# Superintendent’s Memo #112-19


**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: May 10, 2019

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction

## SUBJECT: Community Eligibility Provision Application 2019-2020

This memorandum provides information, including required documentation, for local education agencies (LEAs) to apply for one or more schools to participate in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) for the 2019-2020 school year. CEP in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) allows LEAs with a high percentage of directly certified low-income students to provide meals at no charge to all students without collecting meal applications. School divisions that meet the eligibility criteria outlined below may apply to participate in CEP for one or more schools, groups of schools, or divisionwide. Participation in CEP is a local decision that requires consideration of multiple factors, including the fiscal impact of this alternate provision for claiming reimbursement. The Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Nutrition is available to assist with this evaluation.

[Superintendent’s Memorandum 070-19](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2019/index.shtml), dated March 29, 2019, provided preliminary information, guidance, and the required annual notification of divisionwide eligibility for the Community Eligibility Provision. All school divisions were required to submit a CEP Site Eligibility Report in the School Nutrition Program Web-based System (SNPWeb) by April 15, 2019. This data collection detailed the number of identified students directly certified as eligible to receive free meals and the school enrollment as of April 1, 2019. A school, group of schools, or school division must have an identified student percentage (ISP) of at least forty percent of the students enrolled as reported in the April 1, 2019, CEP Site Eligibility Report to participate in CEP. The complete [April 1, 2019, Virginia CEP report](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/nutrition/statistics/index.shtml) of divisions and schools eligible, near eligible, or currently participating can be downloaded from the VDOE website.

### Community Eligibility Provision Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to participate in CEP, a school division, or one or more schools, or groups of schools in the division, must:

* Participate in both the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP);
* Have an identified student percentage (ISP) of 40 percent or greater as of April 1, 2019. The 40 percent threshold may be determined for an individual school, a group of schools within the school division, or for all schools collectively divisionwide. Grouping schools allows some schools to be below the 40 percent threshold as long as the aggregate percentage of the group is at least 40 percent;
* Agree to provide both breakfast and lunch at no charge to all students and, if the federal reimbursement is not sufficient to cover the meal costs, the LEA agrees to cover any meal cost beyond the reimbursement rate; and,
* Submit an application to participate in CEP in SNPWeb and receive approval from VDOE.

### Community Eligibility Provision Application Process

The CEP application is a component of the SNPWeb Application Packet. The school division must submit the CEP Schedule as part of the 2019-2020 SNPWeb Application Packet for one or more schools, groups of schools, or the entire division to participate in CEP. The 2019-2020 SNPWeb Application Packet will be open for data entry on May 13, 2019. CEP applications must be submitted in SNPWeb by the local point of contact for the school nutrition program with the authorization of the division superintendent. The CEP Schedule is due by June 30 annually, along with the other required components of the CEP application listed below. Early submission is encouraged.

To submit a CEP application for 2019-2020, the following steps must be completed and submitted, as described:

1. Complete and submit the Community Eligibility Provision Schedule in the SNPWeb Application Packet for School Year 2019-2020. Detailed instructions on how to create and submit the CEP Schedule in SNPWeb are in Attachment A to this memo.
2. Download the CEP Addendum from Attachment B to this memo and complete the required fields. Print the completed form and obtain the signatures of the LEA SNP director and the LEA superintendent. Scan and save the form to your computer. Follow the instructions in Attachment B to submit the form to VDOE by uploading it to SNPWeb as an attachment in the 2019-2020 Application Packet.
3. Complete and submit the USDA CEP Federal Reimbursement Estimator. The Excel estimator tool must be downloaded from SNPWeb by accessing Applications>Download Forms>CEP. Complete the estimator (in Excel format), save, and submit by attaching the completed Excel spreadsheet to an email and sending it to the Regional SNP Specialist assigned to your division.
4. Submit, via the SSWS Dropbox, the required supporting documents to include: the confidential list of directly certified students to document the April 1 number of identified students in the CEP Schedule for each school, group of schools, or division applying to participate in CEP and the April 1 number of students enrolled. This documentation requires the detailed list of names and eligibility status for each student reported as an identified student, as well as the number of students enrolled in the school using the LEA enrollment report, to support the data reported in the SNPWeb CEP Site Eligibility Report for April 1, 2019. This detailed documentation must be submitted for each school applying to participate in CEP. Refer to [Superintendent’s Memorandum 070-19](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2019/index.shtml) for specific information on the supporting documentation that was required to be maintained by the LEA for the April 1, 2019, CEP Site Eligibility Report data.

**Please Note:** The direct certification supporting documentation is confidential. To secure the data and protect its confidentiality, it must be uploaded to the secure **Single Sign-on for Web Systems (SSWS) Dropbox** and sent to the Regional SNP Specialist assigned to your division. This confidential documentation **must not** be sent by email or any other method, as the confidentiality and security of the information could be breached. Instructions for how to upload the confidential file to the dropbox are in Attachment C to this memorandum.

