Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

Data Collection Guidance for School-level Eligibility

Connecticut State Department of Education
Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs
450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504
Hartford, CT 06103-1841

March 2025

CEP Data Collection Guidance for School-level Eligibility
Connecticut State Department of Education

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/cep/cep_data_collection_guidance.pdf

For more information, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's CEP webpage or contact the school nutrition programs staff at the Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

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1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
   Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
   1400 Independence Avenue, SW
   Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov

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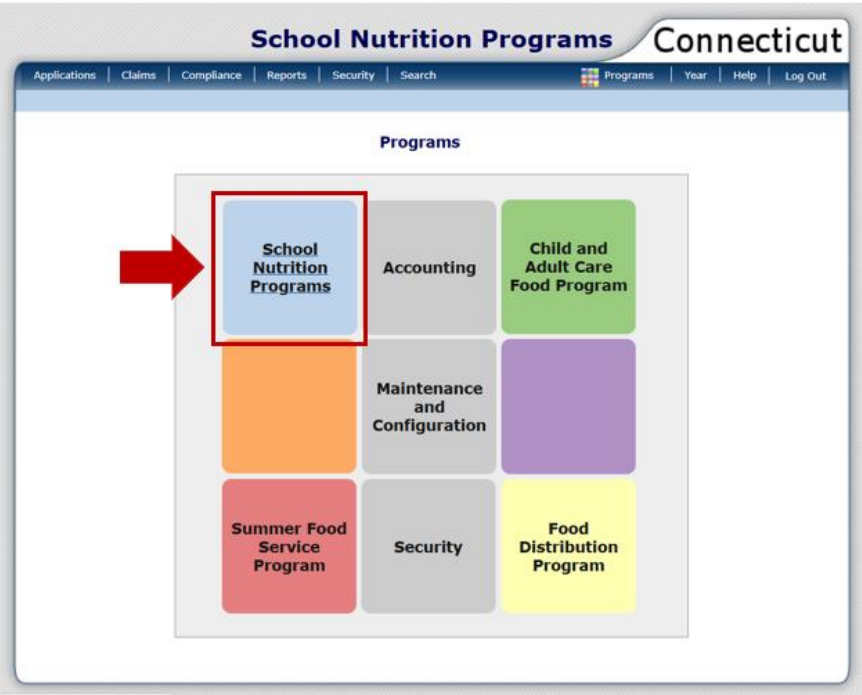
1 — Data Entry

This guide outlines the steps for uploading the CEP school-level eligibility data in the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs (CNP System). This data alerts local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools of their eligibility for participation in the CEP, a non-pricing meal service option for schools in predominately low-income areas. LEAs are eligible to participate in the CEP if the Identified Student Percentage (ISP) for the entire district, groups of schools, or individual schools meets or exceeds 40 percent. The ISP is calculated by dividing the total number of identified students by the total student enrollment. For questions regarding the data collection process for CEP eligibility, please contact the school's assigned school nutrition team member.

