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March 11, 2026

MEMORANDUM

TO: School Nutrition Supervisors
Single Unit and Special School Administrators

FROM: Aimee F. Beam, MS, RD *AFB*
Director, Nutrition Programs

RE: **SY 2025-2026 Operational Memo #21**
Instructions for Community Eligibility Provision Reporting

This memorandum is to remind School Food Authorities (SFAs) about the regulations at 7 CFR 245.9(f)(5), which require Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) to annually submit school-level Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) eligibility data to the State Agency (SA).

To promote and disseminate the required data regarding the CEP, SAs are required to 1) notify all LEAs of their CEP eligibility, 2) publish a list of CEP-eligible schools on the SA website, and 3) submit the list to USDA Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) by May 1st of each year.

In order to comply with notification requirements, all SFAs must enter their school(s) CEP data in DENARS by **April 15, 2026**. Extensions to this deadline will be evaluated and granted on a case-by-case basis. Please contact Aimee Beam via email at aimee.beam@doe.k12.de.us with detailed extension requests.

Detailed instructions for entering the required data are attached to this memo. Please review these instructions carefully prior to entering data into the CEP Report in DENARS.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact us at 302-857-3356.

Attachments: Instructions for Entering CEP Data in DENARS 2026.docx
CEP – DCRT 2026.pptx

cc: Nutrition Team

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ENTERING CEP DATA IN DENARS

School Year (SY) 2025-2026

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) April 1 Data Collection

CEP Site Eligibility is based on Identified Students and enrollment as recorded on April 1 of the year prior to program implementation. USDA requires that all School Food Authorities (SFAs) report this information annually **whether or not they qualify for CEP or plan to implement CEP.**

If a School Food Authority (SFA) requires the assistance of DDOE for matching of special schools or private schools, please provide the Infinite Campus enrollment (or official school enrollment), with Student Name/Student ID/Home School District, no later than April 5, 2026, to ensure sufficient time for DDOE to conduct the matching and provide you the results.

STEP 1: Determine the identified students in each school. To do this you will need the following:

- Student enrollment roster for each school as of April 1. **This must be the official school enrollment (e.g., Infinite Campus enrollment). SFAs must not use enrollment from the Point of Sale (POS).**
- Year-to-date Direct Certification (DCRT) list (July 2025 – March 2026)
 1. In EdInsight, select the Direct Certification List, by Range report:



Direct Certification List, By Range

Direct certification List by range.

Keywords : directcert

2. Using the drop-down bars, select your District/School, select *From Month* of July, *To Month* of March. Ensure that “DHSS Matched” is selected in the *Which Students* drop down and ensure that “Direct Certification” is selected in the *Which Participants* drop-down. Click “View Report” to download the report.



District: <Select a Value> From Month: July

To Month: March Which Students? DHSS Matched

Which Participants? Direct Certification

View Report

The following students are considered “identified” students:

- Any student identified for **free** meals on any DCRT list between July and March of the current school year;
- Any student who resides in a household (same address) of a student identified for free meals on any DCRT list between July and March of the current school year;
- Students receiving SNAP/TANF benefits who can provide a letter from DHSS (if not appearing on the DCRT list);
- Any student identified by the homeless liaison of your school/district as homeless, runaway, foster, or migrant between July and March of the current school year; or
- Any student enrolled in a preschool program that uses enrollment criteria as stringent as Federal Head Start.

NOTE: Students who are certified for Medicaid Reduced only on the DCRT list cannot be counted in the identified count.

STEP 2: Once all students on the school enrollment roster have been identified, you can enter the data in the CEP Site List in DENARS.

NOTE: It is not acceptable to simply enter the total number of DCRT students from your YTD DCRT list in the CEP Site List in DENARS. The students must be matched against the current (April 1) student enrollment roster. Any student on the student enrollment roster that was identified based on any of the criteria listed in Step 1 above at any time between July and March should be counted as identified.

