



Student Success and Wellness Bureau – NSLP CEP Basics

Community eligibility allows high-need schools to offer breakfast and lunch to all students at no charge.

Any school district, group of schools in a district, or school with 40 percent or more “*identified students*” – children who are certified eligible for free school meals without a household application – can choose to participate.

Identified students include children directly certified through data-matching conducted by NMPED, because their households receive the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or the Food Distribution Program for Indian Reservations (FDPIR), and in some states, Medicaid benefits, as well as children who are certified for free meals without an application because they are homeless, migrant, enrolled in Head Start, or in foster care.

Because school districts and schools participating in community eligibility use direct certification to determine their identified student percentage (ISP), they no longer have to collect meal applications each year from students and families to provide free meals to all students.

Helpful Definitions:

Categorically Eligible: Those who are eligible for a program, automatically (categorically) due to their participation in another program.

Identified students: Those certified for free meals without the use of household applications (for example those directly certified through SNAP).

Identified Student Percentage (ISP): The percentage of students who are Identified Students divided by the total Enrollment.
(1.6)

Links to Webinars for Basics of CEP:

[USDA Community Eligibility Basics](#)

[FRAC Community Eligibility: Continue to Provide Free Meals to All Students for Years to Come](#)

Links to Resources for CEP:

NMPED (Links to local data, local information, please start your search for information here)

[NMPED National School Lunch Website](#)

[NMPED Community Eligibility Program Website](#)

[Student Success & Wellness Data Website](#)