




STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



**TO:** Sponsors of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP)

**FROM:** John D. Frassinelli, Chief   
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education

**DATE:** March 19, 2019

**SUBJECT:** **Operational Memorandum No. 08-19**  
Community Eligibility Provision: Annual Notification Requirement

This memo provides guidance to school food authorities (SFAs) to assist with the collection of timely, site-specific data to inform the development of the 2019-20 Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) eligibility lists. **Note:** The CEP notification requirement does **not** apply to residential child care institutions (RCCIs) and sponsors of the Special Milk Program (SMP).

### Background

The CEP provides an alternative approach for offering school meals in local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools in low-income areas, instead of collecting individual household applications for free and reduced-price meals. The CEP allows schools that predominantly serve low-income children to offer free, nutritious school meals to all students through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). 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. **Participation in the CEP is not mandatory, even if an LEA meets eligibility requirements.**

### Federal Requirements

The National School Lunch Act requires the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to annually notify LEAs of **districtwide** eligibility for CEP participation [42 U.S.C. 1759a(a)(1)(F)(x)(II)]. All LEAs (regardless of participation or intent to participate in the CEP) must submit **school-level** CEP eligibility data to the CSDE [42 U.S.C. 1759a(a)(1)(F)(x)(III)]. After collecting the data, the CSDE and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service post the lists of CEP-eligible and near-eligible LEAs and schools on their websites. LEAs receive notice of districtwide eligibility through the process of submitting school-level eligibility data to the CSDE's Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs (CNP System). The CSDE's list of CEP eligible and near-eligible LEAs and schools will be posted on the CSDE's [CEP](#) webpage no later than May 1, 2019.

## Reporting Process

All public and private SFAs of the NSLP and SBP (on behalf of the LEA) must enter into the CNP System the three data elements used to calculate CEP eligibility. SFAs must submit the data by close of business on **April 9, 2019**, even if they do not currently participate or intend to participate in the CEP. These data serve only as a notice of CEP eligibility and near eligibility to LEAs and schools. RCCIs and SMP sponsors are not eligible to participate in the CEP and are exempt from this requirement.

## Data Elements

All primary source data documents used to support the numbers entered into the CNP System must be maintained on file by the LEA for audit purposes.

**Note:** Only students that have access to the NSLP and/or SBP should be included in the total number of directly certified students and total student enrollment. Sponsor LEAs should make arrangements to collect required data from recipient sites if there is an interschool agreement in place. Private schools should also save an enrollment file in case that school will be participating in the CEP.

SFAs are required to enter into the CNP System the following three data elements, specifically from **April 1, 2019**, for each site that operates the NSLP or SBP:

- total number of directly certified students as found on the CSDE's direct certification list that can be accessed from the CSDE's [Direct Certification Web Application](#);
- total number of students directly certified manually or outside of the CSDE direct certification list (e.g., homeless, runaway, Head Start, and some foster students); and
- total enrollment from the LEA's master enrollment file (Excel document provided by the LEA's central office Local Information System). **Note:** Do **not** enter data from the food service point-of-sale data system.

**Required Procedure:** The LEA's total enrollment (master file) from April 1, 2019, must be obtained **only** from the LEA's central office Local Information System, and **must** be saved as an Excel document. The file must indicate that the data is from April 1, 2019, and must be saved until June 30, 2019, in case the LEA plans on submitting an application for CEP participation for the next school year. The file must contain the following data elements:

- school name;
- school facility code (assigned by the state Public School Information System (PSIS));
- student last name;
- student first name;
- student date of birth;
- student grade; and
- state assigned student identifier (SASID) number for students in public schools.

**The CSDE cannot accept any other primary source data for enrollment when the LEA submits the CEP application documents to the CSDE.**

**Note:** SFAs must check the CSDE’s direct certification list on Wednesday, April 3, 2019, **after** the process has completed the match between the CSDE and the Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS). Do not check the CSDE’s direct certification list on Monday or Tuesday because some students may be missed.

For information on how to access the CNP System to enter notification data, please refer to the attached CSDE document, [Community Eligibility Provision \(CEP\) Data Collection Guidance for School-level Eligibility Information](#).

### **Eligible LEAs Interested in Implementing the CEP**

LEAs must formally apply for the CEP for school year 2019-20 if they meet at least one of the following criteria:

- LEAs/schools electing CEP participation for the first time;
- LEAs/schools in the mid-cycle of CEP participation that are requesting changes to their currently approved ISP;
- LEAs/schools currently in the fourth year of CEP participation with an ISP greater than or equal to 40 percent; and
- LEAs/schools currently in the fourth year of CEP participation with an ISP greater than or equal to 30 percent but less than 40 percent (eligible for one “grace” year).

During a “grace” year, the percentage of meals reimbursed at the free rate will be based on the lower ISP, as determined using April 1, 2019, data. The LEA or school will have to return to standard counting and claiming, or to provision 2 or 3, if the ISP calculated using data from April 1, 2020, is less than 40 percent.

Eligible LEAs interested in CEP participation must follow the CSDE’s guidelines to formally apply for the CEP, and must submit all documentation to support ISP calculations. The CSDE will validate this data before any ISPs are finalized and accepted for claiming purposes for the next school year. The CEP application documents are available on the CSDE’s [CEP](#) webpage.

If a LEA determines that it will need to formally apply for CEP for the next school year, please contact Donna Heins no later than **May 17, 2019**, to schedule a conference call to discuss the CEP application process for school year 2019-20. The application deadline to formally apply for CEP participation (new or recalculating schools and LEAs) is **June 30, 2019**. The three required CEP application documents (CEP Participation Worksheets, master Student Enrollment file, and Student Identification List) must also be submitted by that date. Do not upload any application documents to the CNP System before contacting Donna Heins for guidance.

