

SCHOOL MEALS SUPPORT CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND LEARNING

Proposed Cuts to School Meals Would Worsen Childhood Hunger, Hurt Struggling Families, and Create Unnecessary Burdens for **665** Schools in **NEW MEXICO**

House Budget Committee Chair Jodey Arrington (R-TX) has proposed \$12 billion in cuts to school meals programs for the 2025 budget reconciliation. The proposals would substantially decrease the number of schools eligible for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) and make it harder for eligible families to apply for free or reduced-price school meals at non-CEP schools. Combined, these proposals would reduce students' access to school meals and raise families' grocery bills, while imposing unnecessary and burdensome paperwork requirements on schools in **NEW MEXICO**.

What Is Community Eligibility?

CEP allows schools serving large numbers of children from families with low incomes to offer school meals at no charge to all students. Rather than relying on school meal applications to determine a school's federal reimbursements, CEP schools are reimbursed based on the share of students from families with low incomes, as determined through a data-matching process that identifies students' participation in other means-tested programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Currently, schools can adopt CEP if at least 25 percent of students receive these benefits.

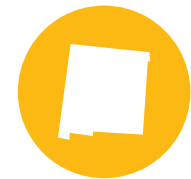
CONGRESS MUST REJECT ANY PROPOSAL TO WEAKEN CEP

Chair Arrington's proposal would increase the CEP eligibility threshold for schools from **25** percent to **60** percent of students identified as receiving benefits. This would cut over 24,000 schools nationwide from participating in CEP and undermine the health and learning of more than **12 million children**.

Community Eligibility Supports Students, Families, and Schools

CEP is a win for students, families, and schools. CEP gives all students access to the nutritious 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 has grown in popularity since first becoming available nationwide over a decade ago. In the 2023–2024 school year, one out of every two schools that operated the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) participated in CEP. CEP makes school meal operations more efficient and effective: It 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, which allows for economies of scale.



IN 2023–2024 SCHOOL YEAR

825 SCHOOLS

in **NEW MEXICO** — which represents **93** percent of schools that participate in the school lunch program — adopted CEP, reaching **256,065** children each school day.

The proposed cuts to school meals would **increase hardships** for children and families across **NEW MEXICO**:



665 schools in **NEW MEXICO** would no longer be able to provide free school meals through CEP and would have to reinstate meal applications.



142 school districts in **NEW MEXICO**, listed on the reverse page, would be affected.



216,669 **NEW MEXICO** children attend schools that would no longer be able to offer meals at no charge to all students through CEP.¹

Rather than reducing access to school meals, **CONGRESS SHOULD INVEST IN CEP** and reduce barriers to applying for free or reduced-price school meals, so families can afford groceries and children have access to the nutritious meals they need to thrive in school and beyond.

The following table identifies the school districts in **NEW MEXICO**, and the number of schools and children within each district that would lose access to CEP if Congress increases the eligibility threshold to 60 percent of students identified as receiving benefits.

School District	Schools Impacted	Children Impacted
21ST CENTURY PUBLIC ACADEMY	1	376
ACE LEADERSHIP HIGH SCHOOL	1	253
ACES TECHNICAL CHARTER SCHOOL	1	158
ALAMOGORDO PUBLIC SCHOOLS	15	2256
ALBUQUERQUE BILINGUAL ACADEMY	1	408
ALBUQUERQUE COLLEGIATE CHARTER SCHOOL	1	188
ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS	85	57302
ALBUQUERQUE SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE	1	336
ALBUQUERQUE SIGN LANGUAGE ACADEMY	1	114
ALDO LEOPOLD CHARTER	1	80
ALICE KING COMMUNITY SCHOOL	1	525
ALMA D'ARTE CHARTER SCHOOL	1	124
AMY BIEHL CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL	1	93
ANANSI CHARTER SCHOOL	1	105
ANIMAS PUBLIC SCHOOLS	3	159
AZTEC MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	7	2515
BELEN CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS	10	3652
BERNALILLO PUBLIC SCHOOLS	10	2711
BLOOMFIELD SCHOOLS	7	2519
CAPITAN MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	3	343
CARLSBAD MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	11	3057
CARRIZOZO MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	3	170
CENTRAL CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS	16	4651
CHAMA VALLEY INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS	4	325
CHRISTINE DUNCANS HERITAGE ACADEMY	1	540

School District	Schools Impacted	Children Impacted
CIEN AGUAS INTERNATIONAL	1	549
CIMARRON MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	6	185
CLAYTON MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	4	275
CLOUDCROFT MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	2	132
CLOVIS MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	18	7427
COBRE CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS DISTRICT	6	971
CORAL COMMUNITY CHARTER	1	291
CORONA MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	1	44
DEAP	1	34
DEMING PUBLIC SCHOOLS	13	5199
DEXTER CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS	3	811
DORA CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS	1	109
DREAM DINE	1	0
DULCE INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS	3	561
EL CAMINO REAL ACADEMY	1	46
ELIDA MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	2	145
ESPANOLA PUBLIC SCHOOLS	13	2228
ESTANCIA MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	4	577
EUNICE MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	3	721
EXPLORE ACADEMY LAS CRUCES	1	151
FARMINGTON MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	12	4566
FLOYD MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	3	222
FORT SUMNER MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	3	266
GALLUP MCKINLEY COUNTY SCHOOLS	32	11617
GILBERT L SENA CHARTER HS	1	238

The following table identifies the school districts in **NEW MEXICO**, and the number of schools and children within each district that would lose access to CEP if Congress increases the eligibility threshold to 60 percent of students identified as receiving benefits.

