

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Business Managers, Superintendents, School Principals and Food Service Directors  
FROM: Laurie M Colgan, Director, Child Nutrition Programs  
SUBJECT: Community Eligibility Provision Program Renewal Process  
DATE: February 13, 2018

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**Community Eligibility Participation:** Your school(s) are currently participating in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) which allows schools to provide breakfast and lunch at no charge to students. To be eligible, schools with an Identified Student Percentage (ISP) of 40% and higher receive reimbursement based on their ISP which is determined by the percent of directly certified students enrolled on April 1<sup>st</sup> of the year prior to application. Direct certification determines students to be eligible for free school meals without the use of a free and reduced price meal application; this includes students that are on the Direct Certification Master List through the student census as result of their household participating in 3SquaresVT or Reach-Up, being a runaway, migrant or homeless student, a foster child or a Head Start student.

**CEP Participation Options:** Schools that are in their final or fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) year of participation must evaluate their current direct certification percentages (number of directly certified students and enrollment) and determine what actions they will take for the food service program for the next school year, 2018-2019. Attached are the schools that need to make this determination.

**Next Steps:** The AOE needs to hear from each SFA whether schools will be renewing their CEP status or not by March 15, 2018. Specific step by step directions are included on the next page.

If you need assistance with determining the Identified Student Percentage or your program's intentions for the next school year, or if you have questions about determining who is directly certified or community eligibility, please contact Laurie Colgan at: [laurie.colgan@vermont.gov](mailto:laurie.colgan@vermont.gov) or at (802) 479-1187.

## Direction for Completing the Community Eligibility Provision Intent to Renew Form

1. **Step 1: Update your Direct Certification Master List:** All schools should maintain an active Direct Certification Master List. [VT Appendix-page 21](#) This list includes students who are direct certified by census, are migrant, McKinney-Vento eligible (homeless), in foster care or Head Start students in your school. If you are unclear about how to complete this document, AOE Child Nutrition staff are available for consult.

As a reminder, it is extremely helpful to continue tracking the direct certification each year as it allows schools to observe trends. For example, if direct certification rates are trending toward a decrease that makes CEP fiscally unfeasible, running the direct certification list helps the school plan and prepare in advance for returning to standard meal counting and claiming. If the school finds that their direct certification numbers have increased, it allows the school or site to establish a new ISP and re-certify their data for higher reimbursement rates and start a new four-year cycle extending participation in CEP by starting a new 4-year cycle with higher reimbursement rates.

2. **Step 2: Complete the Attached Intent to Renew Form:**
  - a. **Column A-** Record the name of each site up for renewal.
  - b. **Column B-** Record the number of students from your updated Direct Certification Master List
  - c. **Column C-** Record the number of students enrolled in the site
  - d. **Column D-** Divide column B by column C to get the ISP. This should be recorded as a percentage.
  - e. **Column E-** Each site will need to have make one decision. We encourage you to consult with each site prior to making your recommendation.
    - i. **E-1-** If column D is greater than 40% you need to determine if you will or won't pursue remaining a CEP site.
      1. **Yes-** Continue as a CEP site with a new ISP that could result in a different reimbursement rate.
      2. **No-** Return to standard counting and claiming.
    - ii. **E-2-** If column D is less than 40% you need to determine if you will request a transition year.
      1. **Yes-** A transition year will give the site(s) the ability to restore CEP eligibility status without returning immediately to standard counting and claiming and provide time to plan for the return to standard claiming the following year.
      2. **No-** Return to standard counting and claiming. Investigate participating in Provision 2.
3. **Step 3: Return the Intent to Renew Form to Laurie Colgan** [Laurie.Colgan@vermont.gov](mailto:Laurie.Colgan@vermont.gov) or Fax to: 479-1822
4. **Step 4: Complete the Agreement for each Site:** On May 1, 2018, each site will need to submit the CEP Agreement with updated enrollment list and direct certification documentation in order to be eligible to participate.