

Frequently Asked Questions about the USDA Community Eligibility Provision

Why is CEP not districtwide?

The USDA set guidelines for CEP based on the number of students at each school who are living near or below the poverty line. The USDA will reimburse DMPS for meals served at qualifying schools. Extending the program to additional schools would require that expenses be covered by the district.

Why isn't my school included?

Schools that have not been designated as CEP have fewer students living near or below the poverty line. The DMPS Food Service account could not cover the expense of offering no cost meals at all schools.

Families with students at schools that have not been designated as CEP are encouraged to complete an application available at <http://www.dmschools.org/departments/operations/food-nutrition/freereduced-lunch-application>.

Those students who meet the income guidelines will be served meals free or at reduced price.

Why do you pay for every student meal when some families can afford to pay?

The USDA program covers every student's meal at each CEP school. It's also a more affordable way for the district to provide no cost meals. The district saves additional dollars by eliminating application paperwork and electronic tracking of student meals.

How does this apply to the A la carte offerings at the high school level?

A la carte items will still be available for purchase. The meal at no cost will include a choice of grain, fruit, vegetable, protein and milk. Students must select at least 3 of these items, one must be a fruit or vegetable.

If a student from an eligible school attends Central Campus, can the student still get a no cost meal?

Students at schools that have been designated as CEP who will be attending Central Campus (which is not CEP) are encouraged to complete an application available at <http://www.dmschools.org/departments/operations/food-nutrition/freereduced-lunch-application>

Those students who meet the income guidelines will be served meals free or at reduced price.

If a student brings cold lunch, is milk provided at no cost?

A meal is provided to students at CEP schools. A meal must consist of at least a fruit or vegetable and 2 other items (milk, grain, protein, fruit or vegetable). If a student wants only a milk they will need to purchase that for 45 cents.

What if my student will receive free meals this school year and has money remaining in their meal account?

Students will receive meals at no cost at CEP schools. If they will be purchasing a la carte items, which would include milk purchased without a meal, you may want to leave some money in their account.

If you would like to have money refunded please send a message to shannon.hoskins@dmschools.org

Please include the following information:

- Your name
- Your student's name
- School your student attends
- Your address
- A phone number to call if there are questions

Are CEP meals the same as meals being served to the rest of the district?

Yes, it is the same breakfast and lunch being served at non-CEP schools.