STEP 3: Schools that are currently participating in year 1, 2, or 3 of a 4-year CEP cycle have two options:

1. To continue with your current CEP cycle, re-enter **the same data** entered in the CEP Site List in DENARS from the April prior to program implementation. **Do not enter new data if you wish to continue your current cycle.** OR;
2. To begin a new 4-year CEP cycle, update enrollment and identified student data. If you choose to update enrollment and identified student data, you begin the 4-year cycle again and must have back-up documentation to support the data.

STEP 4: Schools that are in year 4 of a 4-year CEP cycle or any schools who used a grace year in SY 2025-2026 **must** recertify following Step 1.

Once you have determined the identified students in each school, you can complete the CEP Site List in DENARS:

STEP 1: Open DENARS, proceed through to the menu bar and select the “Applications” tab. Select the “Community Eligibility Provision” (CEP) hyperlink:

School Nutrition Programs DE-NARS

Applications | Claims | Compliance | Reports | Security | Search | Programs | Year | Help | Log Out

Applications > School Year: 2025 - 2026

Item	Description
Sponsor Manager	SNP Sponsor's Profile, Site and Hold Information
Application Packet	Applications Forms (Sponsor and Site)
Meal Pattern Compliance Summary	Number of Menu Pattern Certifications by Sponsor Summary
Verification Report	Mandatory Annual Verification Report
Verification Summary	Mandatory Annual Verification Report (FNS-742) Summary
Food Safety Inspections	Number of Food Safety Inspections by Site
Annual Audit Status Certification Form	Annual Audit Status Certification Form
Food Safety Inspections Summary	Number of Food Safety Inspections by Site Summary
Annual Audit Status Summary	Annual Audit Status Summary
FFVP Grant Overview	Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Grant Information by Site Overview
FFVP Grant Allocations	Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Grant Allocations
Site Enrollment	Site Enrollment and Eligibility information for the month of October
Community Eligibility Provision	Enrollment and Eligibility for Community Eligibility Provision
Financial Report	School Food Annual Revenues and Expenditures Report
Financial Report Summary	School Food Annual Revenues and Expenditures Report Summary
Download Forms	Forms Available for Downloading

STEP 2: Under the “Action” column, click on “Add”

School Nutrition Programs DE-NARS

Applications | Claims | Compliance | Reports | Security | Search | Programs | Year | Help | Log Out

Applications > CEP Year List > School Year: 2025 - 2026

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Site List

Status: Active

DBA:

County:

FEIN: n/a

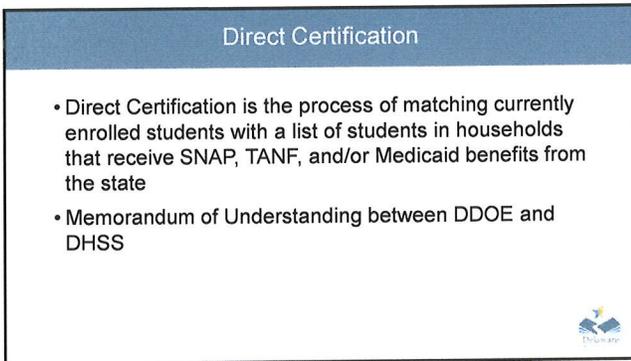
Action	School Year	Reporting Date	Open Date	Close Date	Status
Add	2025 - 2026	April 1, 2026	April 1, 2026	June 30, 2026	Not Started
View Modify Admin	2024 - 2025	April 1, 2025	April 1, 2025	September 30, 2025	Approved
View Modify Admin	2023 - 2024	April 1, 2024	April 1, 2024	August 31, 2024	Approved

STEP 3: Enter the number of Identified Students and Enrollment for each school/site listed.

