

COMMUNITY ELIGIBILITY SUPPORTS CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND LEARNING

In **MISSISSIPPI**, approximately **159,000** 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.

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:

268 SCHOOLS

in **MISSISSIPPI** adopted CEP. An additional **426** schools were eligible to adopt CEP but did not participate.

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.

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



317,846

children ate a school lunch and **183,359** children ate a school breakfast on an average school day.²



52

school districts adopted CEP for some or all schools. An additional **98** school districts had schools that were eligible to adopt CEP but did not participate.



102,959

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>

The following table identifies the school districts in each of **MISSISSIPPI'S** congressional districts that contain CEP-eligible and participating schools, as well as the number of children enrolled in CEP schools for the 2024–2025 school year.³

School District	Number of CEP-Eligible Schools	Number of CEP-Participating Schools	Students Enrolled in CEP-Participating Schools
Congressional District #1			
ABERDEEN SCHOOL DIST	3	3	944
BALDWIN SCHOOL DISTRICT	2	0	
BENTON CO SCHOOL DIST	3	0	
CALHOUN CO SCHOOL DIST	2	0	
CHICKASAW COUNTY SCHOOL DIST	4	0	
CHOCTAW CO SCHOOL DIST	1	1	136
COLUMBUS MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DIST	7	7	3,066
CORINTH SCHOOL DIST	3	0	
DESOTO CO SCHOOL DIST	11	0	
HOLLY SPRINGS SCHOOL DIST	4	0	
ITAWAMBA CO SCHOOL DIST	2	0	
LEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT	6	2	613
LOWNDES CO SCHOOL DIST	3	0	
MARSHALL CO SCHOOL DIST	6	0	
NETTLETON SCHOOL DIST	3	0	
NORTH TIPPAAH SCHOOL DIST	2	0	
OKOLONA SEPARATE SCHOOL DIST	3	0	
PONTOTOC CITY SCHOOLS	2	0	
PONTOTOC CO SCHOOL DIST	1	0	
PRENTISS CO SCHOOL DIST	1	0	
SENATOBIA MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DIST	3	0	
SOUTH TIPPAAH SCHOOL DIST	1	0	
STARKVILLE- OKTIBBEHA CONS SD	7	0	
TATE CO SCHOOL DIST	4	0	
TUPELO PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST	11	0	

School District	Number of CEP-Eligible Schools	Number of CEP-Participating Schools	Students Enrolled in CEP-Participating Schools
WEBSTER CO SCHOOL DIST	2	0	
WEST POINT CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DIST	6	0	
Congressional District #2			
AMITE CO SCHOOL DIST	4	2	882
ATTALA CO SCHOOL DIST	3	0	
CANTON PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST	9	7	3,121
CARROLL COUNTY SCHOOL DIST	2	0	
CLAIBORNE CO SCHOOL DIST	3	3	1,179
CLARKSDALE MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DIST	9	8	1,922
CLEVELAND SCHOOL DIST	8	8	2,828
COAHOMA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT	5	4	979
COFFEEVILLE SCHOOL DIST	2	2	409
COPIAH CO SCHOOL DIST	4	4	2,095
EAST TALLAHATCHIE CONSOL SCH DIST	3	0	
FRANKLIN CO SCHOOL DIST	1	0	
GREENVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS	13	12	3,509
GREENWOOD-LEFLORE CONSOLIDATED SD	16	13	4,115
GRENADA SCHOOL DIST	2	0	
HAZLEHURST CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT	4	2	1,323
HINDS CO SCHOOL DIST	7	2	683
HOLLANDALE SCHOOL DIST	4	1	547
HOLMES CONSOLIDATE SCHOOL DIST	9	7	2,532
HUMPHREYS CO SCHOOL DIST	5	3	1,170
JACKSON PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST	53	39	15,637
JEFFERSON CO SCHOOL DIST	4	2	1,068
KOSCIUSKO SCHOOL DISTRICT	5	0	

(continued)

NOTE: School districts, rather than individual schools, are listed under congressional districts. If a school district crosses congressional district boundaries, all of their schools and children are included in each congressional district. Not all school districts could be matched to congressional districts due to inconsistencies in how the data sources numerically identify and name school districts and schools. Unmatched school districts are listed as unassigned.

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/ccd/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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(continued)

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LEAKE CO SCHOOL DIST	5	5	2,477
LELAND SCHOOL DIST	4	2	719
MADISON CO SCHOOL DIST	7	0	
NATCHEZ-ADAMS SCHOOL DIST	5	0	
NORTH BOLIVAR CONS SCH	3	0	
NORTH PANOLA SCHOOLS	4	0	
QUITMAN CO SCHOOL DIST	3	0	
QUITMAN CO SCHOOL DISTRICT	3	3	832
SOUTH DELTA SCHOOL DISTRICT	3	2	432
SOUTH PANOLA SCHOOL DISTRICT	5	0	
SUNFLOWER CO CONSOLIDATE SCH DIST	11	0	
TUNICA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT	5	0	
VICKSBURG WARREN SCHOOL DIST	13	0	
VICKSBURG-WARREN SCHOOL DIST	10	10	5,253
WATER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT	1	0	
WEST BOLIVAR CONS SCHOOL DISTRICT	4	0	
WEST TALLAHATCHIE SCHOOL DISTRICT	2	0	
WESTERN LINE SCHOOL DISTRICT	4	0	
WILKINSON CO SCHOOL DIST	3	0	
WILKINSON CO SCHOOL DISTRICT	2	2	435
WINONA-MONTGOMERY CONSOLIDATED SD	2	0	
YAZOO CITY MUNICIPAL SCH DIST	3	3	1,685
YAZOO CITY MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DIST	3	0	
YAZOO CO SCHOOL DIST	4	0	
Congressional District #3			
BROOKHAVEN SCHOOL DIST	5	0	
CANTON PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST	9	7	3,121

