

## FAQs: No Kid Hungry's CEP Calculator

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### Where can I download No Kid Hungry's CEP Calculator?

Download the CEP Calculator here: <http://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org/cep-calculator>

### What computer or software will I need?

The CEP Calculator is designed to work on a PC computer equipped with Microsoft Excel. We do **not** recommend using an Apple or Mac.

### If my district's general fund pays for the unpaid school meal charges at the end of the year, should I still include the unpaid school meal charges in the calculator?

Yes! Even though the district's general fund is paying for any unpaid school meal charges, it is still a loss of revenue for the school nutrition department. You'll also want to show district administrators how much money CEP will save the general fund, as CEP schools will not have any unpaid school meal charges.

### Do I enter school meal debt as a negative number?

No. If a school has \$5,000 of unpaid school meal debt at the end of the school year, then type \$5,000.

### Does this calculator work for comparing Provision 2 (P2) and CEP?

Yes, just enter "\$0.00" for the meal charges in the tab "2. ENTER DATA – DISTRICT." However, when you get to the results tabs, you'll only want to look at "Current Program Revenue" (which will be P2 operations) and "Scenario #3" which is the revenue scenario where the district adopts CEP and experiences no changes to breakfast or lunch participation. Because meals are free for all whether operating P2 or CEP, it's less likely that your district will see increases in ADP by switching to CEP, so we recommend comparing these two scenarios to see what the impact will be of switching from P2 to CEP. Remember that you can also manually adjust participation rates by school in the "Custom Analysis" tab.

**My district has more than 100 schools. Does the calculator still work for a district of that size? Do you have any suggestions?**

The CEP calculator works for districts that have up to 150 schools; however, the grouping calculation conducted by [Meals Count](#) will take a significant amount of time for a district of that size. We recommend that any districts with over 100 schools contact us so that we can run the grouping optimization on a computer with more computing power than available via the website version. Please submit a help ticket at <https://www.mealscount.com/#/contact> and/or send an email to [bestpractices@strength.org](mailto:bestpractices@strength.org).

**How do I factor in increased costs due to increased meal volume into the financial analysis?**

At this time, the calculator only looks at revenue. If you are expecting increases in participation due to CEP and/or breakfast after the bell (BAB) implementation, you will want to consider the costs of additional equipment and staff time you may need to accommodate those changes separately from this calculator.

**If I do not want Meals Count's grouping analysis to consider a particular school (a very low ISP, for example), should I choose REMOVE for that school in Step 4?**

Yes, you can remove a school from the grouping by choosing the 'REMOVE' option in the dropdown list next to the school names. We recommend trying multiple scenarios to see what works for you financially – starting with district-wide CEP, and then narrowing from there based on what will work for your district financially. There's no rule of thumb for deciding when a school with a low ISP should be included or excluded from CEP; it depends what your goals are. Is your district more concerned with providing free meals to as many students as possible, or is your district more concerned about financial solvency? We recommend trying multiple scenarios to see what works for you by using the 'INCLUDE' and 'REMOVE' feature on the Meals Count grouping tab.

**Can you explain the "grouping" column numbers that come back after the calculation? All "1's" together is your best option?**

The numbers correspond to the different groups. All of the schools with a '1' in the grouping column belong in a group together, all of the schools with a '2' belong together in another group, and so on.

**Which month's claims should we use for entering data into this calculator?**

We recommend choosing a month in which ADP looked the most "normal" for your district. We know that the latter half of SY19-20 and all of SY20-21 was disrupted by COVID-19. Therefore, you may look to the fall of SY19-20 for more reliable ADP data, e.g. October 2019, and then making any manual adjustments based on your enrollment or demographic changes that may have happened since. For example, if a school's enrollment has significantly declined since October 2019, we'd recommend decreasing the October 2019 ADP data accordingly.

**Will the revenue comparison calculation work properly for Hawaii and Alaska as they have different meal reimbursement rates than the other 48 states?**

As of Tuesday, May 18, 2021, No Kid Hungry's CEP Calculator is updated with reimbursement rates for Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands. You only need to select your state/territory on the first yellow tab called, "2. ENTER DATA – DISTRICT." We extend our sincerest apologies that these reimbursement rates were not included in the first version of the calculator!

***Still have questions?*** Email [bestpractices@strength.org](mailto:bestpractices@strength.org).