

REPORT NAME: District Wide Community Eligibility Provision

REPORT OF: Food Service

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: #5

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE ALIGNMENT: Through collective responsibility, establish a physical and operational environment of safety, cleanliness, innovative spaces and high expectations, partnering with parents, families, community and industry to ensure the highest level of performance by all stakeholders.

FOR: Information

APPLICABLE LAW AND/OR POLICY: 8500 Food services

STRATEGIC GOAL ALIGNMENT: Goal VII: Resource Allocation

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE ALIGNMENT: Review current resource allocation patterns and develop a cost benefit review process that will enable adaptations to current patterns of allocation.

FISCAL FUND IMPACT: Food Service Fund

IMPACT AMOUNT: Approximately \$2,000,000 annually in federal reimbursement to the Food Service Fund.

MEETING TYPE:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/BACKGROUND:

What is the Community Eligibility Provision?

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) is a program through the USDA that allows schools in low income areas to provide free breakfast and lunch to all students.

How does a district qualify?

Eligibility is determined by the Identified Student Percentage (ISP) per school building. ISP is calculated by the number of students who qualify for free meals without an application (Foster, homeless, Medicaid, SNAP etc.) divided by the total school enrollment. A school must have a minimum ISP of 40% to qualify. Southfield Public Schools has an ISP of 49.8%. Districts may participate in CEP in a variety of ways: by individual school building ISP, groups of schools or the entire district. Since 2022, Southfield Public Schools has operated under a district wide Community Eligibility Provision. The 2025–2026 school year represents Year 4 of the district's current CEP cycle, requiring renewal for 2026–2027.

How does a district receive reimbursement for meals?

The reimbursement factor is determined by multiplying a school's ISP by the USDA factor of 1.6 to determine the percentage of meals that will be reimbursed at the federal free rate with the remainder of the meals would be reimbursed at the paid rate.

COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:

The district's current Identified Student Percentage (ISP) is 49.8%. At this level, approximately 79.7% of all meals will be reimbursed at the federal free rate and 20.3% at the paid rate. Any revenue difference resulting from the paid-rate portion is offset by increased student participation, operational efficiencies, and the existing Food Service Fund balance.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Superintendent recommends that the Board of Education approve the renewal of districtwide participation in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) for the 2026–2027 school year.

IMPACT IF NOT APPROVED:

If CEP is not renewed, the district would be required to collect free and reduced-price meal applications from all families. Students who are not directly certified would be charged for meals, resulting in increased administrative workload, potential unpaid meal debt, and financial burden for families.

NEXT STEPS IF APPROVED:

Submit CEP renewal documentation through the MDE Child Nutrition Coordinated Application Program and update district communications to reflect continued universal free meals.