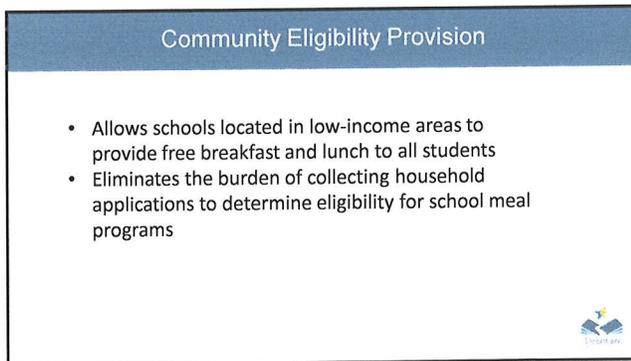
<u>Site Number</u>	<u>Site Name</u>	Nbr of Identified Students	Enrollment	ISP	Eligible?	Potentially Eligible?
0	[REDACTED]	0	0	0.00 %		
Sponsor Totals		0	0	0.00 %		



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Qualifying for CEP

Who can participate?

- Schools and LEAs with a minimum Identified Student Percentage (≥ 25 percent) in the prior school year
- Identified students = those certified for free meals without the use of household applications



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Calculating ISPs

2026 Process for Calculating ISPs

- School Food Authority uses **year-to-date** Direct Certification data from July 1, 2025, through March 31, 2026 (year-to-date data as of April 1, 2026)
- Take the April 1, 2026, student enrollment and identify all directly certified students



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Identified Students

Identified Students: students qualified for free meal benefits without completing a meal benefit form:

- Students who are **directly certified to receive free meals** by DHSS (receiving SNAP, TANF, or Medicaid Free benefits)
- Students receiving SNAP/TANF benefits who can provide a letter from DHSS (if not appearing on the direct certification list)
- Students identified by the LEA's homeless liaison as homeless, migrant, or runaway
- Students in State-appointed foster care
- Students in Pre-K programs where criteria for enrollment is at least as stringent as Federal Head Start
- Students residing in households with students who are directly certified as Free by DHSS
- **Note: Medicaid Reduced students are not counted as identified unless they also received SNAP or TANF**



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Students with MBF Case Number

For a meal benefit form with a SNAP or TANF case number –

- SFAs should qualify the student for free meals based off of categorical eligibility
- Student is NOT counted in the ISP (unless the student is on the DCRT list)

Reminder: In Delaware, SNAP or TANF numbers are 10 digits in length and the first digit and the ninth digit are always the same. If a meal benefit form is submitted with a shorter or longer number, the SFA must contact the household to confirm that someone in the household receives SNAP or TANF and obtain the correct number to note on the form.



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Identified Student Percentage Calculation

$$\text{Identified Student \%} = \frac{\text{Number of Identified Students}}{\text{Total Enrolled Students w/ Access to Breakfast and/or Lunch}} \times 100$$



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Identified Student Percentage Calculation (cont.)

The Identified Student Percentage can be calculated for:

- *An individual school*
- *A group of schools in the LEA*
- *The entire LEA*

The LEA decides how to group the schools according to what will generate the maximum reimbursement for meals served.



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Example ISP Calculations

CEP Grouping Example:

	Identified Students	Enrollment	ISP
School 1	60	120	50%
School 2	24	100	24%
School 3	150	200	75%
Group of Schools	234	420	55.71%

Source: Community Eligibility Provision 101: School Food Authority Webinar 

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Reporting Requirement Deadlines

April 15: In DENARS CEP Site List, all SFAs submit to DDOE the total number of identified students and enrollment for each school using data from July 1, 2025, through March 31, 2026

May 1: DDOE posts list of all LEA's district-wide ISP's and individual school ISP's

June 30: SFA notifies SA of their intent to participate in CEP (if applicable)



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Meal Claiming Percentages

To calculate the meal claiming percentages:

- Multiply the ISP by a factor of 1.6 to yield the free claiming percentage
- The remaining number is the percentage of meals that are claimed at the paid rate



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Meal Claiming Percentages (cont.)

