

## PSIS REFERENCE GUIDE

### APPENDIX K – Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

#### 2014-15 ALTERNATIVE INCOME SURVEY GUIDANCE

#### \*\*\*For Community Eligibility Provision LEAs and Schools only\*\*\*

For a local educational agency (LEA) to use the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) for school year 2014-15, the LEA, school or group of schools must have an identified student percentage (ISP) of 40 percent or greater as of April 1, 2014. Identified student percentage counts include only students directly certified for free meals through documentation provided by the following programs and categories:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Family Assistance (TFA);
- children as defined under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act;
- runaway and homeless youth served by programs established under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act;
- foster children certified through means other than the USDA household application;
- children enrolled in a federally funded Head Start program, a comparable state-funded Head Start program or prekindergarten program;
- children enrolled in an Even Start program; and
- non-applicant students approved by local education officials, such as a principal, based on available information.

However, since there are many students from lower income families who do not participate in programs like SNAP or TFA, the *identified students* provide a partial picture of the students in the district from economically disadvantaged families. To greatly minimize the reporting burden, the following protocol is being established for all CEP districts/schools for the duration of their CEP commitment.

- report all *identified students* as “free” in PSIS.
- for non-identified students who are returning from the previous school year, report their meal eligibility status from the prior year.
- for non-identified students who are newly entering the district in the current school year, report their hypothetical meal eligibility per the USDA income guidelines in through an “alternative income survey” form. Districts may customize this form to suit their needs as long as the income ranges table that are identical to the USDA income guidelines for 2014-15 are preserved. The survey data should be coded as follows in PSIS: the lowest income range as “free”, the middle income range as “reduced”, and the highest income range as “not eligible.”

**Please note that funds from the food service account cannot be used to support the collection or processing of these surveys.**

Suggestions for disseminating this form and improving the response rate:

- have the forms ready for schools to send home to parents;
- offer a workshop on completing the forms;

- make the form school-specific by placing it on school letterhead;
- impress upon parents the importance of filling out and returning the form;
- have forms available for distribution during open house and in packets for parents at back-to-school events;
- offer incentives to students;
- involve homeroom teachers in gathering the forms from their students;
- send forms with staff when home visits take place;
- post forms on a relevant district webpage; and/or distribute reminders via e-mails and school newsletters.

Additional information on CEP is available on the CSDE website

<http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=335336>.

- To download the 2014-15 Alternative Income Survey please visit the PSIS Help Site.  
<http://www.csde.state.ct.us/public/psis/downloads.asp#layouts>