OSPI CNS School Meal Programs Reference Sheet

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) allows schools with high numbers of low-income children to serve free breakfast and lunch to all students without collecting school meal applications. CEP is available to public, private and tribal schools.

Requirements

- ✓ Local Education Agencies (LEAs) or schools must have an identified student percentage of at least 40% (based on data from April 1st of the school year prior to implementing CEP)
- ✓ Identified Student Percentage (ISP):

ISP = (# of Identified Students / Total # of Enrolled Students) x 100

- o Identified Students:
    - ▪ Students directly certified for Basic Food, TANF, and foster children that are included on the direct certification list from EDS.
    - ▪ Students that are directly certified for FDPIR, that are included on a list from the FDPIR office.
    - ▪ Migrant or homeless students that are on lists received from the Migrant Student Coordinator or Homeless Liaison.
    - ▪ Students participating in Head Start, Even Start, and ECEAP that are included in a list from the program administrator.
    - ▪ **Note:** Student who are categorically eligible based on information, such as a case number, submitted on a free and reduced-price meal application are NOT included.
- o Enrolled Students:
    - ▪ Students who are enrolled and attending school AND have access to at least one meal service daily under NSLP or SBP.
- ✓ The reimbursement rate for both lunch and breakfast is determined by multiplying the percent of Identified Student by 1.6
    - o The resulting number is the percent of meals reimbursed at the "free" rate, with the remainder being reimbursed at the "paid" rate.
- ✓ CEP is approved for a four-year cycle, so participating schools will have the same free and paid claiming percentages for four years.

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Annual Poverty Data Collection

In Washington State, funding for state education programs use individual student free and reduced-price information. Schools participating in CEP will need to implement an alternate method to collect this data annually. The Family Income Survey may be used to collect this data.

Benefits of CEP

- ✓ All students receive meals at no charge.
- ✓ All students receive the benefits of nutritious school meals.
- ✓ Eliminates unpaid meal charges.
- ✓ Minimizes stigma.
- ✓ Decreases paperwork for families as free and reduced-price meal applications do not need to be completed.
- ✓ Decreases paperwork for schools with no applications to process and eliminates the verification process.

Grace Year

For CEP schools in the fourth year of their cycle with an ISP of less than the required 40% but at least 30% as of April 1, they may choose to continue CEP on a grace period:

- ✓ A grace year may be approved for one year (a fifth year).
  - o This gives the LEA an opportunity to try restoring the ISP without having to immediately revert to standard counting and claiming.
- ✓ Claiming percentages change for the grace year.
  - o The claiming percentages are based on the ISP representative of April 1.
  - o These claiming percentages may be lower than claiming percentages from the four-year CEP cycle.

If the school regains an ISP of 40% as of April 1 of the grace year, a new four-year cycle may be approved beginning the year following the grace year. LEAs may use the end of the cycle to evaluate CEP and regroup schools and/or bring on new schools.

Reference

- [7 CFR 245.9(f)](#)
- [SP 54-2016: Community Eligibility Provision: Guidance and Updated Q&As](#)
- [USDA Community Eligibility Provision: Planning and Implementation Guidance](#)

Resources

- [OSPI CEP and Provision 2 webpage](#)
- [USDA Community Eligibility Provision](#)

Acronym Reference

- CNS - Child Nutrition Services
- ECEAP – Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program
- FDPIR – Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations
- NSLP – National School Lunch Program
- OSPI - Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- SBP – School Breakfast Program
- TANF – Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- USDA - United States Department of Agriculture