

Community Eligibility Provision

Policy Statement for Free and Reduced-Price Meals: CEP Addendum – SY 2022-23



COLORADO
Department of Education

The _____ School District agrees to participate in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program and accepts responsibility for schools under its jurisdiction that agree to provide all children meals at no charge while following requirements for operating the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) set forth in 7 CFR 245.

The Local Education Agency (LEA) assures the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) School Nutrition Unit that the LEA has reviewed the federal regulation *National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Eliminating Applications through Community Eligibility as required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010* and will uniformly implement the following policy in fulfilling its responsibilities. The LEA certifies that each of the schools listed meets the requirements for participation in CEP, as set forth in 7 CFR 245.9.

Requirements:

- LEAs and/or schools must meet a minimum level (40%) of identified students for free meals in the year prior to implementing the CEP.
- Eliminate the distribution and collection of free and reduced-price school meal applications from households in participating schools.
- Offer reimbursable breakfast and lunches at no charge to all students regardless of the children's eligibility status.
- Notify the public of the availability of school meals at no charge.
- The Identified Student Percentage (ISP) is calculated and multiplied 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.
- Claiming percentages established for a school in the first year may be used for a period of 4 school years and may be increased each year if the percentages increase.
- Retain all records for the entire period that the school operates under CEP, plus five years or longer for the CDE fiscal audit and until resolution of the findings.
- Although the LEA is not required to conduct verification efforts for those schools participating in the CEP, the VCR Report must be completed as instructed.
- The LEA will provide the CDE School Nutrition Unit with documentation that shows how the ISP was calculated for each school that chooses to participate in the CEP.
- If the reimbursement received by the LEA is not sufficient to cover total nonprofit school food service program costs, **non-federal funds must be used to pay the difference.**



- The opening of a new school or any change to the grade structure of an existing school could cause the school district to be required to reestablish ISP data. **Notification of any change to district structure must be made in writing to CDE School Nutrition before the start of the school year.**

Recordkeeping:

The school district shall retain specified base year records for the entire period that the school operates under CEP **plus five years**, or longer if there are audit findings and until resolution of the findings, as per 7 CFR 210.15(b), 220.7(e), 245.9(g) and 1 CCR 2254-R-8.00.

Required records include:

- Direct Certification data
- Categorically eligible student data lists
- Changes in eligibility status
- Daily meal counts
- Calculation of free and paid claiming percentages
- The socioeconomic data used for at-risk funding
- Any extension authorized by CDE School Nutrition Unit
- Claims for reimbursement
- Total daily meal counts of reimbursable meals
- Daily edit check and on-site review documentation

Renewal or Extension:

At the end of the 4-year cycle, CDE will contact the LEA, and schools may opt to revert to standard meal counting and claiming procedures or begin another 4-year cycle. Regardless of the option chosen, the LEA must inform CDE in writing of the planned activity at the end of the CEP cycle and no later than **June 30** of the program year.

Revisions to Policies:

Submit to the CDE School Nutrition Unit any revisions to the administrative procedures outlined above **before** implementation. Such changes will be effective only upon approval. All changes in eligibility criteria must be publicly announced in the same manner as announced at the beginning of the school year.

School Food Authority Signature

Date

CDE School Nutrition Unit Director Signature

Date