



Community Eligibility: The Key to Hunger-Free Schools

School Year 2022–2023

MAY 2023 | WWW.FRAC.ORG

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About FRAC

The Food Research & Action Center improves the nutrition, health, and well-being of people struggling against poverty-related hunger in the United States through advocacy, partnerships, and by advancing bold and equitable policy solutions. For more information about FRAC, or to [sign up](#) for FRAC's e-newsletters, go to www.frac.org.



 **Executive Summary**

**Community Eligibility
Participation 2022–2023**

 **6,419**

school districts have one or more schools adopting community eligibility, an increase of **876** school districts, or **15.8 percent**, from the 2021–2022 school year.

 **40,235**

schools have adopted community eligibility, an increase of **6,935** schools, or **20.8 percent**, from the previous school year.

 **82 percent**

of eligible schools have adopted community eligibility.

 **19.9 million**

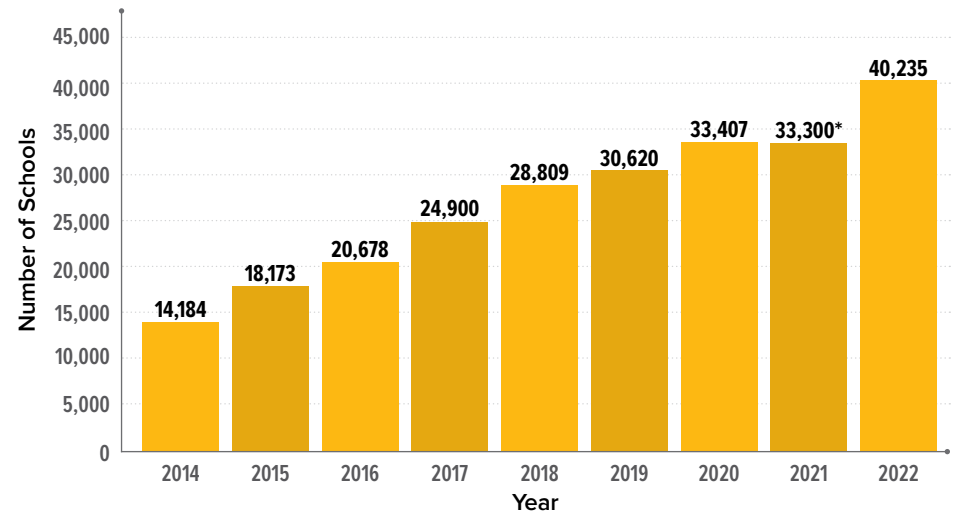
children attend a school that has adopted community eligibility, an increase of nearly **3.7 million** children, or **22.5 percent**, from the previous school year.

The 2022–2023 school year marked the end of the pandemic-related child nutrition waivers that have allowed schools across the country to offer meals to all their students at no charge since spring 2020. Through the waivers, students, families, and schools were able to experience the benefits of Healthy School Meals for All. School districts reported numerous benefits, including reduced childhood hunger, elimination of stigma from participating in school meals, easing administrative work, supporting academic achievement, and eliminating school meal debt.¹ School nutrition professionals did not want to return to pre-pandemic operations,² and according to Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) polling, 63 percent of voters nationwide support legislation that would make healthy school meals for all students a permanent policy.³

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) has offered high-need school districts and schools an important opportunity to continue to offer school breakfast and lunch to all students

- 1 Food Research & Action Center (2022). *Large School District Report: Operating School Nutrition Programs During the Pandemic*. Available at <https://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/large-school-district-report-2022.pdf>.
- 2 School Nutrition Association (2023). *2023 Position Paper: Meals for All Fact Sheet*. Available at <https://schoolnutrition.org/resource/2023-position-paper-meals-for-all-fact-sheet>.
- 3 Food Research & Action Center (2023). *Raise Your Hand for Healthy School Meals for All*. Available at <https://frac.org/healthy-school-meals-for-all>.