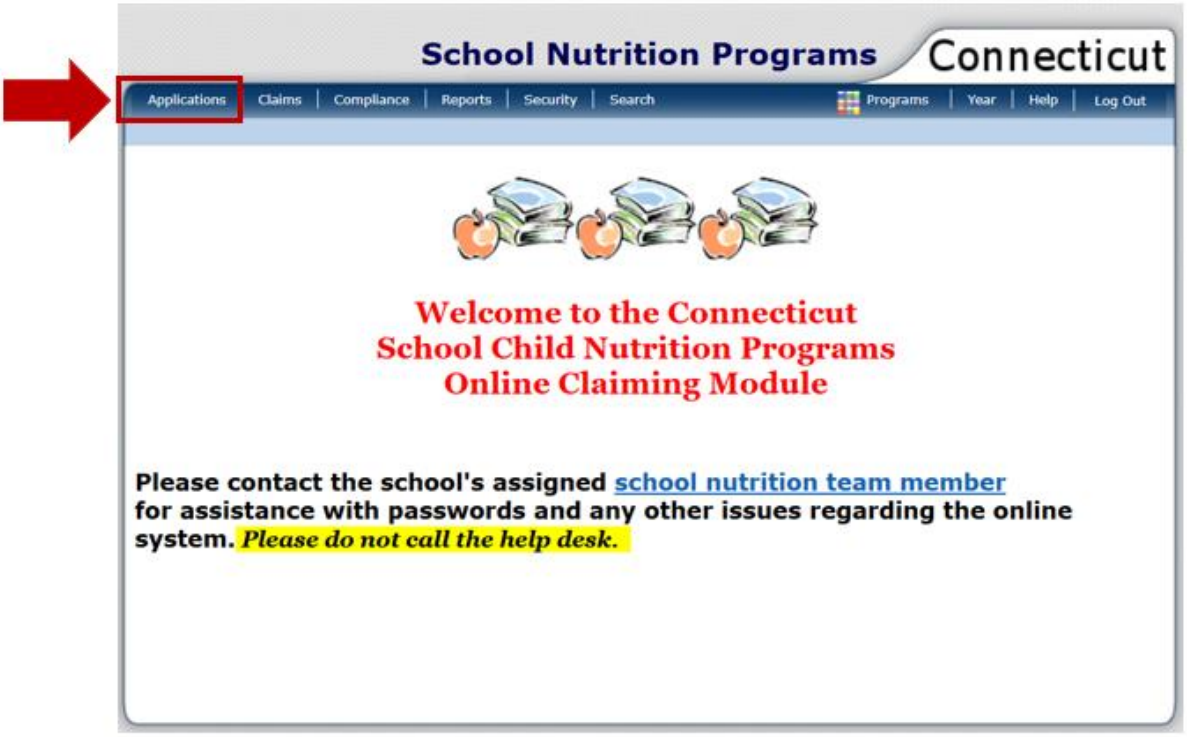
Note: Participation in the CEP is not mandatory. However, the submission of data to identify school-level eligibility is **required** for all LEAs participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) . Residential child care institutions and sponsors of the Special Milk Program are exempt from this requirement because they cannot participate in the CEP.

