

## The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

### *What Does It Mean For Your School or Local Educational Agency?*

#### What does it do?

- Allows schools and local educational agencies (LEAs) located in low-income areas to provide free breakfast and lunch to all students
- Eliminates the burden of collecting household applications to determine eligibility for school meal programs

#### Who benefits? **Everyone!**

- **Students**  
Access to free nutritious meals for all students, no stigma, and less time spent in cashier lines and more time to eat nutritious meals
- **Parents**  
No household application means less paperwork and no worries about lunch accounts
- **School staff**  
Streamlined meal service operation and more time for students to consume their food
- **Administrators**  
Reduced paperwork and administrative costs, no need to track unpaid meal charges, improved program integrity, and more nourished students ready to learn and grow



#### Who can participate?

- Schools and LEAs with a minimum Identified Student Percentage ( $\geq 40$  percent) in the prior school year

Identified students = those certified for free meals without the use of household applications (for example those directly certified through SNAP).

- Available to:
  - All schools in an LEA
  - A group of schools in an LEA
  - An individual school in an LEA

#### Background

- Authorized by Congress as a part of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.
- Phased in over a period of 3 years, starting with D.C., Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, New York, Ohio, West Virginia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, and Massachusetts.
- Available nationwide beginning July 1, 2014 (School Year 2014-15).

#### What must interested schools and LEAs do?

- Meet eligibility requirements.
- Serve free breakfasts and lunches to all students during the 4-year cycle.
- Count total breakfasts and total lunches served to students daily.
- Agree not to collect household applications for school meal programs.
- Determine if non-Federal funds are needed to cover costs above USDA reimbursement.

#### What do interested schools and LEAs do next?

- Determine if CEP is right for you.
- Contact your State for more information: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/contacts/StateDirectory.htm>.
- If eligible, submit required documentation to your State Agency.