(continued)

School District	Schools Impacted	Children Impacted
GORDON BERNELL CHARTER	1	243
GRADY MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	3	179
GRANTS CIBOLA COUNTY SCHOOLS	12	2893
HAAK'U COMMUNITY ACADEMY	1	278
HAGERMAN MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	3	390
HATCH VALLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	5	1121
HEALTH LEADERSHIP HIGH SCHOOL	1	151
HOBBS MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	18	10012
HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC SCHOOL	1	0
HORIZON ACADEMY WEST	1	189
HOUSE MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	3	50
HOZHO ACADEMY	1	675
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL AT MESA DEL SOL	1	434
ISLETA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	1	0
J PAUL TAYLOR ACADEMY	1	57
JAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS	3	546
JEMEZ VALLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	3	308
KHAPO COMMUNITY SCHOOL	1	92
LA ACADEMIA DE ESPERANZA	1	227
LA ACADEMIA DOLORES HUERTA	1	35
LAKE ARTHUR MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	3	126
LAS CRUCES PUBLIC SCHOOLS	39	18457
LAS VEGAS CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	6	1107
LOGAN MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	3	228

School District	Schools Impacted	Children Impacted
LORDSBURG MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	4	420
LOS LUNAS PUBLIC SCHOOLS	16	8225
LOVING MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	3	660
LOVINGTON MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	9	3135
MAGDALENA MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	3	297
MARK ARMIJO ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL	1	292
MAXWELL MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	3	102
MCCURDY CHARTER SCHOOL	1	336
MELROSE PUBLIC SCHOOLS	3	293
MESA VISTA CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS	4	152
MIDDLE COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL CHARTER - GALLUP	1	85
MISSION ACHIEVEMENT AND SUCCESS	2	2977
MONTE DEL SOL CHARTER SCHOOL	1	202
MORIARTY-EDGEWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT	7	2335
MOUNTAIN MAHOGANY COMMUNITY SCHOOL	1	274
MOUNTAINAIR PUBLIC SCHOOLS	3	187
NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITY ACADEMY	1	591
NAVAJO PREPARATORY SCHOOL INC	1	0
NEW MEXICO SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF	1	144
NORTH VALLEY ACADEMY	1	174
OHKAY OWINGEH COMMUNITY SCHOOL	1	102
PECOS INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS	3	365
PENASCO INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS	3	240
POJOAQUE VALLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	5	693

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(continued)

School District	Schools Impacted	Children Impacted
PORTALES MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	6	2536
QUEMADO INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS	3	103
QUESTA INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS	4	295
RATON PUBLIC SCHOOLS	3	737
RED RIVER VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL	1	85
RESERVE PUBLIC SCHOOLS	2	63
RIO GRANDE ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS	1	141
RIO RANCHO PUBLIC SCHOOLS	20	4603
ROBERT F. KENNEDY CHARTER	1	332
ROSWELL INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS	22	9380
ROY MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	2	32
RUIDOSO MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	4	1753
SAINT ANTHONY ZUNI INDIAN SCHOOL	1	0
SAINT BONAVENTURE SCHOOL	1	113
SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI-LUMBERTON	1	65
SAINT JOSEPH MISSION SCHOOL	1	39
SAN ILDEFONSO DAY SCHOOL	1	0
SAN JON MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	3	123
SANDOVAL ACADEMY OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION	1	136
SANTA FE INDIAN SCHOOL	1	664
SANTA FE PUBLIC SCHOOLS	18	3260
SANTA ROSA CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS	5	589

School District	Schools Impacted	Children Impacted
SCHOOL OF DREAMS	1	545
SIEMBRA LEADERSHIP HIGH SCHOOL	1	356
SILVER CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS	9	2173
SOCORRO CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS	6	1189
SOLARE COLLEGIATE CHARTER SCHOOL	1	296
SOUTH VALLEY PREPARATORY SCHOOL	1	139
TAOS INTEGRATED SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS	1	203
TAOS MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	6	1817
TATUM MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	2	201
TECHNOLOGY LEADERSHIP HIGH SCHOOL	1	313
TEXICO MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	2	383
THE ALB TALENT DEVELOPMENT CHARTER	1	164
THE NEW AMERICA SCHOOL	1	152
THRIVE COMMUNITY SCHOOL	1	30
TIERRA ADENTRO	1	254
TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	5	1277
TSE II AHI COMMUNITY SCHOOL	1	83
TULAROSA MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS	4	860
TURQUOISE TRAIL CHARTER SCHOOL	1	351
VISTA GRANDE HIGH SCHOOL	1	66
WILLIAM W AND JOSEPHINE DORN COMMUNITY SCHOOL	1	36
WINGATE HIGH SCHOOL	1	328