1. Access the CNP System at https://ct.cnpus.com/prod/Splash.aspx and enter your user ID and password.

2. Click on the blue box, "**School Nutrition Programs**.

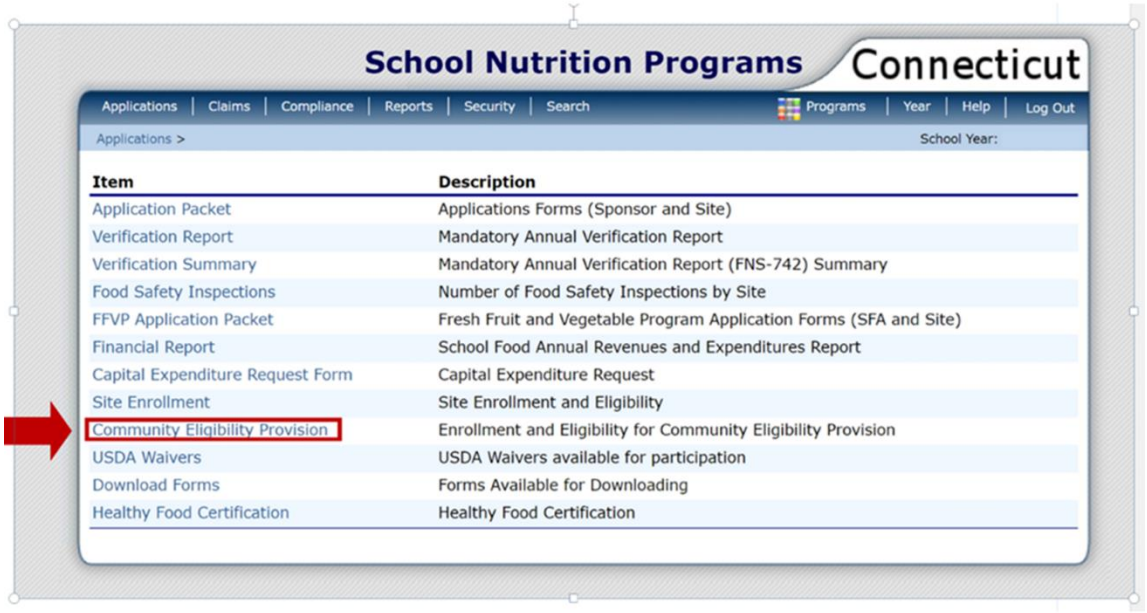


3. Click on "**Applications**" at the top left of the screen.

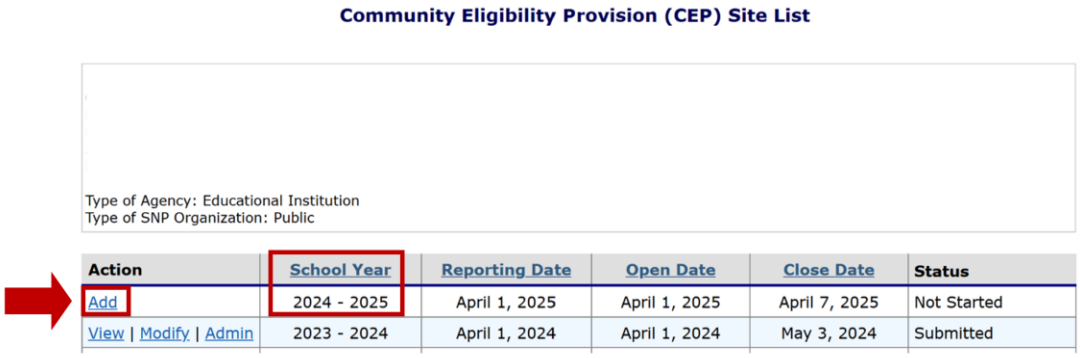


4. Under “**Item**,” click on “**Community Eligibility Provision**.”

   Note: If you have access to more than one Sponsor Application, you will be prompted to select a sponsor before accessing the “Community Eligibility Provision” section of the Application.



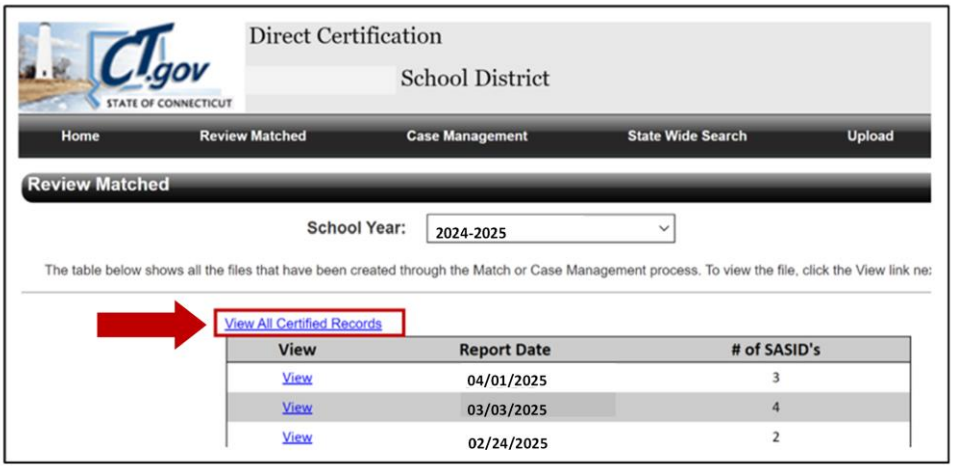
5. Click "**Add**" for School Year 2024-25.



Please note the following information regarding the dates on the "**CEP Site List screen**" above.

- **Reporting Date:** The Direct Certification Web Application date and the enrollment data date used will be **April 1, 2025**. CEP data must reflect all enrolled students directly certified in school year 2024-25, up through **April 1, 2025**.

