COMMUNITY ELIGIBILITY SUPPORTS CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND LEARNING

In GEORGIA, approximately 609,000 children live in food-insecure households, jeopardizing their health and well-being.1

School meal programs combat food insecurity by providing millions of children with the nutrition they need to learn and thrive.

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) is an option within the school meal programs that increases students' access to nutritious food by allowing schools and school districts serving large numbers of children from families with low incomes to offer meals at no charge to all students.

How CEP Schools Are Reimbursed

Rather than relying on school meal applications to determine a school's federal reimbursements, CEP schools are reimbursed based on the share of students who are automatically eligible for free school meals without an application because they meet specific criteria, such as being in foster care or participating in certain federal means-tested programs, including SNAP. Schools can adopt CEP if at least 25 percent of students meet these criteria. The more students who are automatically eligible for free school meals, the more federal reimbursement CEP schools receive.

THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP) CUTS

recently enacted in H.R. 1 will **exacerbate food insecurity** and have ripple effects for the school meal programs, including threatening schools' ability to implement CEP.

As children lose access to SNAP, their automatic eligibility for free school meals is severed and federal reimbursement for meals served in CEP schools decreases, jeopardizing the program's financial viability.

CEP Is a Win for Students, Families, and Schools

CEP provides all students access to the balanced school breakfasts and lunches they need to be well-nourished and ready to learn, while reducing the stigma often present in school cafeterias when schools have to track students' eligibility for free, reduced-price, and paid meals.

When students have access to free meals at school, families have lower grocery bills and more money in their household budgets to help make ends meet.

CEP makes school meal operations more efficient and effective for schools and districts. CEP eliminates the administrative burden associated with school meal applications, strengthens program integrity, and supports school nutrition finances by eliminating school meal debt and increasing participation in school breakfast and lunch programs, which allows for economies of scale.

In the 2024–2025 school year, 74 percent of eligible schools nationwide adopted CEP. These 54,000 schools reached more than 27 million students around the country.



In the 2024–2025 school year:

1,275 SCHOOLS

in **GEORGIA** adopted CEP. An additional **875** schools were eligible to adopt CEP but did not participate.

In **GEORGIA**, during the 2024–2025 school year:



1,164,906

children ate a school lunch and 672,209 children ate a school breakfast on an average school day.²



170

school districts adopted CEP for some or all schools. An additional 49 school districts had schools that were eligible to adopt CEP but did not participate.



796,831

children attended schools that adopted CEP.

By repealing SNAP cuts and investing in CEP, policymakers can reduce barriers that keep eligible children from receiving free school meals and help families afford to put food on the table.



- 1 Analysis of 2023 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement, rounded to the nearest 1,000. The data for this analysis was pooled across multiple years to ensure adequate sample sizes for every state. As a result, cross-state comparisons using multiple fact sheets may cover different time periods.
- 2 Average daily participation data for school breakfast and lunch are reflective of April 2025. U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service. (2025). State-level table current activity. Accessed September 24, 2025. https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/child-nutrition-tables

School District	Number of CEP-Eligible Schools	Number of CEP-Participating Schools	Students Enrolled in CEP-Participating Schools
	Congressional Dis	trict #1	
APPLING COUNTY	5	5	3,414
BACON COUNTY	4	4	2,094
BRANTLEY COUNTY	7	7	3,375
BRYAN COUNTY	5	0	
CAMDEN COUNTY	12	0	
CHARLTON COUNTY	4	4	1,613
EFFINGHAM COUNTY	12	0	
GLYNN COUNTY	20	16	12,727
LIBERTY COUNTY	13	12	10,925
LONG COUNTY	5	5	4,724
MCINTOSH COUNTY	3	3	1,394
PIERCE COUNTY	5	5	3,647
SAVANNAH-CHATHAM COUNTY	56	0	
WARE COUNTY	10	10	5,920
WAYNE COUNTY	10	8	5,348
	Congressional Dis	trict #2	
BAKER COUNTY	2	2	289
BIBB COUNTY	33	33	20,922
CALHOUN COUNTY	3	3	443
CHATTAHOOCHEE COUNTY	3	1	285
CLAY COUNTY	2	2	191
CRAWFORD COUNTY	6	3	1,516
DECATUR COUNTY	6	6	4,178
DOOLY COUNTY	5	4	1,067
DOUGHERTY COUNTY	23	21	12,910
EARLY COUNTY	3	3	1,482

