

# What is Provision?

Child Nutrition  
Programs  
April 2021



# Types of Provision

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- **Provision 1**
- **Provision 2**
- **Provision 3**
- **Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)**

# WHAT IS PROVISION?

# What is Provision?

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In an effort to reduce paperwork at the local level, Congress has incorporated into Section 11(a)(1) of the National School Lunch Act four alternative provisions to the normal requirements for annual determinations of eligibility for free and reduced-price school meals and daily meal counts by type (free, reduced price and paid meals) at the point of service

# Who could consider going on Provision?

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- Sites with high Free & Reduced
- Sites with a majority of the student population on the direct certification list
- Non-pricing schools

# Why do schools choose to go on Provision?

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- Reduction of Paperwork
  - Applications are not sent out every year
- Reduction of cost
  - Paper
  - Labor costs – approving applications
- Allows all children to ***eat meals at no charge***

# What can/cannot be done on Provision?

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- Meal counts are still required to be taken at the point of service
  - *Provision 1* – meal counts must be taken by type (i.e. free, reduced, paid)
  - *Provision 2, 3, and CEP* - meal counts **do not** have to be taken by type
- Keep a modified Edit Check

**\*\*A child cannot be required to take a tray**

# TYPES OF PROVISIONS

## Provision 1, 2, 3, and Community Eligibility (CEP)



# How long is the Provision Cycles?

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- **Provision 1**
  - 2-year period
- **Provision 2**
  - 4-year cycle with possible extensions
- **Provision 3**
  - 4-year cycle with possible extensions
- **Community Eligibility (CEP)**
  - 4-year cycle with no extension; possible 5<sup>th</sup> year grace period

# Applies to All Provisions

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- All children ***EAT*** for **FREE** but are ***claimed by FREE, REDUCED, and PAID rates*** even in BASE years
- Direct Certification must still be pulled at least **ONCE** per year
- Verification report must still be completed even in the years verification is not done at the district
- **SFA must pay difference between Federal reimbursement and the cost of providing meals at no charge with non-federal funds if costs are not covered by CNP Funds**

# Provision 1

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- **Site must have at least 80 percent of enrolled children eligible for free or reduced-price meals**
- Children who qualify for free or reduced meals can be served meals at no charge for two years
- All other households must be provided a meal application
- *No School in the United States is using this option*

# Provision 2

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- **During the first year, known as the BASE year, there is no change in traditional procedures and administrative burden**
  - *Following 3 years no applications are taken*
- Claiming percentages are established in base year by month
- Districts can use applications and direct certification to approve students
- **Reimbursement during these years is determined by applying percentages of free, reduced, and paid**

# Provision 3

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- **Year 0 is known as the BASE year. There is no change in traditional procedures and administrative burden**
  - *Following 4 years no applications are taken*
- Districts can use applications and direct certification to approve students
- **The State Agency will tell you what to claim each month**
  - Reimbursement during these years is determined by applying percentages of free, reduced, and paid

# Provision 3

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- Allows a school to receive a comparable level of Federal cash and commodity assistance as the school received in the last year in which free and reduced-price eligibility determinations were made
  - It is adjusted for enrollment, inflation and operating days if applicable
- For each of the 4 years, the level of Federal cash and commodity support is adjusted to reflect changes in enrollment and inflation

# Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

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- Direct Certification is the only way to qualify
  - ***Direct Certification*** is information that comes directly from the source such as a State Agency or Tribe
    - *Documentation cannot be provided by a parent*
  - Applications are not allowed to be taken
  - Students are claimed as FREE and PAID percentages

# Community Eligibility Provision

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To be eligible to participate, the site, group, or district ***Must have an identified student percentage (ISP) of at least 40% as of April 1<sup>st</sup>*** of the school year prior to implementing CEP



# Community Eligibility Provision

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## Identified Students

- Direct Certification list pulled as of **April 7, 2021**
- **REMINDER:** *Students that have an exit date before April 1 on DC list **CANNOT** count towards the number of children on the DC list for ISP*

# Community Eligibility Provision (cont.)

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## Enrolled Students

- Roster of enrolled students in schools serving both NSLP and SBP will be
- Must have access to at least one meal service daily
- Enrollment is as of **as of April 1<sup>st</sup>**
- ***Any child that has dropped before April 1 cannot be counted as an enrolled student***

# CEP (FOR 2021 ONLY)

- LEA's electing CEP, establishing a new ISP, or conducting a grace year for SY 21-22, may calculate the ISP using data drawn at any time during the prior school year (July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021)
- The printed enrollment list will be for the same timeframe as the month they pull DC for
- ***They must elect CEP and let us know by September 30, 2021***

# Community Eligibility Provision (cont.)

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## Calculating the ISP:

$$\frac{\text{Identified Students}}{\text{Enrolled Students}} \times 100 = \text{ISP}$$

ISP X 1.6 qualifier

- *Example:* FREE ISP 59% x 1.6 = 94.4%  
PAID = 5.6%

# Directly Certified (DC) Students

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- SNAP- WAVE
- TANF
- FDPIR – Tribal Organization
- HOMELESS, MIGRANT, OR RUNAWAY – LEA
- FOSTER CERTIFIED BY STATE AGENCY
- HEAD START
- EVEN START
- NONAPPLICANTS APPROVED BY LOCAL OFFICIAL

