



CALCULATING IDENTIFIED STUDENT PERCENTAGE USING EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM AND ALTERNATIVE AGREEMENT SCHOOL DATA

What is CEP and why does your ISP matter?

The [Community Eligibility Provision \(CEP\)](#) is a school meal funding option that allows eligible schools to provide free breakfast and lunch to all students. Schools with an Identified Student Percentage (ISP) greater than or equal to 40% are eligible to participate in CEP. A district's reimbursement is determined by a school's ISP; the greater the ISP, the more likely a school is eligible for CEP, and the greater the reimbursement to the school district.

A school's ISP is determined by the number of directly certified students which includes students:

- Enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), Medicaid (in some states*), or if they live in a household where another student is enrolled in one of these programs (this is referred to as 'extended eligibility' or a 'sibling match').
- Who are homeless, migrant, runaway, in foster care, or enrolled in Head Start or Early Head Start. *Note that these categories do not confer eligibility to other students in the household.*

Early childhood programs and alternative agreement schools may contribute to their associated school's ISP and therefore help boost the total ISP increasing the possibility of CEP eligibility and financial feasibility.

Check out *No Kid Hungry's* [Strategies for Finding Success with CEP](#) to learn more about maximizing ISPs!

* States that allow Medicaid direct certification include: IL, KY, NY, PA, CA, FL, MA, NE, UT, VA, WV, CT, IN, IA, MI, NV, TX, WA, WI, AL, KS, LA, MN, NC, MD, SC. *Please check with your state agency to verify and learn more.*

What are early childhood programs and alternative agreement schools?

Many school districts serve meals to students in early childhood programs such as:

- Pre-kindergarten programs
- Half-day kindergarten programs
- Full or half-day pre-school programs
- Early Head Start and Head Start programs

Alternative agreement schools exist if a district provides meals to a neighboring school district (often times these are charter or private schools) through an alternative school food authority agreement. An alternative school food authority agreement is between two school food authorities (SFAs) or an SFA and a school in which one agrees to operate the school meal programs for the other. The agreement transfers legal and financial authority over the school meal programs to the SFA operating the programs.

Students served by your district in early childhood programs or alternative agreement schools may count to your calculated ISP. See the flow chart below to learn more.

How do you determine if a student should be included in your ISP calculation?