All other mid-cycle participating CEP LEAs must notify Donna Heins by **June 30, 2019**, if they intend to continue with their current ISP or plan to withdraw from the CEP and revert to the regular meal counting and claiming process.

The table on pages 5-6 summarizes the CEP notification due dates for NSLP and SBP public and private school sponsors, and the dates associated with an LEA’s intent to participate in the CEP for the next school year.

**Note:** The CEP data must be from **April 1, 2019**, but must be accessed on **April 3, 2019**. The CEP data must reflect all enrolled students directly certified in school year 2018-19, up through and including April 1, 2019. Therefore, SFAs must be sure to click on “View All Certified Records” (see below) when accessing the CSDE’s direct certification list.

Direct Certification

School District

Home Review Matched Case Management State Wide Search Upload Settings

School Year: 2018-2019

The table below shows all the files that have been created through the Match or Case Management process. To view the file, click the View link next to the record.

View	Report Date	# of SASID's
<a href="#">View</a>	03/11/2019	8
<a href="#">View</a>	03/05/2019	40
<a href="#">View</a>	02/25/2019	10
<a href="#">View</a>	02/19/2019	36

<b>Summary of CEP Notification and Application Due Dates for NSLP and SBP Public and Private School Sponsors</b>		
<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Action Required</b>	<b>Comments</b>
April 9, 2019	All LEAs participating in the NSLP and SBP (except RCCIs and SMP sponsors) report the required CEP notification data in the CNP System.	Beginning April 3, 2019, insert only school year 2018-19 data as of April 1, 2019.
April 15, 2019	The SFA reports 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.	LEAs are eligible to participate in the CEP if the ISP for the entire district, groups of schools, or individual schools meets or exceeds 40 percent.
May 1, 2019	The CSDE posts the LEA and school-level CEP Notification lists on the CSDE's CEP website at <a href="https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Community-Eligibility-Provision/Eligibility">https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Community-Eligibility-Provision/Eligibility</a> .	
May 17, 2019	<p>Deadline for eligible LEAs that are interested in CEP participation <b>and</b> meet one of the criteria below, to schedule a conference call to discuss the CSDE's CEP application process guidelines. LEAs <b>must</b> formally apply for CEP participation for school year 2019-20 if they meet one of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LEAs/schools are electing CEP participation for the first time;</li> <li>• LEAs/schools are currently in year four of their ISP cycle; or</li> <li>• LEAs/schools are in the mid-cycle of CEP participation and requesting changes to their current ISP (e.g., population changes, grades removed/added, schools merge, ISP is higher, etc.).</li> <li>• LEAs/schools currently in the fourth year of CEP participation with an ISP greater than or equal to 30 percent but less than 40 percent (eligible for one "grace" year).</li> </ul>	Contact Donna Heins at <a href="mailto:donna.heins@ct.gov">donna.heins@ct.gov</a> or 860-807-2082.

**Summary of CEP Notification and Application Due Dates  
for NSLP and SBP Public and Private School Sponsors, continued**

<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Action Required</b>	<b>Comments</b>
June 30, 2019	Deadline for currently participating CEP LEAs ( <b>in the mid-cycle of CEP participation with no intention of revising the ISP</b> ) to confirm continued participation in the CEP for school year 2019-20.	Contact Donna Heins at <a href="mailto:donna.heins@ct.gov">donna.heins@ct.gov</a> or 860-807-2082.
June 30, 2019	<p>Deadline for any LEA (<b>requiring new ISP calculations</b>) to formally notify the CSDE of their intention to participate in the CEP for school year 2019-20 by submitting the required CSDE CEP application documents.</p> <p>Deadline for any LEA participating in the CEP to notify the CSDE if they intend to drop CEP participation for the following school year. These LEAs must either enroll in another provision program <b>or</b> return to standard counting and claiming.</p>	<p>Upload CEP application documents in the CNP System:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. CEP Participation Worksheets</li> <li>2. Master Student Enrollment File obtained and saved from April 1, 2019</li> <li>3. Identified Student List</li> </ol>

Questions may be directed to Donna Heins or your school nutrition county consultant.

Consultants for School Nutrition Programs	
County	Consultant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fairfield County (Includes Region 9)</li> <li>Litchfield County (Includes Regions 1, 6, 7, 12, and 14)</li> </ul>	Fionnuala Brown <a href="mailto:fionnuala.brown@ct.gov">fionnuala.brown@ct.gov</a> 860-807-2129
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hartford County (Includes Region 10)</li> <li>Middlesex County (Includes Regions 4, 13, and 17)</li> </ul>	Teri Dandeneau <a href="mailto:teri.dandeneau@ct.gov">teri.dandeneau@ct.gov</a> 860-807-2079
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Haven County (Includes Regions 5, 15, and 16)</li> </ul>	Jackie Schipke <a href="mailto:jackie.schipke@ct.gov">jackie.schipke@ct.gov</a> 860-807-2123
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New London County</li> <li>Tolland County (Includes Regions 8 and 19)</li> <li>Windham County (Includes Region 11)</li> </ul>	Susan Alston <a href="mailto:susan.alston@ct.gov">susan.alston@ct.gov</a> 860-807-2081

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Attachment

Important: This is a numbered Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) operational memorandum that contains important program information. Please read carefully and retain for future reference. All CSDE operational memoranda are posted on the CSDE’s [Operational Memoranda for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.