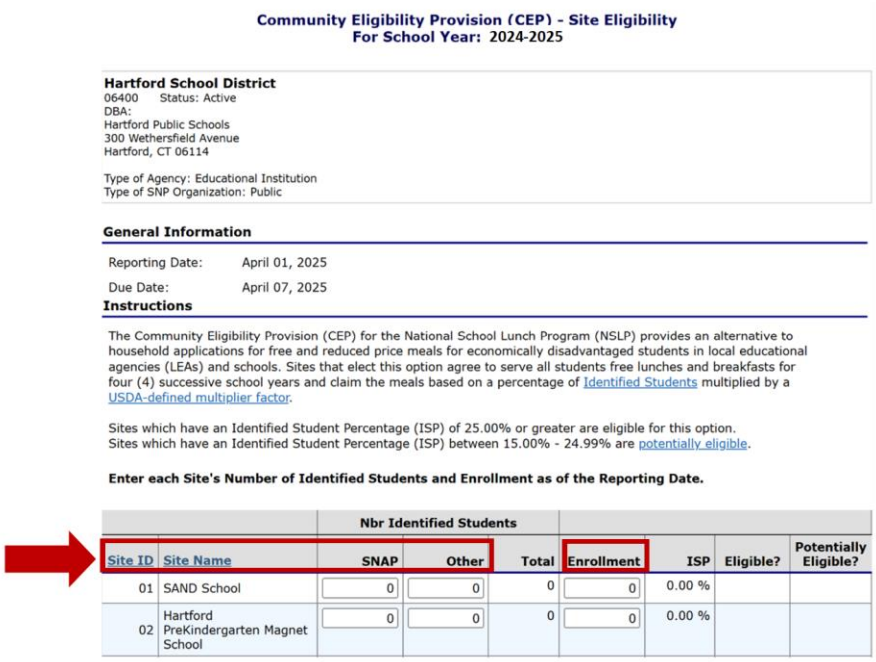
- **Open Date April 1, 2025: This is the date that the CNP System will open for data entry.** When accessing the CSDE's Direct Certification Web Application, sponsors must **choose April 1, 2025.** To obtain a list of all directly certified students to date, click on the "View All Certified Records" link, as shown in the example below.



- **Close Date: April 7, 2025**, is the final date that the CNP System will be open for data entry. The school food authority (SFA) should report CEP districtwide and school-level eligibility or near-eligibility status to LEA school officials to determine if a CEP application will be submitted to the CSDE.

The CSDE will post the lists of eligible (ISP ≥ 25 percent) and near eligible (ISP ≥ 15 percent and < 25 percent) LEAs and schools on the CSDE's CEP webpage by **May 1, 2025**.

6. Enter the requested data elements for each identified site under "**SNAP**," "**Other**," and "**Enrollment**." All other screens will automatically populate. For information on the three data entry categories (SNAP, Other, and "Enrollment), refer to "Guidance for Data Entry Categories" on the next page.



Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) - Site Eligibility
For School Year: 2024-2025

Hartford School District
06400 Status: Active
DBA:
Hartford Public Schools
300 Wethersfield Avenue
Hartford, CT 06114

Type of Agency: Educational Institution
Type of SNP Organization: Public

General Information

Reporting Date: April 01, 2025

Due Date: April 07, 2025

Instructions

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) provides an alternative to household applications for free and reduced price meals for economically disadvantaged students in local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools. Sites that elect this option agree to serve all students free lunches and breakfasts for four (4) successive school years and claim the meals based on a percentage of Identified Students multiplied by a USDA-defined multiplier factor.

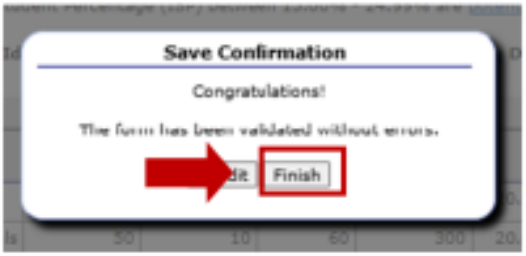
Sites which have an Identified Student Percentage (ISP) of 25.00% or greater are eligible for this option.
Sites which have an Identified Student Percentage (ISP) between 15.00% - 24.99% are potentially eligible.

Enter each Site's Number of Identified Students and Enrollment as of the Reporting Date.

		Nbr Identified Students						
Site ID	Site Name	SNAP	Other	Total	Enrollment	ISP	Eligible?	Potentially Eligible?
01	SAND School	0	0	0	0	0.00 %		
02	Hartford PreKindergarten Magnet School	0	0	0	0	0.00 %		

7. After entering the data for each site, click "**Save"** at the bottom of the page.

8. Correct any errors. Click "**Finish**."



Make note of the ISP for your LEA and schools. This information serves as notice of districtwide eligibility for participation in the CEP. Some LEAs, not previously participating in the CEP, may decide to participate for the next school year based on the ISP. Currently participating LEAs may decide to recalculate if they now identified a higher ISP. The SFA should discuss CEP eligibility with school officials.