GRAPH 1: 9-Year Trend in Schools Participating in Community Eligibility



* The number of students enrolled in CEP schools in 2021 increased even though there was a slight decrease in schools adopting CEP. This was driven by school consolidations in New York City.

at no charge for another four years instead of transitioning back to normal school nutrition operations, resulting in significant growth in community eligibility participation. Created through the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, community eligibility can be adopted by any district, group of schools in a district, or school with 40 percent or more “identified students” — children who are eligible for free school meals and already identified by means other than an individual household application. Schools that participate in community eligibility often see increased participation in school meals, allowing more students to experience the many educational and health benefits linked to school meal participation. A 2022 U.S. Department

of Agriculture (USDA) community eligibility study on school year 2016–2017 found a 6.8 percent increase in school lunch participation and a 12.1 percent increase in school breakfast.

Under community eligibility, schools no longer have to collect and process school meal applications, which reduces administrative costs and paperwork, allowing school nutrition staff to focus more on offering healthy, appealing meals. Moreover, offering meals at no charge to all students eliminates the stigma from the perception that school meals are only for “children from low-income families,” and facilitates the implementation of breakfast after the bell service models, such as breakfast in the classroom, which further boosts participation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY CONTINUED

Participation in community eligibility has continued to grow since it became available nationwide in the 2014–2015 school year. During the 2022–2023 school year, there was a significant increase in the number of schools and districts participating in community eligibility. Here are the top-level findings for this year:

- ▶ 6,419 school districts have one or more schools adopting community eligibility, an increase of 876 school districts, or 15.8 percent, from the 2021–2022 school year.
- ▶ 40,235 schools have adopted community eligibility, an increase of 6,935 schools, or 20.8 percent, from the previous school year.

- ▶ 82 percent of eligible schools have adopted community eligibility.
- ▶ 19.9 million children attend a school that has adopted community eligibility, an increase of nearly 3.7 million children, or 22.5 percent, from the previous school year.

Despite these increases, there are many eligible schools and districts across the country that have not adopted community eligibility that stand to benefit. Several factors that existed prior to the pandemic, such as challenges associated with the loss of traditional school meal application data and low rates of direct certification (which is the foundation of community eligibility), have hindered

adoption in some states and school districts, and the low multiplier of 1.6 limits the financial viability of community eligibility for many eligible schools.

Looking ahead to the 2023–2024 school year, strong state, district, and school-level leadership; hands-on technical assistance from national, state, and local stakeholders; peer-to-peer learning among districts; and state efforts to pass Healthy School Meals for All legislation that provide state funding to make offering free school meals to all students financially viable can help overcome these barriers. In addition, Congress can enact Healthy School Meals for All legislation, including by expanding community eligibility, and USDA, state child nutrition agencies, and anti-hunger and education advocates can work together to promote community eligibility to eligible school districts. Taking these important steps will allow more schools to implement community eligibility.



 **About This Report**

This report analyzes community eligibility adoption — nationally and for each state and the District of Columbia — in the 2022–2023 school year, and is based on three measures:

1. the number of eligible and adopting school districts and schools;
2. the share of eligible districts and schools that have adopted community eligibility; and
3. the number and share of eligible schools that have adopted, based on the school’s poverty level.

As a companion to this report, FRAC has compiled all data collected in a [database of eligible and adopting schools](#) that can be searched by state and school district.

Community eligibility schools are high-need schools that offer breakfast and lunch to all students at no charge and use significant administrative savings to offset any additional costs, over and above federal reimbursements, of serving free meals to all. Instead of collecting school meal applications, community eligibility schools are reimbursed for a percentage of the meals served, using a formula based on the percentage of students who are certified for free school meals without an application (for example, students whose households participate in specific means-tested programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)).

There are many benefits that community eligibility provides to schools and families:

- ▶ **Schools no longer collect, process, or verify school meal applications**, saving significant time and administrative burdens.
- ▶ **Schools do not need to track each meal served by fee category** (free, reduced-price, paid), and instead report total meal counts.
- ▶ **School nutrition staff do not need to collect fees** from students who are eligible for reduced-price or paid school meals, allowing students to move through the cafeteria line faster, and ensuring that more children can be served.
- ▶ **Offering meals at no charge to all students increases participation among all students** because it eliminates any perception that the school meals programs are just for children from households with low incomes.
- ▶ **Schools no longer have to deal with unpaid school meal debt** for reduced-price and paid students at the end of the school year, or follow up with families when students do not have money to pay for meals.