School District	Number of CEP-Eligible Schools	Number of CEP-Participating Schools	Students Enrolled in CEP-Participating Schools
GRADY COUNTY	7	6	4,415
HOUSTON COUNTY	42	29	22,229
LEE COUNTY	8	0	
MACON COUNTY	3	3	1,047
MARION COUNTY	2	2	1,293
MILLER COUNTY	3	3	772
MITCHELL COUNTY	4	4	1,203
MUSCOGEE COUNTY	54	49	26,947
PEACH COUNTY	7	7	3,980
PELHAM CITY	3	3	1,246
QUITMAN COUNTY	2	2	309
RANDOLPH COUNTY	3	3	635
SCHLEY COUNTY	2	0	
SEMINOLE COUNTY	2	2	1,332
STEWART COUNTY	3	3	338
SUMTER COUNTY	6	5	3,560
TALBOT COUNTY	1	1	364
TAYLOR COUNTY	4	4	1,176
TERRELL COUNTY	3	3	921
THOMAS COUNTY	7	7	5,818
THOMASVILLE CITY	5	5	2,622
WEBSTER COUNTY	2	2	228
	Congressional Dis	trict #3	
BREMEN CITY	1	0	
CARROLL COUNTY	26	23	16,350
CARROLLTON CITY	4	0	

(continued)

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³ Food Research & Action Center. (2025). Community Eligibility Provision database for the 2024–2025 school year. https://frac.org/community-eligibility-database/. National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Common core of data for the 2023–2024 school year. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/edge/geographic/relationshipfiles

(continued)

School District	Number of CEP-Eligible Schools	Number of CEP-Participating Schools	Students Enrolled in CEP-Participating Schools
COWETA COUNTY	27	0	
DOUGLAS COUNTY	34	0	
FAYETTE COUNTY	12	0	
GRIFFIN SPALDING COUNTY	18	18	9,350
HARALSON COUNTY	7	7	3,525
HARRIS COUNTY	7	0	
HEARD COUNTY	6	5	2,220
HENRY COUNTY	50	0	
LAMAR COUNTY	5	4	2,872
MERIWETHER COUNTY	7	6	2,241
MUSCOGEE COUNTY	54	49	26,947
PIKE COUNTY	5	0	
THOMASTON-UPSON COUNTY	4	4	3,996
TROUP COUNTY	19	18	12,238
	Congressional Dis	trict #4	
DEKALB COUNTY	126	101	70,185
FULTON COUNTY	65	40	29,564
GWINNETT COUNTY	127	0	
	Congressional Dis	trict #5	
ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS	80	57	28,581
CITY SCHOOLS OF DECATUR	1	0	
CLAYTON COUNTY	67	64	50,132
DEKALB COUNTY	126	101	70,185
FULTON COUNTY	65	40	29,564
	Congressional Dis	trict #6	
ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS	80	57	28,581

School District	Number of CEP-Eligible Schools	Number of CEP-Participating Schools	Students Enrolled in CEP-Participating Schools
COBB COUNTY	70	34	28,980
DOUGLAS COUNTY	34	0	
FAYETTE COUNTY	12	0	
FULTON COUNTY	65	40	29,564
MARIETTA CITY	11	0	
	Congressional Dis	strict #7	
CHEROKEE COUNTY	29	0	
DAWSON COUNTY	7	0	
FORSYTH COUNTY	8	0	
FULTON COUNTY	65	40	29,564
GAINESVILLE CITY	9	0	
GWINNETT COUNTY	127	0	
HALL COUNTY	35	0	
LUMPKIN COUNTY	5	0	
	Congressional Dis	trict #8	
ATKINSON COUNTY	4	0	
BALDWIN COUNTY	7	7	4,510
BEN HILL COUNTY	7	5	2,831
BERRIEN COUNTY	6	5	3,061
BIBB COUNTY	33	33	20,922
BLECKLEY COUNTY	6	5	2,581
BROOKS COUNTY	6	6	2,179
CLINCH COUNTY	3	3	1,242
COFFEE COUNTY	12	12	7,640
COLQUITT COUNTY	13	13	8,767
COOK COUNTY	5	4	2,979

(continued)

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³ Food Research & Action Center. (2025). Community Eligibility Provision database for the 2024–2025 school year. https://frac.org/community-eligibility-database/. National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Common core of data for the 2023–2024 school year. https://nces.ed.gov/rcod/files.asp; and NCES. School district geographic relationship files for the 119th Congress. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/edge/geographic/relationshipfiles

