



School Nutrition Office

We have great news!

We have been approved for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program and will implement it this school year. Every student enrolled in Winchester Public Schools can eat breakfast and lunch at NO charge!



Officially:

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) enables high-needs schools and districts with high concentrations of low-income students to offer free meals to all students and eliminates the need for household school meal applications.

Participation:

Any district, group of schools in a district, or individual school with 40% or more “identified students”—children eligible for free school meals who are identified by means other than an individual household application—can participate. We are approved for a four year window, but can withdraw from the program if it causes us financial difficulties.

Identified students include:

Children who are directly certified for free school meals because their household participates in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), and in certain instances, Medicaid.

Benefits of CEP:

Less administrative work

Schools no longer need to collect and verify school meal applications, handle meal payments or track down uncollected fees.

Increases participation

In a U.S. Department of Agriculture evaluation of school districts participating in the seven pilot states in the 2012-13 school year, CEP boosted school meal participation; school breakfast participation increased by 9.4 percent and school lunch participation increased by 5.2 percent.

Facilitates implementation of alternative breakfast models

When schools only need to do a “headcount” of how many kids eat and no longer need to collect fees or count each meal served by fee category, it simplifies the implementation of breakfast in the classroom and “grab and go” service models that can further boost participation.

Improved financial viability of school meal programs

When more students participate in school meals, economy of scale allows the program to be more cost effective and generate more revenue, which can be used to pay staff, buy equipment, and/or improve the quality of the food served.

Eliminates unpaid meal balances

Schools no longer have to foot the bill for unpaid meal fees, or try to collect them from families. Removing this dynamic between schools and families allows school nutrition staff to focus on preparing and serving healthy meals and eliminates a significant financial burden for school districts and families.



Not for adults or visitors:

Adults visiting their elementary child for breakfast or lunch must also pay for their meals and cannot participate in the program.

Effect on grants and programs:

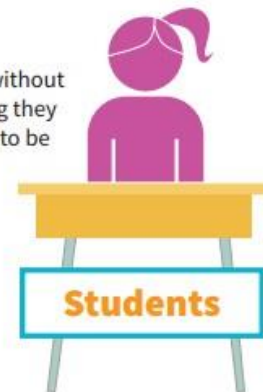
Since there are no applications, actual free and reduced percentages will be masked by the program's availability to all students. Some grants and programs require a free and reduced number as part of their application process. The USDOE has established different methods of calculating these free and reduced numbers, and we will have to use them.

CEP Benefits Many:



Children eat two healthy meals at school each day, stretching families' limited food budgets

Students get healthy meals without the stigma attached, ensuring they have the nutrition they need to be engaged learners



CEP simplifies and streamlines administrative processes; maximizes federal reimbursements; eliminates unpaid meal balances; and makes it easier to implement Breakfast After the Bell models like Breakfast in the Classroom

We are excited about this opportunity to provide free and nutritious meals for both Breakfast and Lunch to every student in the district. We will be working with the principals to carefully implement the program at their school, and expect to start the first day of classes. We will be issuing a media release in the coming days.

**Please call Food Services Office if you have any questions.
(540)667-4258 Ext. 16147**