To calculate the meal claiming percentages:

- Multiply the ISP by a factor of 1.6 to yield the free claiming percentage
- The remaining number is the percentage of meals that are claimed at the paid rate

	ISP		Multiplier	=	% Free	% Paid
Example 1	25%	x	1.6	=	40	60
Example 2	62.5%	x	1.6	=	100	0



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CEP Cycle

Once schools or districts qualify for CEP, the established claiming percentages may be used for the entire 4-year cycle unless:

- LEA feels data has changed and the ISP could be higher
- Changes are made to grouped schools (school is removed or added)
- In both cases the ISP is recalculated and a new 4-year cycle begins



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**CEP Cycle
CEP Site List Reminder**

Schools that are currently participating in year 1, 2, or 3 of a 4-year CEP cycle have two options:

- To continue with your current CEP cycle, re-enter the same data entered in the CEP Site List in DENARS from the April prior to program implementation. **Do not enter new data if you wish to continue your current cycle.** OR;
- To begin a new 4-year CEP cycle, update enrollment and identified student data. If you choose to update enrollment and identified student data, you begin the 4-year cycle again and must have back-up documentation to support the data.



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CEP Matching
Example: Step 1

The SFA must use the **official school enrollment as of April 1**. SFAs must not use the enrollment from the Point of Sale System.

Example:

Student ID	Last Name	First Name	School Name	Official School Enrollment	City	State	Zip Code
173456	Evans	John	123 ABC Street	Greenville	SC	29604	
234567	Smith	Jane	456 DEF Street	Columbia	SC	29204	
345678	Johnson	Mike	789 GHI Street	Durham	NC	27604	
456789	Williams	Liam	101 JKL Street	Greenville	NC	27608	
567890	Lee	Amy	321 MNO Street	Greenville	SC	29604	



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CEP Matching
Example: Step 2

The SFA must gather the direct certification information, which includes:

- DCRT July 2025 – March 2026 Year to Date List (for SFAs without a year-to-date list, like private schools, use each of the monthly lists that were provided by DDOE)
- List of students identified as homeless from the school's homeless liaison
- List of students identified as foster, runaway, or migrant from the school official who manages these programs
- List of students who are in Pre-K programs where criteria for enrollment is at least as stringent as Federal Head Start
- Students residing in households with students who are directly certified as free by DHSS
 - The SFA must confirm that the address of the student being matched is the same exact address as the student on the DCRT list



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DCRT List
Medicaid Reduced Removal Step 1

Remove students who are only certified on the DCRT list for Medicaid Reduced:

Step 1: Download the July 2025 through March 2026 DCRT list

Step 2: Save as an Excel Spreadsheet

Step 3: Save to your computer and follow the sorting steps on next slide



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DCRT List
Medicaid Reduced Removal Step 2

1. Place cursor on the Medicaid Reduced cell (should be outlined in dark green)
2. Click on "Sort & Filter"
3. Click "Filter" in the drop-down box

After these steps are completed, you will see arrows above the cells as shown in this screen shot:



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DCRT List
Medicaid Reduced Removal Step 3

- Click the arrow above the Medicaid Reduced box, highlighted in teal below
- Unclick "N" so that only Medicaid Reduced "Y" is left
- Click "OK"



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DCRT List
Medicaid Reduced Removal Step 4

Only students approved for Medicaid Reduced in the Medicaid Reduced column are left.

Review the Food Stamps (SNAP), Public Assistance (TANF) and Medicaid Free columns. If each has an "N", remove the student from the DCRT list that will be used for matching.



