

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Analysis

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) can be a very beneficial program for districts with high poverty levels, allowing all students to eat at no cost without requiring meal applications. However, CEP funding is based entirely on a district's Identified Student Percentage (ISP). Districts with low ISPs do not receive enough federal reimbursement to cover the cost of providing free meals to all students.

- To receive full reimbursement under CEP, a district must have an ISP of at least 62.5%.
- Troup ISD's current ISP is 34%, which is significantly below the required level for the program to be financially sustainable.
- The Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) is the national authority on CEP adoption and best practices states "Districts with ISPs of 60 percent or higher are strong candidates for CEP. Districts between 40–59 percent must conduct a thorough financial analysis to ensure the program is viable."
- No Kid Hungry produces national CEP implementation guidance and notes "Districts with ISP of 60 percent or higher will typically see positive financial outcomes under CEP. Lower ISP schools require additional district subsidy."
- An independent study performed by Region VII confirmed that Troup ISD would see significant losses from switching to the Community Eligibility Provision (\$28,004.65 just for the month of October)

Even though CEP is not financially viable for our district, Troup ISD remains committed to ensuring that every student has access to nutritious meals every day in the following ways:

- Accepting applications for free and reduced meals based on income
- Automatically qualify students whose household receives Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) to receive free meals
- Each student that is not considered free is allowed to continue purchasing a meal until their balance reaches \$-10.00
- Once a student has reached a \$-10.00 balance they are still provided a meal consisting of the following
 - Meat alternate (such as cheese or yogurt)
 - Vegetables
 - Fruit
 - Grain
 - Milk

While CEP is not viable at this time, Troup ISD performs an analysis on an annual basis to reassess for any changes in feasibility.