



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

March 31, 2017

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Community Eligibility Provision (CEP): Required April 1, 2017, Identified Student Data Collection for All Schools and Required LEA CEP Annual Divisionwide Eligible and Near Eligible Notification

The Community Eligibility Provision for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) gives eligible local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools with high percentages of low-income children the option to offer school breakfast and lunch meals at no charge (free) to all children in those schools without collecting meal applications. Under this provision, eligible LEAs and schools elect to provide meals to all students at no charge and are reimbursed for both breakfast and lunch through a formula using the percentage of "*Identified Students*" multiplied by a factor of 1.6 to develop a claiming percentage.

Identified Students are defined as students approved for free meals through means other than individual household applications. This definition includes students who are directly certified for free meals based on their participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Identified students also includes homeless students, runaways, migrant youth, Head Start, and foster children approved for free meals by means other than a meal application, such as through the LEA liaison or other school division records. It does not include students who are categorically eligible based on information submitted on a free and reduced price meal application, such as a SNAP or TANF case number.

All school divisions must complete and return, no later than **April 14, 2017**, the attached CEP Preliminary Data Collection report (Attachment A) for all schools (including school divisions currently operating under CEP and those that do not meet CEP eligibility requirements). The *identified student* data submitted on this required report must reflect all students who were directly certified by means other than a meal application as of **April 1, 2017**. Because April 1 falls on a Saturday this year, report the data as of the end of the day on March 31. Data submitted by school divisions in the CEP Preliminary Data Collection report will be reviewed by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and consolidated into a state report which will be posted to the VDOE website by May 1.

Detailed information on completing the report can be found in Tab 1-*Instructions* in the Excel workbook. The report must list **ALL** schools in the division including those with:

- An identified student percentage (ISP) of 40 percent or more (eligible for CEP)
- An identified student percentage of 30 or more but less than 40 percent (near eligible)
- An identified student percentage less than 30 percent (not eligible for CEP)

School divisions with one or more sites currently operating under CEP must enter the number of identified students for each individual site as validated by VDOE in the base year. The individual site data must be reported even if the site participates in CEP as part of a group of schools or divisionwide. If the ISP has increased since the base year and the division is planning to request an adjustment to the ISP, the newly documented number of identified students must be reported.

The completed Excel workbook must be submitted electronically to the Department of Education, Office of School Nutrition Programs (SNP) via email at: SNPWEBDOC@doe.virginia.gov.

Please use the following file name format:


Division Name-Division Number-2017 CEP Preliminary Data as of 04012017

(For example: ACCOMACK-001-2017 CEP Preliminary Data as of 04012017)

The Department is also required to provide annual notification, by April 15, to all LEAs with divisionwide eligibility for CEP that meet the criteria below. The annual LEA divisionwide CEP notification is provided in Attachment B to this memorandum. The notification includes:

- LEAs with a divisionwide identified student percentage of at least 40 percent;
- LEAs with a divisionwide ISP greater than or equal to 30 but less than 40 percent; and,
- LEAs currently participating in CEP.

School divisions that meet the CEP eligibility threshold of 40 percent or more identified students for one or more schools or divisionwide may wish to consider implementing CEP. Schools, groups of schools, and school divisions with an identified student percentage of 62.5 or greater would qualify to receive free reimbursement for all student meals. Those with an identified student percentage of 55 to 62.4 would qualify to receive free reimbursement for 88 to 99 percent of the meals served to students. Those with an ISP less than 55 percent should carefully consider the financial impact of implementing CEP to determine if it is feasible.

For more information about CEP, the USDA [Community Eligibility Provision: Planning and Implementation Guidance manual](#)  consolidates CEP guidance and best practices. The manual may be helpful to those school divisions that are considering participating in CEP as well as those that have already implemented CEP.

A Superintendent's Memorandum will be published in May to provide the CEP application for school year 2017-2018 and additional information about the application process. School divisions that are interested in learning more about CEP and those that are considering applying will also be invited to participate in training on CEP and the application process. The deadline for CEP applications is June 30 annually; USDA has not granted an extension of this deadline for the 2017-2018 school year.

If you have questions or need more information, contact the school nutrition program specialist assigned to your school division or Dr. Sandy Curwood, Director of the Office of School Nutrition Programs, at (804) 371-2339 or by email at sandra.curwood@doe.virginia.gov.

SRS/SCS/ag

Attachments:

- A. [CEP Preliminary Data Collection Worksheet](#) (XLS)
- B. [LEA Notification of Eligibility or Near Eligibility for CEP Divisionwide](#) (PDF)