



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

OFFICE OF FACILITIES AND OPERATIONS

March 25, 2021

TO: Deputy Superintendent
Complex Area Superintendents
Principals (All)

FROM: Randall M. Tanaka
Assistant Superintendent

SUBJECT: **Application Deadline of April 1, 2020 to Increase School's Identified Student Percentage for Benefits from the Community Eligibility Provision**

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) is a non-pricing meal service option for schools and school districts in low-income areas. CEP allows the nation's highest poverty schools and districts to serve breakfast and lunch at no cost to all enrolled students without collecting household applications. Instead, schools that adopt CEP are reimbursed using a formula based on the percentage of students categorically eligible for free meals based on their participation in other specific means-tested programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

In an effort to increase the number of participants to be counted in the CEP, the Office of Facilities and Operations (OFO), School Food Service Branch is requesting that schools encourage parents and families who may meet income eligibility requirements to apply for the SNAP and/or the TANF. For more information about who may be eligible for these programs, please see the links below, or call the Public Assistance Information Line, (statewide) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, at 855-643-1643.

Although families are able to apply for SNAP and TANF benefits throughout the year, schools should urge eligible families to submit their applications by **April 1, 2021** in order for your school to count the eligible applications toward the school federal meal reimbursement funding formula for the following school year. Schools that are already a designated CEP school, increasing the Identified Student Percentage (ISP) for your school, will bring additional federal revenues to the meal program and will help other communities receive the benefits of being identified as a CEP school. Schools that are not currently designated as a CEP school, increasing the number of students on these assistance programs may make it possible for the school to convert to the CEP status—possibly even as soon as the upcoming 2021-2022 school year. As you may know, schools with the CEP status do not have to collect free and reduced meal applications from families each year and are able to provide all students with free meals for the entire school year.

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We understand that this is a short window of time to try and increase the number of SNAP and TANF applications that are received by **April 1, 2021**. Therefore, OFO is requesting the accompanying flyer be sent to families in your school and/or posted to your school's website. OFO will also be looking to directly reach out, via e-mail, to eligible families that are receiving a free/reduced meal, but are not identified as part of your school's ISP.

The link to information for SNAP eligibility [here](#). The link to information for TANF eligibility [here](#).

If you should have any questions, please contact the School Food Service Branch, at (808) 784-5500.

RMT:jk:cs
Attachment

c: Superintendent
Assistant Superintendents
School Food Services Branch