E-6-7 & E29

# Deciding between Provision & CEP

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## Provision

- The SFA may contact the State agency for a extension of Provision after the 4-year cycle
- The State agency may approve four-year extensions if the income level of the school's population has remained stable
  - ***Continuation of original base year***
- Claiming percentages are based on applications, DC, or any other way children are approved for Free, reduced, & Paid

# Provision 2 & 3

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- There is no *minimum requirement* for free or reduced-price eligibles in order to participate
- Provision may be a good alternative for schools with a high percentage of children eligible for free and reduced-price applications

# Deciding between Provision & CEP

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## Community Eligibility (CEP)

- Schools ***MUST*** re-establish a base year every 4 years
  - Extensions are not an option
- Claiming percentages are based on Direct Certification ***ONLY***
- This may be a good alternative for schools with a high percentage of children who are directly certified



# END OF THE CYCLE AND CHANGES

# End of the Cycle

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## Provision

- The agency will notify you to see if you want to continue Provision
  - If **yes**, socioeconomic information will be checked to make sure the school qualifies for an extension

## Community Eligibility

- The agency will notify you

CARS will show the school site(s) base year and how many years are left in the cycle

- ***Provision 2 (by site)*** – scroll down to Current Year
- ***CEP Current Year Information*** – View Details by site

# No Longer Wanting to Participate in Provision/CEP?

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- The School/District can decide to go back to standard counting and claiming procedures at any time for CEP and at the end of the year for other Provisions
- The State Agency needs to be aware of the change
- The district ***MUST*** start:
  - Collecting the Family-Size and Income applications
  - Eligibility determinations must be made
  - Meals must be counted and claimed by type (free, reduced, and paid) at the point of service

# Provision Extension Denied

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## **A School/District may not qualify for a cycle extension *IF*:**

- Significant change in the school's population such as school consolidation
  - An increase of 5% or more
- Significant changes in the socioeconomic level in the school's population
  - An increase of 5% or more

## **What to do if an extension is denied:**

- Re-establish a NEW BASE year
- Go back to standard counting and counting

# CEP Population Change

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Changes to student population could indicate a change in the poverty level of the households served by the school. **It may require an ISP to be recalculated *WITHIN* the 4-year cycles**

- *Example:* District-wide or group approval – school site(s) close
- No changes need to be made in mid-school year, but it would have to occur before the next school year

**What to do if ISP needs to be recalculated:**

- Re-establish a NEW BASE year
- Go back to standard counting and counting

# 4<sup>th</sup> Year Cycle in CEP

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- The ISP for the **NEW** 4-year cycle must be established using the most recent April data
- Cycle extensions using the same base year information is not allowed with Community Eligibility as it is with Provision 2 & 3
- **Grace Year** - If in the 4<sup>th</sup> year the ISP is under 40% but over 30% as of April 1, the school may continue to participate for a 5<sup>th</sup> year at the lower ISP **NOT the original (year 1) ISP** (below 40% and over 30%)

# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

# Things to Consider

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- All children eat at no charge; however, students are still claimed by type (*Free, Reduced, or Paid*)
- The money the school or district received from Reduced and Paid children will no longer be received
- ***The district may have to pay back***



# Things to Consider (cont.)

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A school considering Provision must evaluate whether the savings in administrative costs associated with reducing application burdens and simplifying meal counting and claiming procedures under Provision ***offset the costs of providing meals to all children at no charge***

# Base Year Documentation

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- Base year documentation ***MUST*** be kept for the duration the school is on Provision
  - Example: If the district stays on Provision 2 for 20 years, the base year records must be kept for 20 years.
- When a consultant comes to the district, they will ask to see base year documentation
- If the documentation cannot be found, the district can no longer continue provision and **MUST** establish a new base year in order

# How to Apply for Provision

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## Provision Approval:

- Provision 2 & 3 is approved by site
- CEP is can be done by site, group, or district-wide

## A Provision Application must be filled out and sent to the State Agency:

- Provision 2 & Provision 3 paper application deadline – ***August 1st***
- CEP CARS application deadline – **June 30th**

# Provision Approval

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## Provision:

- Your consultant will verify ***ALL applications and direct certification*** documentation for the site(s) approved
- Documentation will be validated around November 15th (*after or around verification process has been completed*)

# Community Eligibility Approval

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## Community Eligibility:

- Your consultant will verify children on the ***direct certification and the roster*** documentation for the site, group, or district
- Documentation will be validated at as soon as the school decides they are interested in CEP or as soon as April data was pulled

# Transferring Students

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## Transferring within the same LEA

- If a student transfers from a Provision school to a non-Provision school within the same LEA, the receiving LEA must provide free meals to the transfer student for up to 30 operating days or until new eligibility is made, whichever comes first

# Transferring Students (cont)

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## Transferring between Districts

- If a student transfers from a Provision school to a non-Provision school in a different LEA, the receiving LEA must provide free meals to the transfer student for up to 30 operating days or until new eligibility is made, whichever comes first
- **The district the student came from should provide a letter stating the child was in a Provision school**

# Resources

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- **USDA Provision 2 Guidance**
- **USDA Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Planning & Implementation Guidance**
- **Child Nutrition Manual**



**QUESTIONS  
or  
COMMENTS?  
?????**

**THANK YOU!**

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