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CEP Matching
Example: Step 3

The SFA must identify those students on enrollment who are directly certified. This can be done by:

- Using a highlighter and the enrollment list and lists of directly certified students, highlight names of students who are enrolled and are directly certified. Total the number of highlighted students.
- Using Excel, use the matching feature through Conditional Formatting



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CEP Matching
Example: Step 3 (Cont. 1)

Excel Matching using Conditional Formatting:
Step 1 - Copy student IDs from DCRT lists over to Enrollment List

Student ID	Last Name	First Name	Street Address	City	State	Zip Code	Weighted Score
121951	Scott	Julie	121 ABC Street	Denver	CO	80202	22500
234567	Smith	John	321 ABC Street	Denver	CO	80203	22500
345678	Smith	May	123 ABC Street	Denver	CO	80204	22500
456789	Smith	John	123 ABC Street	Denver	CO	80205	22500
567890	Smith	John	123 ABC Street	Denver	CO	80206	22500



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CEP Matching
Example: Step 3 (Cont. 2)

Excel Matching using Conditional Formatting:
Step 2 - Highlight DCRT Student IDs (left click and select entire list of Student IDs), then highlight list of Student IDs on Enrollment (press "Ctrl" on your keyboard and left click to select all Student IDs).

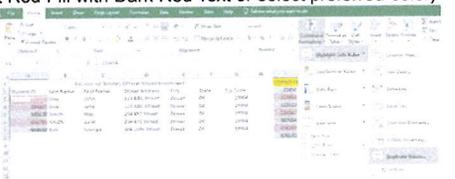


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CEP Matching
Example: Step 3 (Cont. 3)

Excel Matching using Conditional Formatting:

3. Select Conditional Formatting, then Highlight Cells Rules, then Duplicate Values, then select "OK" (for Duplicate values with Light Red Fill with Dark Red Text or select preferred color)

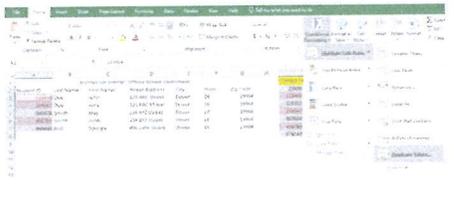


The screenshot shows the 'Duplicate Values' dialog box in Excel. The 'Format Style' section is set to 'Light Red Fill with Dark Red Text'. The 'Options' section is checked for 'Duplicate values only'. The 'Apply to range' is set to '\$A\$1:\$G\$1000'. The 'Match these cells' list contains several rows of student data.

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CEP Matching
Example: Step 3 (Cont. 4)

In this example, three students are matched with the DCRT list, 5 students are enrolled in the school.

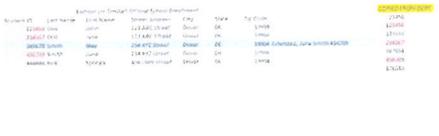


The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet with columns for 'Last Name', 'First Name', 'Address', 'City', 'State', 'Zip Code', and 'DCRT'. Three rows are highlighted in light red, indicating they are duplicate values. The DCRT column contains 'DCRT' for the highlighted rows.

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CEP Matching
Example: Step 3 (Cont. 5)

The SFA will need to highlight any additional directly certified students (extended, foster, homeless, migrant, runaway, Headstart). In this example, a student is extended benefits based off same address; the SFA noted who the student is extended from along with their ID:



The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet with columns for 'Student ID', 'Last Name', 'First Name', 'Address', 'City', 'State', 'Zip Code', and 'DCRT'. One row is highlighted in light red. The DCRT column contains 'DCRT' for the highlighted row. The 'Address' column contains '12345 Main St, Anytown, IL 61801'.

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CEP Site List in DENARS
Enter Identified and Enrolled Totals

Site Number	Site Name	Nbr of Identified Students	Enrollment	ISP	Eligible?	Potentially Eligible?
				0.00 %		
Sponsor Totals		0	0	0.00 %		



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Additional CEP Notes

- School or group of schools either new to CEP or starting a new CEP cycle
 - DDOE must validate the data
 - Data validation must be completed before the June 30th CEP election deadline
 - Documentation must be sent securely
- In Delaware, CEP schools are required to offer breakfast through an alternative service model. Examples include -
 - Breakfast in classroom
 - Grab-and-Go breakfast
 - Second chance breakfast



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Questions

Please contact the DDOE Nutrition Programs Office with any questions related to CEP or CEP reporting:

(302) 857-3356



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