How Schools Can Participate

Any district, group of schools in a district, or a school with 40 percent or more “identified students” is eligible to participate. Identified students are comprised of students certified for free school meals without an application. This includes:

- ▶ children directly certified for free school meals through data matching because their households receive SNAP, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations benefits, and in most states, Medicaid benefits; and
- ▶ children who are certified for free school meals without an application because they are homeless, migrant, runaway, enrolled in Head Start, or in foster care.



School districts may choose to participate school by school, districtwide, or group schools at their discretion, if the school, school district, or group has an overall identified student percentage (ISP) of 40 percent or higher.

Identified students are a subset of those eligible for free and reduced-price school meals. This is a smaller group than the total number of children who would be certified to receive free or reduced-price school meals if school meal applications were collected. For that reason, a multiplier (discussed below) is applied to the ISP. Schools that qualify for community eligibility typically have free and reduced-price percentages of 65–70 percent or higher if traditional school meal applications were collected from student households.

How Schools Are Reimbursed

Although all meals are offered at no charge to all students in schools that participate in community eligibility, federal reimbursements are based on the proportion of children from households with low incomes in the school. The ISP is multiplied by 1.6 to calculate the percentage of meals reimbursed at the federal free rate, and the remainder are reimbursed at the lower paid rate. The 1.6 multiplier was determined by Congress to reflect the ratio of six students certified to receive free or reduced-price meals with an application for every 10 students certified for free meals without an application. This serves as a proxy for the percentage of students that would be eligible for free and reduced-price meals if the school districts had collected school meal applications. For example, a school with 50 percent identified students would be reimbursed for 80 percent of the meals eaten at the free reimbursement rate ($50 \times 1.6 = 80$), and 20 percent at the paid rate.



KEY FINDINGS FOR THE 2022–2023 SCHOOL YEAR

School District Adoption

Nationally, 6,419 school districts — 67.5 percent of those eligible — adopted the Community Eligibility Provision in one or more schools for the 2022–2023 school year.⁴ This is a significant increase of 876 school districts from the prior school year, when 5,543 school districts adopted. This increase is likely due to the end of the child nutrition waivers that had allowed schools to offer meals at no charge to all students beginning in spring 2020, which meant the return of pre-pandemic school nutrition operations and to active participation in community eligibility.⁵

The median state’s take-up rate in school year 2022–2023 for eligible school districts is 73.9 percent; however, school district take-up rates across the states vary significantly, from 20 percent in New Hampshire to over 90 percent in Louisiana, New Mexico, Oregon, Nevada, West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky, the District of Columbia, Washington, Wyoming, North Dakota, and Hawaii.

Several states saw increases in the 2022–2023 school year. California had the largest growth in the number of school districts adopting, increasing by 221 school districts. Washington and Pennsylvania followed in school district adoption growth with 93 and 90 school districts, respectively.

Eight states have had small decreases — between one and five — in the number of districts

implementing community eligibility in the 2022–2023 school year. Of those that have had fewer school districts adopting community eligibility, five have had a decrease in the number of eligible school districts. Missouri has had the largest decrease in adopting school districts — five school districts — despite adding four more eligible school districts, resulting in the percentage of eligible districts adopting decreasing from 66.7 percent to 61.9 percent.

