

General Information

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) allows eligible districts and schools in income eligible areas to provide school lunch and breakfast at no charge to all students using simplified meal counting and claiming methods.

Schools or districts are required to serve breakfast **and** lunch at no charge to all students. They must also agree to cover the cost of providing free meals to all students, above the amount provided by federal and state reimbursement, with non-federal funds if needed to keep a positive balance in the non-profit school food service fund. Participants in CEP are approved for 4 years. However, CEP can be stopped at any time during the 4-year duration.

To be eligible for the federal CEP, the identified student percentage (ISP) for a site or group of sites must be at least 25 percent. The ISP is calculated by taking the number of identified students in a site or group of sites divided by the number of students enrolled in the site or group of sites. Enrolled students are those who have access to either breakfast or lunch at the site(s).

Identified students are those who are certified for free meals in the following ways (other than a free/reduced price application):

- Directly certified for SNAP, TANF, FDPIR, or the Medicaid Demonstration Project.
- Foster students certified through means other than an Application for Meal Benefits.
- McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Program
- Migrant Education Program
- Head Start/Early Head Start, Oregon Pre-K, or Preschool Promise participants.
- Recipients of the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR).
- Administrative Applications under special circumstances

There are other factors to consider before applying. The [Community Eligibility Provision Decision Tree](#) can help you decide if CEP is right for you.

Please visit the **Resources** section of the ODE School Nutrition Program's [Special Provision](#) webpage for the step- by-step CEP Data Collection Instructions. Please read all instructions for important information on preparing and submitting your application documents.

Additional information related to this program may be found at:

- [CEP Planning and Implementation Guidance | Food and Nutrition Service \(usda.gov\)](#)
- [Community Eligibility Provision Resource Center | Food and Nutrition Service \(usda.gov\)](#)
- [Community Eligibility Provision | Food and Nutrition Service \(usda.gov\)](#)

Introduction to Community Eligibility Provision

Student Success Act (SSA) — Community Eligibility Provision Incentive

Oregon's Community Eligibility Provision Incentive (CEPI) Reimbursement Program will provide additional state funding to approved CEP schools that meet the eligibility requirements, as defined in [OAR 581-051-0610 \(1\)\(c\)](#). These state funds will be in addition to the federal meal reimbursements CEP schools receive, making it possible for more schools to participate at a funding level that is more sustainable for the school. Applying for CEP is recommended for all schools who qualify.

The Oregon CEPI will supplement the federal free reimbursement **up to 90%** for those sites, groups, or districts that qualify for CEP per [OAR 581-051-0610 \(1\)\(c\)\(A\)](#). By offering this supplemental, state-funded meal reimbursement, the legislature and the ODE are encouraging more CEP eligible schools to participate in the provision. This will benefit schools and ensure more students receive their breakfasts and lunches at no charge.

Note: This is a separate state grant agreement for these supplemental funds. This state agreement is in conjunction with the federal agreement to operate CEP.

Important Dates

- April 1: Beginning of CEP election process. Is also the “as-of” date used when compiling the required student lists.
- June 30: Deadline for interested and currently approved CEP sponsors to complete the online CEP Annual Evaluation survey. Is also the deadline date to submit data if opted to go through the election process.

Tips

- Complete the online [CEP Annual Survey](#) form as soon as possible. This enables ODE staff to monitor your district's progression through the CEP process and provide more effective support.
- Follow the CEP data collection instructions found on the [Special Provisions](#) webpage.
- Submit comprehensive data for the best results.
- Collaborate with the ADM membership (enrollment) personnel in your district to obtain the district's entire membership report from the student membership information system.
- Communicate with your district program liaisons (McKinney-Vento, Migrant Ed, Head Start, etc.) on data required for submission.
- Please use the templates found on [Special Provisions](#) page when submitting data.
- Be sure to discuss Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program participation with school nutrition staff, administrators, and business managers to ensure all factors are considered before choosing to participate in CEP.
- **Do not send** any student data via email, as it is not secure. Use the [secure file transfer](#) system only.