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School District	Number of CEP-Eligible Schools	Number of CEP-Participating Schools	Students Enrolled in CEP-Participating Schools
CRISP COUNTY	5	5	3,311
DODGE COUNTY	8	5	2,659
ECHOLS COUNTY	2	2	917
HOUSTON COUNTY	42	29	22,229
IRWIN COUNTY	3	3	1,610
JEFF DAVIS COUNTY	5	5	3,074
JONES COUNTY	7	7	5,004
LANIER COUNTY	3	3	1,652
LOWNDES COUNTY	12	11	10,618
MONROE COUNTY	5	0	
PULASKI COUNTY	3	3	1,320
TELFAIR COUNTY	5	5	1,543
TIFT COUNTY	11	11	7,471
TURNER COUNTY	3	3	1,107
TWIGGS COUNTY	3	3	726
VALDOSTA CITY	8	8	8,247
WILCOX COUNTY	3	3	1,126
WILKINSON COUNTY	4	4	1,036
WORTH COUNTY	5	5	3,057
	Congressional Dis	trict #9	
BANKS COUNTY	4	4	2,798
BARROW COUNTY	17	0	
COMMERCE CITY	3	0	
COMMERCE CITY SCHOOLS	2	2	764
FANNIN COUNTY	5	5	2,753
GAINESVILLE CITY	9	0	
GILMER COUNTY	7	5	4,124

School District	Number of CEP-Eligible Schools	Number of CEP-Participating Schools	Students Enrolled in CEP-Participating Schools
GWINNETT COUNTY	127	0	
HABERSHAM COUNTY	15	14	7,257
HALL COUNTY	35	0	
JACKSON COUNTY	9	0	
JEFFERSON CITY	1	0	
RABUN COUNTY	4	4	2,257
STEPHENS COUNTY	6	6	3,855
TOWNS COUNTY	3	3	966
UNION COUNTY	6	5	3,015
WHITE COUNTY	7	6	3,782
	Congressional Dist	trict #10	
BARROW COUNTY	17	0	
BUTTS COUNTY	5	5	3,497
CLARKE COUNTY	24	21	12,275
ELBERT COUNTY	6	5	3,007
FRANKLIN COUNTY	5	5	3,577
GREENE COUNTY	4	4	2,275
GWINNETT COUNTY	127	0	
HANCOCK COUNTY	3	3	652
HART COUNTY	5	5	3,743
HENRY COUNTY	50	0	
JASPER COUNTY	4	4	2,706
MADISON COUNTY	8	7	5,165
MORGAN COUNTY	4	0	
NEWTON COUNTY	25	22	18,672
OGLETHORPE COUNTY	4	4	2,293

(continued)

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(continued)

School District	Number of CEP-Eligible Schools	Number of CEP-Participating Schools	Students Enrolled in CEP-Participating Schools
PUTNAM COUNTY	4	4	2,938
SOCIAL CIRCLE CITY	4	4	2,032
TALIAFERRO COUNTY	1	1	184
WALTON COUNTY	15	0	
WILKES COUNTY	5	4	1,262
	Congressional Dist	trict #11	
BARTOW COUNTY	19	0	
CALHOUN CITY SCHOOLS	5	5	4,193
CARTERSVILLE CITY	4	0	
CHEROKEE COUNTY	29	0	
COBB COUNTY	70	34	28,980
GORDON COUNTY	11	10	6,259
MARIETTA CITY	11	0	
PICKENS COUNTY	6	0	
	Congressional Dist	trict #12	
BULLOCH COUNTY	19	12	8,189
BURKE COUNTY	5	5	3,841
CANDLER COUNTY	5	4	2,157
COLUMBIA COUNTY	17	0	
DUBLIN CITY	5	5	2,370
EFFINGHAM COUNTY	12	0	
EMANUEL COUNTY	6	6	3,939
EVANS COUNTY	5	4	1,742
GLASCOCK COUNTY	2	0	
JEFFERSON COUNTY	6	5	2,017
JENKINS COUNTY	3	3	1,170
JOHNSON COUNTY	3	3	1,026

School District	Number of CEP-Eligible Schools	Number of CEP-Participating Schools	Students Enrolled in CEP-Participating Schools
LAURENS COUNTY	8	8	6,308
LINCOLN COUNTY	3	3	1,261
MCDUFFIE COUNTY	6	6	3,088
MONTGOMERY COUNTY	3	3	902
RICHMOND COUNTY	59	48	28,891
SCREVEN COUNTY	3	0	
TATTNALL COUNTY	5	5	3,501
TOOMBS COUNTY	5	5	3,118
TREUTLEN COUNTY	2	2	1,020
VIDALIA CITY	5	4	2,279
WARREN COUNTY	3	3	662
WASHINGTON COUNTY	4	4	2,661
WHEELER COUNTY	3	3	848
WILKES COUNTY	5	4	1,262
	Congressional Dist	rict #13	
CLAYTON COUNTY	67	64	50,132
DEKALB COUNTY	126	101	70,185
GWINNETT COUNTY	127	0	
HENRY COUNTY	50	0	
NEWTON COUNTY	25	22	18,672
ROCKDALE COUNTY	19	18	15,342
WALTON COUNTY	15	0	
	Congressional Dist	rict #14	
CATOOSA COUNTY	17	5	2,827
CHATTOOGA COUNTY	5	0	
COBB COUNTY	70	34	28,980

(continued)