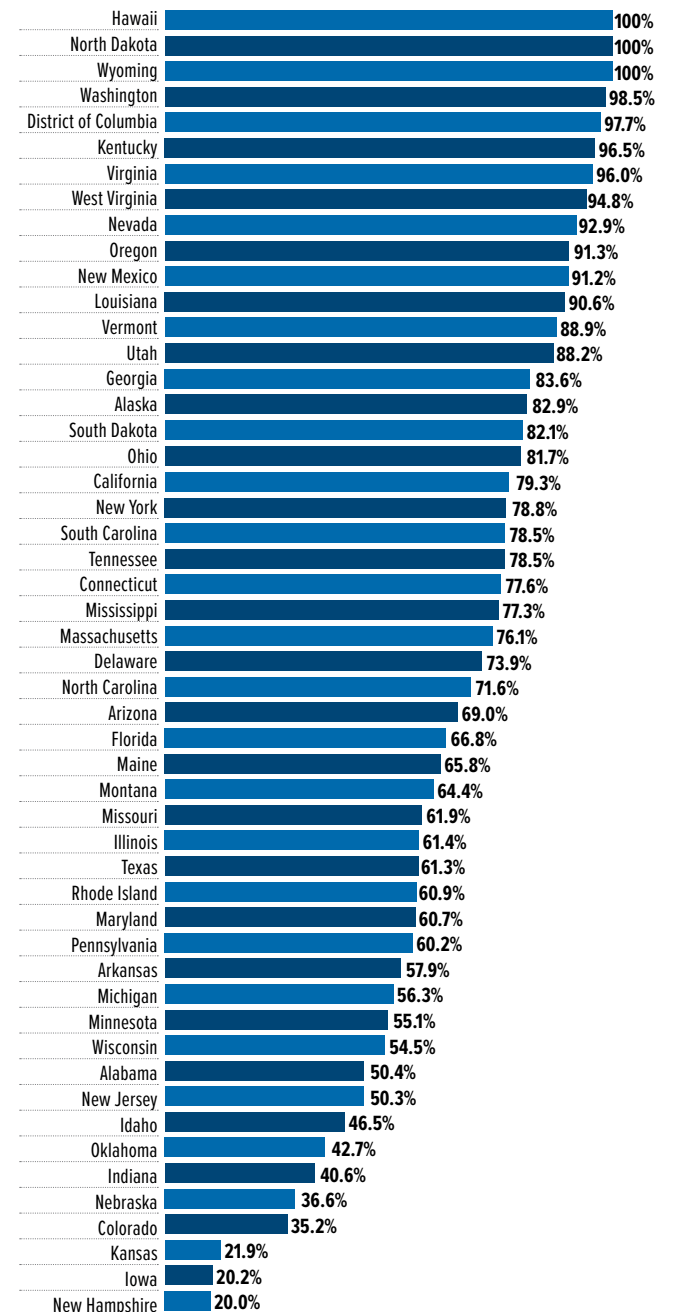
A primary factor in the growth in school district (and school) adoption of community eligibility in the 2022–2023 school year compared with previous years was the desire to continue offering school breakfast and lunch to all students at no charge after the expiration of the pandemic child nutrition waivers. Given the success many schools observed when offering free meals to all students, many eligible schools and districts looked to community eligibility as a way to continue providing healthy school meals to all students through an existing federal program when financially viable.

Furthermore, as more school districts overcome the perceived barrier that community eligibility will change Title I funding allocations dramatically, and those in states that require alternative income applications for state education funding and other purposes work through the challenges of collecting alternative income applications, more school districts have been adopting this provision.

4 Under federal law, states are required to publish annually a list of school districts that are eligible for the Community Eligibility Provision districtwide, as well as a list of individual schools that are eligible, by May 1. During the pandemic, USDA has allowed states to extend this deadline and other community eligibility deadlines including for the 2022–2023 school year. For more information on requirements related to the published lists, see <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/SP17-2019os.pdf>.

5 In March 2020, USDA issued a series of pandemic-related child nutrition waivers that allowed schools across the country to offer free meals to all students regardless of their household income, which expired in June 2022. As a result, most schools and districts listed as adopting community eligibility in the 2020–2021 and 2021–2022 school years were operating under the waivers and not actively participating in community eligibility.

GRAPH 2: Percentage of Eligible School Districts Adopting Community Eligibility in School Year 2022–2023



KEY FINDINGS FOR THE 2022–2023 SCHOOL YEAR CONTINUED

While the significant increase in community eligibility participation for the 2022–2023 school year is encouraging, states can focus on direct certification and continue to improve their systems to ensure that school districts can maintain the ISPs necessary to become and remain eligible for community eligibility, and to ensure that it continues to be a viable financial option for school districts. In USDA’s latest report on state direct certification rates, 12 states did not meet the required benchmark of directly certifying 95 percent of children living in households that participated in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for free school meals in the 2018–2019 school year, pointing to missed opportunities for school districts to increase their ISPs to facilitate easier community eligibility implementation.⁶ In addition, the Medicaid direct certification demonstration pilots offer an important opportunity to improve ISPs, and the 11 states and the District of Columbia that are not included should consider applying to further support participation in community eligibility.

As more school districts consider community eligibility for the upcoming school year, conducting robust direct certification will be critical to support implementation. It also can help reduce the number of school meal applications that districts have to collect and process, even if they do not adopt community eligibility.

