



**SNA of Ohio**  
**April 2025**  
**Need to Know**

**Thinking About CEP? Here's What You Need to Know**

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) allows eligible schools to serve free breakfast and lunch to all students—no applications required. If you're weighing the pros and cons of applying, here are the essentials to guide your decision.

**Who's Eligible?**

To qualify, a school, group of schools, or entire district must have an Identified Student Percentage (ISP) of at least 25%.

Identified Students include those directly certified for free meals without an application, such as:

- SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)
- TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families)
- FDPIR (Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations)
- Homeless, migrant, or runaway youth
- Foster children
- Head Start or Even Start participants

**Formula:**

$(\text{Identified Students} \div \text{Total Enrollment}) \times 100 = \text{ISP}$

Data must reflect enrollment as of April 1 of the current school year.

**The 1.6 Factor: How Reimbursement Works**

Once you have your ISP, multiply it by 1.6 to determine the % of meals reimbursed at the free rate.

Example:

- $\text{ISP} = 50\%$
- $50\% \times 1.6 = 80\%$  of meals reimbursed at free rate
- Remaining 20% reimbursed at paid rate

This multiplier accounts for students who may qualify for reduced-price meals or don't apply.

## **CEP Benefits At a Glance**

- Increased Participation - Free meals for all = more students eating.
- Reduced Admin Work - No meal apps = less paperwork and fewer errors.
- Financial Stability - Higher participation can boost revenue—especially when paired with smart grouping strategies.
- Equity & Access - Eliminates stigma, ensures all students are fed.

## **Key Dates**

- April 1: Use enrollment & identified student data
- June 30: Deadline to elect CEP for the upcoming school year

## **Pro Tip:**

If your school doesn't meet the 25% ISP on its own, grouping schools can help increase eligibility and reimbursement potential.

## **Ready to Explore CEP for Your School or District?**

Work with your state agency for support on data collection, grouping strategies, and maximizing your ISP.

CEP can simplify your program, increase student participation, and ensure every child has access to nutritious meals—no paperwork, no stigma, no barriers.