Guidance for Data Entry Categories

SNAP

For the purpose of this data collection process, this count will include students normally identified on the FNS 742 Verification Collection Report as either SNAP (FS), Free Medicaid (FM), or TANF (AF). These students are considered directly certified (DC) based on information provided by Federal assistance programs. This count will **also include** those students who are DC through extended eligibility. **Do not include Reduced Medicaid (RM).**

Data source: CSDE Direct Certification Web Application as of **April 1, 2025**

Other

This count includes students identified as Other (OT) on the FNS 742 Verification Collection Report and may include the following:

- Homeless children as defined under section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act [42 U.S.C. 11434a(2)];

- Runaway and homeless youth served by programs established under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5701);
- Foster children certified through means other than a household application;
- Children enrolled in a Federally-funded Head Start Program or comparable State-funded Head Start or pre-kindergarten program; and
- Non-applicant students approved by local education officials, such as a principal, based on available information.

Note: Extended eligibility does not pertain to students identified as OT.

Data source examples: Head Start enrollment lists, lists of homeless/runaway or foster children, other source documentation from designated officials, etc.

Enrollment

Enter the enrollment number **only** for students who are **enrolled** in and **attend** schools where SBP and/or NSLP meals are served for each site. For example, if one site serves meals to students enrolled in three different schools, combine the totals from each of the three schools when entering data for that site.

Only count students who have **access to at least one meal service** (SBP and/or NSLP) daily. For example, if a school enrolls Kindergarten students but those students **do not** have access to at least one meal service daily, do not include those students in the total enrollment for that site.

Data source: LEA's Local Information System as of **April 1, 2025**.

2 — Primary Source Data Retention

All sponsors planning to formally apply for CEP participation for school year 2025-26 **must** save a copy of all primary source data, as summarized in "Guidance for Primary Source Data Retention" on the next page. If an interschool agreement is in place, this includes data from any recipient sites that will be participating in the CEP.

LEAs can **only use primary source data** to apply for CEP participation.

> **Reminder:** All documentation must be representative of **April 1, 2025**. This includes the direct certification file from the CSDE web application, the CEP participation worksheets, the list of the identified students, and the LEA master enrollment file.

Guidance for Primary Source Data Retention

Categorically Eligible Student List (FS, FM, AF)

- In an Excel file, download and save a copy of the Direct Certification Data Match File (from **April 1, 2025).**
- **Data Source:** CSDE Direct Certification Web Application (saved on April 1, 2025). Do not include Reduced Medicaid (RM).

Other Source Categorically Eligible Student Lists (OT)

- Extended eligibility does not pertain to students identified as OT.
- Collect and save proof of eligibility from April 1, 2025, for other source categorically eligible students.
- **Data Source:** Examples include Head Start enrollment records, and lists provided by district homeless liaisons or other state or local agencies. This documentation must be dated and signed. Eligibility dates must be noted on all documentation.

Enrollment

- Download and save in Excel the LEA's entire master enrollment file from April 1, 2025. The list must contain the following:
    - date the data pertains to;
    - school name;
    - school facility code (assigned by the state Public School Information System (PSIS);
    - student last name;
    - student first name;
    - student address;
    - student date of birth;
    - student grade; and
    - state assigned student identifier (SASID) number for students in public schools.
- The CSDE encourages sponsors to work with the LEA's central office staff to ensure enrollment data can be collected appropriately and saved in an Excel file.
- **Data source:** The LEA's Local Information System (saved on April 1, 2025).

3 — Resources

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) (CSDE webpage):
https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/community-eligibility-provision

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 05-2025: Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Annual Notification Requirement for all Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) Participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or the School Breakfast Program (SBP) Due April 7, 2025:
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/memos/om2025/om 05-25.pdf

Direct Certification for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):
https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/direct-certification

Eligibility Manual for School Meals (USDA):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/forms/freered/usda_eligibility_manual.pdf

Important Reminders for Completing Direct Certification (CSDE webpage):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/directcert/important_reminders_completing_direct_certification.pdf

USDA Memo SP 09-2014: CEP Guidance and Frequently Asked Questions:
https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/SP09-2024s.pdf

3 | Resources