School Adoption

In the 2022–2023 school year, there are 40,235 schools adopting community eligibility, including schools from all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Overall, school adoption of community eligibility increased by nearly 7,000 schools from the prior school year. This dramatic increase in the number of schools participating in community eligibility is likely

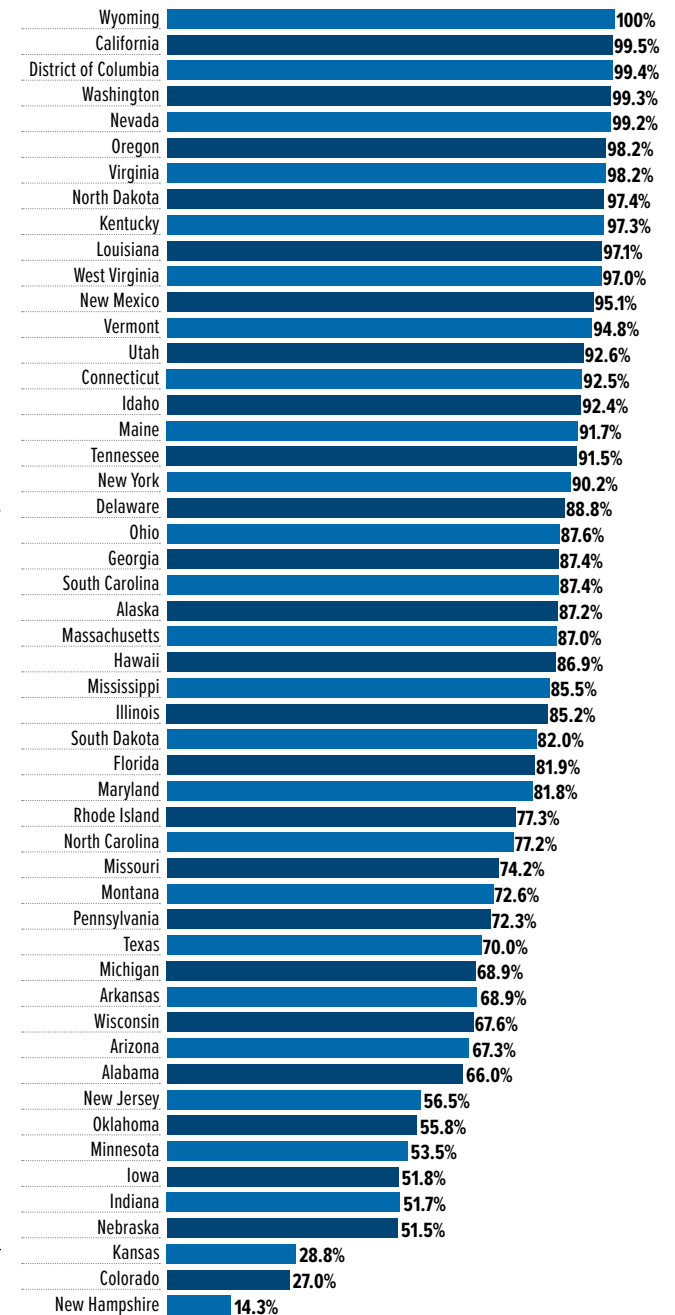
due to many schools’ desire to continue offering healthy meals to all students free of charge after the expiration of the pandemic child nutrition waivers. In the 2022–2023 school year, 82 percent of all eligible schools have adopted community eligibility nationally, with a median state take-up rate of 86.9 percent.

Among the states, the percentage of eligible and adopting schools varies significantly. Nineteen states and the District of Columbia have 90 percent or more of their eligible schools adopting community eligibility. Thirty-one states have 80 percent or more of their eligible schools adopting it. Alternatively, Kansas, Colorado, and New Hampshire have less than 40 percent of their eligible schools adopting it: 28.8 percent, 27 percent, and 14.3 percent, respectively.

Thirty-nine states have seen an increase in the number of schools adopting community eligibility. California had the largest increase, with 2,420 more schools adopting community eligibility since the 2021–2022 school year, likely due to their state having passed statewide Healthy School Meals for All legislation in 2022. Florida, Washington, and Texas added 1,080, 731, and 491 schools, respectively. Smaller states with fewer eligible schools also have made strong progress, including Nebraska, which increased by 106 schools, or 235 percent, and Vermont, which increased by 33 schools, or 56 percent.