The VDOE SNP staff will review the CEP Schedule and application packet to ensure the school/group/division meets the minimum identified student percentage; participates in both the NSLP and SBP; and has a record of administering the USDA school nutrition programs in accordance with federal and state regulations, including maintaining an appropriate and timely financial reporting system.

School divisions should analyze the fiscal impact of CEP implementation on the local school nutrition program. Financial consideration should be based on the anticipated level of federal reimbursement and other non-federal support that may be available to pay for any meal costs in excess of the projected federal reimbursement that will be received using the CEP alternative. If the federal reimbursement received is not sufficient to cover the costs of providing breakfast and lunch to all students at no charge, non-federal funds must be used to offset the difference. The division should identify the source and amount of non-federal funds that will be budgeted and available to support costs in excess of the federal reimbursement, if needed, prior to finalizing the application to participate in CEP.

School divisions should use the USDA CEP Federal Reimbursement Estimator, which is Attachment C to this memorandum, to project the monthly federal reimbursement that will be received using CEP. The division should also assess the current net cash resources of the school nutrition program and projected per meal costs to determine if non-federal funds will be required to support the school nutrition program in CEP schools. A tool to determine both total revenues and total expenses per meal equivalent has been developed by the Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) as part of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for School Nutrition Programs. The interactive Excel spreadsheet tool could be used to assist LEAs with decision making on the financial impact of CEP. The interactive Excel spreadsheet is available to LEAs in SNPWeb by accessing Applications>Download Forms>Financial Management.

### Considerations for Other Programs Using Individual Student Free and Reduced Eligibility

The identified student percentage, as submitted in the CEP Site Eligibility Report and used in the CEP Schedule, will be validated by VDOE SNP staff for each participating CEP school. Validation will be conducted, using the submitted LEA documentation, prior to final approval and before the first claim for reimbursement is filed to ensure the integrity of the data. This validated identified student percentage data will be used for CEP and for other programs for which individual student free and reduced eligibility was previously used as an indicator of socioeconomic status. Questions about the impact of CEP implementation and Title I funding should be directed to Shyla Vesitis, VDOE Title I Coordinator, at (804) 225-3711 or by email at shyla.vesitis@doe.virginia.gov.

[Superintendent’s Memorandum 104-14](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2014/104-14.shtml) addressed the topic of economically disadvantaged student identification for accountability purposes in schools using CEP when Virginia schools began to participate in the 2013-2014 school year. The VDOE determined schools would identify only students determined eligible by direct certification in the non-base years as economically disadvantaged for tracking accountability results in CEP schools.

To provide required economically disadvantaged information for individual students, as available, SNP staff in CEP participating school divisions should continue to conduct direct certification for all enrolled eligible students each year, including those in CEP schools. Students enrolled in CEP schools who are directly certified each year should be identified as economically disadvantaged in the division’s student enrollment database, even though direct certification status will not be used by the school nutrition program to claim meals for individual students in CEP schools.

In divisions where CEP is implemented in some schools and other schools continue to collect household applications, there may be students in CEP schools who are determined free or reduced price eligible because they are a member of a household where an application was used to determine eligibility for free or reduced price meals for students attending a non-CEP school. The eligibility from the household application should be used to identify the student in the CEP school as economically disadvantaged in the student enrollment database for other purposes, such as accountability reporting, but should not be used to determine eligibility for meals or to claim meals by category for the student who attends a CEP school.

For non-participating schools in a division that participates in CEP for some schools, any student who is determined free or reduced price eligible by either direct certification or application should be identified as economically disadvantaged in the student enrollment database. This procedure was in place for all schools prior to CEP implementation and remains the same in the non-CEP schools.

For other programs, such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA Part B) and other child nutrition programs, the validated ISP times the 1.6 multiplier (the claiming percentage for meals reimbursed at the free rate) is used to determine the free and reduced price eligibility percentage for schools participating in CEP. This number aligns more closely with the free and reduced price percentage used for non-CEP schools. [The annual October 31 free and reduced price eligibility report](http://doe.virginia.gov/support/nutrition/statistics/index.shtml) should be used for this purpose as it reports the calculated claiming percentage for all schools using the validated ISP.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact the Regional School Nutrition Program Specialist assigned to your division, or Dr. Sandy Curwood, RDN, Director, Office of School Nutrition Programs, at (804) 225-2074 or sandra.curwood@doe.virginia.gov.

JFL/SCC/cc

### Attachments

1. [Instructions for the CEP Schedule in SNPWeb 2019-2020](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2019/112-19a.docx)
2. [CEP Addendum to the Agreement and Instructions](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2019/112-19b.docx)
3. [Instructions for Uploading a File to the SSWS Dropbox](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2019/112-19c.docx)