School District	Number of CEP-Eligible Schools	Number of CEP-Participating Schools	Students Enrolled in CEP-Participating Schools
COLUMBIA SCHOOL DISTRICT	3	0	
COVINGTON CO SCHOOLS	4	0	
EAST JASPER CONSOLIDATED SCH DIST	4	2	732
FOREST MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DIST	1	0	
JACKSON PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST	53	39	15,637
JEFFERSON DAVIS CO SCHOOL DIST	4	0	
JONES CO SCHOOL DIST	1	0	
KEMPER CO SCHOOL DIST	4	4	891
LAUDERDALE CO SCHOOL DIST	6	0	
LAUREL SCHOOL DISTRICT	6	6	2,434
LAWRENCE CO SCHOOL DIST	3	0	
LINCOLN CO SCHOOL DIST	2	0	
LOUISVILLE MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DIST	5	0	
MADISON CO SCHOOL DIST	7	0	
MARION CO SCHOOL DIST	5	0	
MCCOMB SCHOOL DISTRICT	6	6	2,268
MERIDIAN PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST	9	0	
MERIDIAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS	5	5	2,765
NESHOBA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT	3	0	
NEWTON MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	3	0	
NORTH PIKE SCHOOL DIST	4	0	
NOXUBEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT	3	0	
PEARL PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST	1	0	
PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC SCH DIST	2	2	766
PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST	2	0	
QUITMAN SCHOOL DIST	4	0	

(continued)

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(continued)

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RANKIN CO SCHOOL DIST	3	0	
SCOTT CO SCHOOL DIST	2	0	
SIMPSON CO SCHOOL DIST	7	0	
SMITH CO SCHOOL DIST	1	0	
SOUTH PIKE SCHOOL DIST	5	0	
STARKVILLE- OKTIBBEHA CONS SD	7	0	
UNION PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST	2	0	
WALTHALL CO SCHOOL DIST	4	0	
WEST JASPER CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS	3	0	
Congressional District #4			
BAY ST LOUIS WAVELAND SCHOOL DIST	3	0	
BILOXI PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST	7	0	
FORREST COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT	5	0	
GEORGE CO SCHOOL DIST	4	0	
GREENE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT	3	0	
GULFPORT SCHOOL DIST	13	7	4,491
HANCOCK CO SCHOOL DIST	2	0	
HARRISON CO SCHOOL DIST	22	10	5,726
HATTIESBURG PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST	8	8	3,588
JACKSON CO SCHOOL DIST	1	0	
JONES CO SCHOOL DIST	1	0	
LAMAR COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT	4	0	
LAUREL SCHOOL DISTRICT	6	6	2,434
MOSS POINT SEPARATE SCHOOL DIST	4	0	
PASCAGOULA GAUTIER SCHOOL DIST	15	0	
PASS CHRISTIAN PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST	2	0	

School District	Number of CEP-Eligible Schools	Number of CEP-Participating Schools	Students Enrolled in CEP-Participating Schools
PERRY CO SCHOOL DIST	4	0	
PICAYUNE SCHOOL DIST	9	0	
POPLARVILLE SEPARATE SCHOOL DIST	2	0	
RICHTON SCHOOL DIST	1	0	
STONE CO SCHOOL DIST	3	0	
WAYNE CO SCHOOL DIST	5	0	
Unassigned School Districts			
Not all school districts could be matched to congressional districts due to data inconsistencies			
AMBITION PREPARATORY	1	1	375
CLARKSDALE COLLEGIATE	1	1	505
CLEVELAND SCHOOL DIST	1	1	1
COLUMBUS MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DIST	1	1	1
FORREST COUNTY AG HIGH SCHOOL	1	0	
HATTIESBURG PUBLIC SCHOOL DIST	1	1	1
INSTANT IMPACT GLOBAL PREP	1	0	
LEFLORE LEGACY ACADEMY	2	1	221
MERIDIAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS	3	3	1,801
MIDTOWN PARTNERS, INC.	2	2	221
MIDTOWN PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL	1	0	
MOSS POINT SCHOOL DISTRICT	4	4	1,579
MS SCHOOLS FOR BLIND/DEAF	1	1	112
NORTH BOLIVAR CONSOLIDATED SCH	3	3	823
NORTH PANOLA CONS SCH DIST	3	3	1,173
NOXUBEE CO SCHOOL DISTRICT	3	3	1,345
OKOLONA PUBLIC SCHOOLS	2	2	524
REPUBLIC	1	0	

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REPUBLIC	1	0	
REPUBLIC	1	0	
REPUBLIC	1	0	
REPUBLIC SCHOOLS, INC.	4	4	1,806
SOUTH PIKE CONS SCHL DISTRICT	3	3	1,052
SR1 COLLEGE PREP & STEM ACADEMY	1	0	
SUNFLOWER COUNTY CONSOLIDATED	11	11	2,899
TUNICA CO SCHOOL DISTRICT	5	5	1,690
VICKSBURG-WARREN SCHOOL DIST	5	5	1,537
WEST BOLIVAR CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT	3	3	688
WILKINSON CO SCHOOL DISTRICT	1	1	353

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