Four states — Georgia, Hawaii, North Dakota, and Wyoming — have maintained the same number of community eligibility schools during the 2022–2023 school year. Eight states have experienced a decrease in the number of schools eligible to implement community eligibility. The largest decreases were in Missouri (17 schools) and South Dakota (10 schools).

GRAPH 3: Percentage of Eligible Schools Adopting Community Eligibility in School Year 2022–2023



⁶ U.S. Department of Agriculture (2021). Direct Certification in the National School Lunch Program State Implementation Progress Report to Congress School Year 2017–2018 and School Year 2018–2019. Available at <https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/NSLPDirectCertification2017-1.pdf>.

School Adoption by Poverty Level

All schools that qualify for community eligibility are considered to be high need, but a school’s ability to implement community eligibility successfully — and maintain financial viability — typically improves when its ISP is higher. For this report, the Food Research & Action Center examined the number of schools adopting in each state, based on their ISP as a proxy for the school’s poverty level.

Schools with higher ISPs receive the free reimbursement rate for more meals, which makes community eligibility a more financially viable option. As a result, schools with ISPs of 60 percent and above — those that receive the free reimbursement rate for 100 percent or nearly 100 percent of their meals — are more likely to participate in community eligibility than schools with lower ISPs; that has been the case since the program became available nationwide. Still, since the 2016–2017 school year, the number of schools participating with an ISP between 40 and 50 has more than quadrupled, and the number of schools participating with an ISP between 50 and 60 percent has increased by over one-third as schools become more familiar with the positive impact of community eligibility on school nutrition finances and the benefits for children and families.⁷

In the 2022–2023 school year, of the 40,235 schools adopting community eligibility, a plurality of schools — 19,883 or 49.4 percent — had ISPs of 60 percent or higher. Of adopting schools with lower ISPs, 10,871 schools, or 27 percent, had ISPs between 50 and 60 percent, and 9,399 schools, or 23.4 percent, had ISPs between 40 and 50 percent. Among schools with ISPs between 40 and 50 percent, the national

average of take-up rate for eligible schools was 60.3 percent, with a median of 58.4 percent.

Among states, the percentage of eligible versus adopting schools in the 40 to 50 percent ISP group varies significantly. Twelve states and the District of Columbia had 90 percent or more eligible low ISP schools adopting. An additional three states had 80 percent or more of their schools adopting. Alternatively, 10 states had less than 30 percent of their eligible low-ISP schools adopting, including New Hampshire, which has only 6.7 percent of eligible low-ISP schools adopting.

Student Enrollment

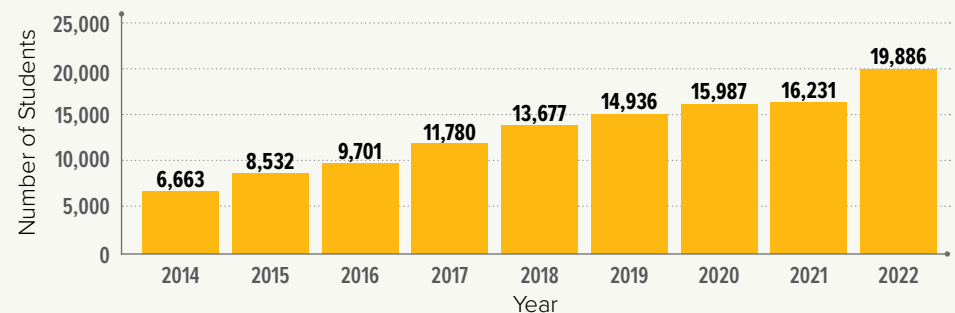
The reach of community eligibility is most evident in the number of students impacted. In the 2022–2023 school year, 19.9 million students attend schools that have adopted the Community Eligibility Provision; this is up from 16.2 million in the 2021–2022 school year. California and Texas have the most children attending schools that are adopting community eligibility, with approximately 3.5 million and 2.3 million in each state, respectively. Nationally, more than one in four students attending a school that is adopting community eligibility lives in California or Texas.

