# SNP Memo #2022-2023-58


**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: March 27, 2023

TO: School Nutrition Program Directors, Supervisors, and Contact Persons

FROM: Sandra C. Curwood, PhD, RDN, ***Sandy***

## SUBJECT: Identified Student Percentage Data Collection and Annual Required Notifications, April 2023

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) allows eligible local education agencies (LEAs) and participating schools with high percentages of low-income households to offer school breakfast and lunch meals at no charge to all students without collecting meal applications. The purpose of this memorandum is to collect the April 1 identified student percentage (ISP) data from LEAs and to meet certain CEP notification requirements.

* All LEAs must report school-level data as of April 1, 2023, on the number of **free** directly certified and categorically **free** eligible students and the school membership to establish the identified student percentage (ISP). **This data is required for all schools and must be reported in the School Nutrition Program Web-based software (SNPWeb) by April 17.** Attachment A provides detailed instructions.
* The required notification of **LEAs currently participating in CEP with four-year cycles that will expire on June 30, 2023, is provided in Attachment B**. All currently participating CEP LEAs should review the list and prepare to submit a new application to continue CEP participation in school year (SY) 2023–2024 for eligible schools with an expiring cycle (Note 3 in Attachment B and Cycle Year 2019-2020 in the SNPWeb CEP Schedule).
* The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) is required to provide an **annual notification to LEAs that may be eligible or near eligible to participate in CEP divisionwide.** See Attachment B, Column C for this projected eligibility. The potential divisionwide CEP eligibility uses a calculated ISP based on data previously submitted by LEAs this year for other purposes. It is for notification only to encourage LEAs that potentially meet CEP divisionwide eligibility to review their actual April 1 ISP data and, if it meets the 40 percent threshold, to prepare to apply for CEP divisionwide. **The actual reported April 1, 2023, ISP data for the LEA must be used in the CEP application and will determine divisionwide eligibility for SY 2023–2024.**

### Identified Students and the ISP

Identified studentsare defined as students approved for **free** meals through means other than household meal applications. This includes students who are directly certified (DC) for free meals based on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or DC for **free** meals based on Medicaid income data. Identified students also includes students approved as **categorically free** eligible without an application through the LEA liaison because of their status as homeless, runaway, migrant, or foster care placement, and certain eligible Head Start students. Only students who are determined free eligible by one of these methods should be reported as identified students in the SNPWeb report.

Students who are categorically **free eligible based on a meal application**, such as SNAP or TANF case numbers, and students who are approved free by income on an application **should not be included in the ISP**. Students approved as **reduced-price eligible** **by any means, DC or application, should not be included in the ISP data and must be excluded from the ISP report.**

All school food authorities (SFAs) must report the ISP data for all schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program as of April 1, 2023. April 1 falls on a weekend this year, however the reported data is still required to use the as of April 1 date. The next business day after April 1 may be used to generate the data with an as of date of April 1. The **SFA must create the complete, required, formatted supporting documentation, as outlined in Attachment A, and maintain that documentation locally** to support the publicly posted April 1 ISP. The documentation will also be submitted with the CEP application in June.

SFAs must report the ISP data for all schools in the SNPWeb CEP Site Eligibility Report. The identified student data must reflect all students who were determined free eligible without an application, by DC or categorically free eligible, and the school membership **as of April 1, 2023**. **The deadline to submit the report in SNPWeb is Monday, April 17, 2023, at 5:00 p.m**.

### Reporting ISP Data, Including for Currently Participating CEP Schools

Detailed instructions for the SNPWeb CEP ISP Site Eligibility Report are in Attachment A. An e-learning module for the April 1 ISP report is available on the [VDOE-SNP Rise.com e-learning portal](https://vdoe-school-nutrition.rise.com/login). If you are not registered as a learner in Rise, visit [the VDOE-SNP Training and Resources webpage](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/programs-services/school-operations-support-services/school-nutrition/training-resources) for information on how to enroll.

SFAs must report data for all schools in the SFA, including those already participating in CEP and those not eligible for CEP. SFAs with one or more **schools operating under CEP must report the current April 1 number of identified students and membership for each school**, regardless of validated base year data. The April 1 supporting documentation must be maintained on file in the SFA for every school, regardless of whether they are eligible, and whether or not a CEP application is submitted.

If the reported ISP for a participating CEP school, group, or SFA has increased since the base year, the SFA will be required to submit a new CEP application for SY 2023–2024 and begin a new cycle. If the reported ISP for a CEP participating school, group, or SFA has decreased, the previously validated ISP and cycle will continue to be in effect in SY 2023–2024 unless the four-year cycle is set to expire.

If a currently participating CEP school, or a school applying to participate for SY 2023–2024, will have a change in attendance boundaries that will reconfigure its student population in the new year, contact the VDOE, School Nutrition Programs (SNP) regional specialist assigned to the SFA for guidance.

### Annual LEA Notification of Divisionwide CEP Eligibility and Expiring CEP Cycles

The VDOE-SNP is required to provide notification annually, by April 15, to all LEAs with CEP eligibility that meets any one of the criteria below. Attachment B includes required notification of:

* LEAs potentially eligible for divisionwide CEP with a calculated ISP of 40 percent or more;
* LEAs near eligible for divisionwide CEP with a calculated ISP between 30–40 percent;
* LEAs currently participating in CEP for any schools, regardless of divisionwide ISP; and
* LEAs currently participating in CEP that have reached the end of the four-year cycle and are required to reapply for a new CEP cycle in SY 2023–2024 for one or more schools.

### CEP Implementation, Guidance, and Application

The simplified procedures of CEP help both households and schools. CEP allows schools to provide meals at no cost to all enrolled students, eliminates the need for meal applications, and eliminates student meal debt. LEAs that meet the CEP eligibility threshold for a school, group of schools, or divisionwide are encouraged to evaluate CEP for the upcoming school year. **For more information about CEP, the USDA** [**Community Eligibility Provision: Planning and Implementation Guidance Manual**](https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/cn/SP61-2016-CEP_Guidance.pdf) **consolidates CEP guidance and best practices into one resource.**

Schools, groups of schools, and school divisions with a validated ISP of 62.5 percent or greater will receive the free reimbursement rate for all reimbursable breakfast and lunch meals served to students. Schools with an ISP between 62.49–40 percent will receive the free reimbursement rate for a percentage of student meals determined by multiplying the ISP by a factor of 1.6. Meals not reimbursed at the free rate will be reimbursed at the paid rate and no student payments will be collected.

A VDOE Superintendent’s Memorandum will be issued at the beginning of May with instructions on how to apply to participate in CEP for SY 2023–2024. The CEP application will be submitted in SNPWeb as part of the SY 2023–2024 SNP application packet. Supporting documentation for the April 1, 2023, ISP and, for new CEP schools or groups only, the VDOE financial viability tool will be required with the application. The annual federal **deadline** to submit the **CEP application is June 30, 2023.**

If you have questions, please contact the VDOE-SNP regional specialist assigned to your SFA, or Lynne A. Fellin, SNP Technical Advisor to the State Director, via email at Lynne.Fellin@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 225-2717.

SCC/LAF/cc

### Attachments

1. SNPWeb Community Eligibility Provision Site Eligibility Report Checklist 2023
2. LEA Notification of Potentially and Nearly Eligible Divisionwide CEP and Expiring CEP Four-Year Cycles