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MEMORANDUM

TO: Business Managers, Superintendents, Food Service Directors
FROM: Rosie Krueger, Assistant Director, Child Nutrition Programs
SUBJECT: Eligibility for the Community Eligibility Provision for 2019-2020 School Year
DATE: May 1, 2019

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) is one option for schools participating in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program to serve meals at no charge to students. To begin participating in CEP, sites, groups of sites, or the entire School Food Authority (SFA) must have an Identified Student Percentage (ISP) of at least 40%. The ISP is the number of students in the school or SFA that are directly certified for free meals. Based on the April 1, 2019 data reported, the Vermont sites and SFAs that are eligible or nearly eligible to begin participating in CEP next year are included on the attached lists. SFAs and sites that are already participating in CEP may wish to re-establish their ISP if it has increased since their first year of participation.

Lists of Eligible and Near Eligible Schools and SFAs

One list includes the School Food Authorities whose collective ISP for the sites in the SFA indicate that the entire SFA is eligible or nearly eligible to participate in CEP. To participate as a group, the collective ISP of the SFA must be 40% or more. The second list includes individual sites that are eligible or nearly eligible to participate. Sites that are eligible and nearly eligible may combine into groups within their SFA to create an eligible ISP for participation (40% or more). The attached notification does not contain information about potential groupings of some sites with the SFA. If you are interested in creating a grouping of sites within an SFA, please contact me to discuss your options.

The Community Eligibility Provision

The Community Eligibility Provision is an alternative method to participate in the school meals programs without the use of free & reduced price meal applications. The provision reduces the administrative burden of processing meal applications and point of sale systems needed to count meals served by free, reduced-price and paid categories. The requirements for CEP include verifying the ISP, offering both breakfast and lunch to all students at no charge, and reporting the total number of reimbursable meals served. Reimbursement is determined based on the ISP for the supervisory union/SFA or school. Reimbursement claiming percentages are established by multiplying the ISP by 1.6 to determine the number of meals claimed at the free rate of reimbursement; the remaining meals would be claimed at the paid rate of reimbursement. For example, if your SFA's ISP was 42.5%, then 68% of the meals served would be claimed at the free rate and the remaining 32% would be claimed at the paid rate. The SFA would need to identify a source on non-federal funds to cover the difference between the reimbursement and the cost for running the program. Please visit the [USDA Community](#)

[Eligibility Provision Resource Center](#) for more information on CEP, including the Federal Reimbursement Estimator.

Schools and SFAs participating in CEP must continue to collect and maintain Direct Certification data regularly for reporting purposes. In addition, in order to collect information on student income for use outside of the federal child nutrition programs, participating schools will need to send home the household income form at the start of each school year instead of the free and reduced price meal application.

To Enroll in the Community Eligibility Provision for SY 19-20

Schools interested in starting CEP in School Year 19-20 must notify the State Agency and enroll in the Community Eligibility Provision prior to June 30, 2019. To initiate the enrollment process, schools or SFAs must provide the following documents to the State Agency:

- A Letter of Intent to Participate from Superintendent or Principal
- List of enrolled students in the School or SFA as of April 1, 2018
- The Direct Certification Documentation (DC Lists, documentation from Homeless, Migrant liaisons, etc.) to verify the ISP
- The Site Declaration Form
- CEP Agreement
- Amendment to Free & Reduced Policy Statement – indicating how meals will be counted and recorded at the School & SFA
- [The Federal Reimbursement Estimator](#)

Updated versions of the required documents will be posted to the [Vermont Child Nutrition Programs Community Eligibility Webpage](#) in May 2019. For more information about the Community Eligibility Provision, please feel free to contact me at (802)479-1246, or at mary.krueger@vermont.gov.

Enc.