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School District	Number of CEP-Eligible Schools	Number of CEP-Participating Schools	Students Enrolled in CEP-Participating Schools
DADE COUNTY	4	0	
DALTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS	10	0	
FLOYD COUNTY	15	0	
MURRAY COUNTY	11	11	6,585
PAULDING COUNTY	29	0	
POLK COUNTY	10	10	7,713
ROME CITY	9	8	6,357
TRION CITY	3	0	
WALKER COUNTY	17	15	8,379
WHITFIELD COUNTY	23	22	11,942
	Unassigned School	Districts	
Not all school districts could l	pe matched to congression	onal districts due to data inconsi	stencies
ATLANTA YOUTH ACADEMIES, INC.	1	1	147
BRIGHT FUTURES ACADEMY	1	1	77
CHATTAHOOCHEE HILLS CHARTER SCHOOL	1	1	536
CRISTO REY ATLANTA JESUIT HIGH SCHOOL	1	1	481
DEKALB ACADEMY OF TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT, INC (D.A.T.E.)	1	1	760
DEKALB PATH ACADEMY	1	1	369
DEKALB PREPARATORY ACADEMY	1	1	537
FULTON LEADERSHIP ACADEMY	1	0	
GA MAGNET CHARTER SCHOOLS FOUNDATION	1	1	638
GEORGIA FUGEES ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL	1	0	
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SCHOOL	1	1	501
IVY PREPARATORY ACADEMY, INC	1	0	
KIPP	7	0	
KIPP SFA	11	11	5,537

School District	Number of CEP-Eligible Schools	Number of CEP-Participating Schools	Students Enrolled in CEP-Participating Schools
MOUNTAIN EDUCATION HIGH SCHOOL	1	0	
ODYSSEY CHARTER SCHOOL	1	0	
RESURGENCE HALL CHARTER SCHOOL	1	0	
RESURGENCE HALL MIDDLE ACADEMY	1	0	
SAVANNAH CLASSICAL ACADEMY	2	2	417
SCINTILLA CHARTER ACADEMY	1	0	
SOUTHWEST GEORGIA S.T.E.M. CHARTER ACADEMY	1	0	
STATE SCHOOLS	3	3	273
STATE SPECIALITY SCHOOLS II - LIBERATION ACADEMY	1	1	132
STATE SPECIALITY SCHOOLS II - SANKOFA MONTESSORI	1	1	144
STATE SPECIALITY SCHOOLSII - BACONTON COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL	1	1	941
STATE SPECIALTY SCHOOL II - INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF SMYRNA	1	1	328
STATE SPECIALTY SCHOOLS I - DUBOIS INTEGRITY ACADEMY	1	1	1,341
STATE SPECIALTY SCHOOLS I - IVY PREPARATORY ACADEMY	1	1	436
STATE SPECIALTY SCHOOLS II - ATLANTA HEIGHTS	1	1	663
STATE SPECIALTY SCHOOLS II - FURLOW CHARTER	1	1	585
STATE SPECIALTY SCHOOLS II - GENESIS INNOVATION ACADEMY FOR BOYS	1	1	307
STATE SPECIALTY SCHOOLS II - GENESIS INNOVATION ACADEMY FOR GIRLS	1	1	318
STATE SPECIALTY SCHOOLS II - PATAULA CHARTER ACADEMY	1	1	578
STATE SPECIALTY SCHOOLS II - PEACE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL	1	1	241
STATE SPECIALTY SCHOOLS II - RISE PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL	1	1	313
STATE SPECIALTY SCHOOLS II - SLAM ACADEMY OF ATLANTA	1	1	238

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data for the 2023–2024 school year. https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/files.asp; and NCES. School district geographic relationship files for the 119th Congress. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/edc

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School District	Number of CEP-Eligible Schools	Number of CEP-Participating Schools	Students Enrolled in CEP-Participating Schools
STATE SPECIALTY SCHOOLS II - SOUTHWEST STEM ACADEMY	1	1	522
STATE SPECIALTY SCHOOLS II - SPRING CREEK CHARTER ACADEMY	1	1	474
STATE SPECIALTY SCHOOLS II - THE ANCHOR SCHOOL	1	1	208
STATE SPECIALTY SCHOOLS II - ATLANTA SMART ACADEMY	1	1	221
STATE SPECIALTY SCHOOLS II - ATLANTA UNBOUND ACADEMY	1	1	199
STATE SPECIALTY SCHOOLS II - CIRRUS CHARTER ACADEMY	1	1	429
STATE SPECIALTY SCHOOLS II - DEKALB BRILLIANCE ACADEMY	1	1	357
STATE SPECIALTY SCHOOLS II - ETHOS CLASSICAL CHARTER SCHOOL	1	1	676
UTOPIAN ACADEMY FOR THE ARTS	4	4	1,070

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