



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA  
Department of Education

**DATE:** March 23, 2018  
**TO:** Division Superintendents  
**FROM:** Steven M. Constantino, Ed.D., Acting Superintendent of Public Instruction  
**SUBJECT: Community Eligibility Provision (CEP): Required April 1, 2018, Identified Student Percentage Data Collection and Annual LEA Division-wide Eligible, Near Eligible, and CEP Expiration Notification**

The purpose of this memorandum is to meet two regulatory requirements for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

- The first is to collect school-level data as of April 1, 2018, on the number of directly certified free students and total enrollment to establish the identified student percentage for each school. This is required for public posting and the 2018-2019 CEP application.
- The second is to provide the required annual notification to LEAs that are eligible or near eligible to participate in CEP division-wide based on previously reported data.

The CEP school meal program provides the option for eligible local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools with high percentages of low-income households to offer school breakfast and lunch meals at no charge to all students in participating schools without collecting meal applications.

Identified students are defined as students approved for free meals through means other than individual household applications. This definition includes students who are directly certified for free meals based on their participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or directly certified for free meals based on Medicaid income data. Identified students also includes homeless, runaway, migrant and foster, and Head Start students, approved for free meals by means other than a meal application, such as through the LEA liaison or other school division records. It does not include students who are categorically eligible based on information submitted on a meal application, such as SNAP or TANF case numbers. The Identified Student Percentage (ISP) will be determined by dividing the number of identified students for each site by its enrollment. Data submitted by school divisions will be reviewed by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and consolidated into a state report that will be posted to the VDOE website by May 1, 2018.

All school divisions and school food authorities (SFAs) must submit the April 1, 2018, number of identified students and enrollment for each school/site in the School Nutrition Program Web-based software (SNPWeb). Data for all schools/sites must be reported, including schools and divisions currently operating under CEP and those that do not operate under CEP or do not meet CEP eligibility requirements. The identified student data submitted in this required report must reflect all students who were directly certified for free meals as of **April 1, 2018**.

**Note:** because April 1 falls on a Sunday this year, the data should be reported as of the end of the day on March 30, 2018. **The deadline to submit the data in SNPWeb is April 16, 2018, at 5 p.m.**

Detailed instructions for the SNPWeb CEP ISP Site Eligibility Report are in Attachment A to this memorandum. The report must include data for all schools/sites in the SFA. School divisions and SFAs with one or more schools/sites currently operating under CEP must report the number of identified students and enrollment for each individual site as validated by VDOE in the base year CEP application. The individual site

data must be reported even if the site participates in CEP as part of a group or division-wide. If the ISP for a participating site has increased and the SFA is planning to request an adjustment to the ISP through a new CEP application, the newly documented number of identified students and enrollment as of April 1, 2018, must be reported.

The VDOE is also required to provide an annual notification, by April 15, to all LEAs with CEP division-wide eligibility that meets the criteria below. The annual LEA division-wide CEP notification was developed using data previously reported to VDOE by SFAs and is in Attachment B to this memorandum. The notification includes:

- LEAs eligible for CEP with a division-wide ISP of 40 percent or more;
- LEAs near eligible for CEP with a division-wide ISP of at least 30 but less than 40 percent;
- LEAs currently participating in CEP, regardless of division-wide ISP; and,
- LEAs currently participating in CEP that have reached the end of the four-year cycle and are required to reapply for one or more schools in the upcoming school year.

School divisions that meet the CEP eligibility threshold of 40 percent or more identified students division-wide, or for one or more schools, should consider implementing CEP in the upcoming school year. Schools, groups of schools, and school divisions with an identified student percentage of 62.5 or greater qualify to provide meals at no charge (free) to all students and to receive the free reimbursement rate for all student meals served. Those with an identified student percentage of 55 to 62.4 qualify to provide meals at no charge to all students and receive free reimbursement for 88 to 99 percent of the meals served. Those with an ISP less than 55 percent should evaluate the financial impact of implementing CEP to determine if it is feasible. Meals not reimbursed at the free rate are reimbursed at the paid rate and there are no student payments collected for any revenue shortfall. For more information about CEP, the USDA [Community Eligibility Provision: Planning and Implementation Guidance manual](#) ➔ consolidates CEP guidance and best practices in one location.

A Superintendent's Memorandum will be published in May to provide instructions on how to apply to participate in CEP for school year 2018-2019. The CEP application will be submitted in the SNPWeb software as part of the 2018-2019 application packet. The CEP application will be available in SNPWeb after the May 1 public posting of the ISP data. The deadline to submit CEP applications is June 30, 2018. Extensions of this CEP application deadline are not permitted by USDA regulations.

If you have questions or need more information, please contact the school nutrition program specialist assigned to your school division, or Lynne Fellin, Technical Assistance Specialist, at [lynne.fellin@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:lynne.fellin@doe.virginia.gov) ✉ or by telephone at (804) 225-2717.

SCC/tc

## Attachments:

- A. [Instructions to Submit the April 1 Identified Student Percentage Data in SNPWeb](#) (Word)
- B. [LEA Notification of Division-wide Eligible, Near Eligible, and Expiring CEP](#) (XLS)