013. More information will be sent before then to those individuals who have access to the Direct Cert system.

**Free and Reduced Training Information**

Information regarding the annual mandatory Free and Reduced Training (for both regional and online trainings) will be sent out by the end of April/very early May. All details will be provided at that time.

**When Can F&R Materials be Sent to Households?**

We have received some questions on this topic, so we wanted to address it. The old Eligibility Manual stated, “LEAs should send out the letter no earlier than four calendar weeks prior to the time students start school.” The new Eligibility Manual does not include this language. The USDA therefore provided the following guidance: “The National Office responded that they did not want to quantify the timeframe for more flexibility (and in cases of unusual circumstances) for school districts.  The National Office also reaffirmed that they do not want schools to send information out at the end of the previous school year or too early before the start of the new one.  The key to this change was to accommodate some flexibility for schools; however, guidance to schools on not sending information out too early is advisable.”

Please let us know if you have any questions, and enjoy the rest of the school year!