Thirty-seven states have seen increases in the number of students in community eligibility schools in the 2022–2023 school year. The states that saw the biggest increases in the number of enrolled students are California and Florida, having added over 1.3 million and over 854,000

students, respectively. Washington, Texas, and Pennsylvania had significant increases relative to other states as well, adding over 350,000, over 255,000, and over 148,000, respectively.

Fourteen states saw decreases in student enrollment numbers in community eligibility schools in the 2022–2023 school year. Twelve states saw decreases of more than 1,000 students, and two states had decreases of more than 10,000 students, but the driver of these decreases varied. Seven states had a decrease in students, but increased or maintained the same number of schools participating from the prior school year. For example, New York saw a decrease of more than 16,000 students, or less than one percent, from the 2021–2022 school year, but this can be accounted for in the fact that 29 participating schools did not report enrollment data. South Carolina, West Virginia, and Mississippi all had significant decreases as well, with 13,545, 9,136, and 9,037, respectively. While some of these states saw schools fall out of community eligibility, many attribute these losses to overall drops in student enrollment statewide as a continuing result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

GRAPH 4: 9-Year Trend in Student Enrollment in Schools Participating in Community Eligibility (in Thousands)



⁷ Food Research & Action Center (2017). *Community Eligibility Continues to Grow in the 2016–2017 School Year*. Available at https://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/CEP-Report_Final_Links_032317-1.pdf.

Healthy School Meals for All State Legislation

The trial run of Healthy School Meals for All during the pandemic has highlighted the value of offering healthy school meals to all students at no charge regardless of their household income. Schools, families, and students throughout the country do not want to go back to the way the school nutrition programs operated before the pandemic. In lieu of Congressional action, five states — California, Colorado, Maine, Minnesota, and New Mexico — have implemented Healthy School Meals for All permanently. Four more states — Connecticut, Massachusetts, Nevada, and Vermont — have extended Healthy School Meals for All for at least one more year. Other states, such as Oregon and Washington, have provided additional funding to support community eligibility to increase the number of schools able to offer free meals to all of their students. As a result of these legislative efforts, these states have had significant increases in take up of community eligibility in the 2022–2023 school year. Read more at [FRAC's Healthy School Meals for All microsite](#).

Expanding Access to Community Eligibility

In spring 2022, the U.S. Department of Agriculture released a [Community Eligibility Provision Characteristics Study in the 2016–2017 school year](#). The report found that schools and districts participating in community eligibility saw increased meal participation and federal reimbursements, an increase in average daily attendance, the elimination of unpaid school meal fees, and reduced stigma for students from low-income households.

The report also found that three out of four school districts (76 percent) had implemented community eligibility districtwide. The most often cited concerns among eligible nonparticipating districts were districtwide ISPs that kept the district from participating in all schools and the financial viability of using the current multiplier. Fifty-one percent of eligible nonparticipating school districts reported that increasing the 1.6 multiplier would make community eligibility more appealing.

In spring 2023, USDA announced a [proposed rule to lower the eligibility threshold for community eligibility from 40 percent to 25 percent](#), which would address the concern among some eligible districts about qualifying districtwide. FRAC supports the proposed rule, which would make more high-need schools eligible to participate in community eligibility, expand school districts' ability to group schools together, and support states that have passed Healthy School Meals for All legislation.

However, USDA does not have the authority to increase funding for community eligibility, and the proposed rule does not address this challenge. In order to make community eligibility a more financially viable option for high-need school districts and schools, Congress must increase the multiplier that determines the level of federal reimbursement that community eligibility schools receive from 1.6 to 2.5 as proposed in the School Meals Expansion Act (H.R. 2567).

Medicaid Direct Certification

Medicaid direct certification allows children whose families participate in Medicaid to be automatically certified as eligible for free or reduced-price school

meals. This ensures that they are not missed through the application process, and it increases schools' ISPs, making community eligibility a more financially viable option for more schools.

The Medicaid direct certification demonstration project was first authorized through the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 to allow students who are enrolled in Medicaid and belong to a family whose income, as defined by Medicaid, is below 133 percent of the federal poverty level⁸ to be directly certified to receive free school meals. Kentucky and New York directly certify children for free school meals through this statutory authority.

USDA used its demonstration authority to test using Medicaid data to certify children for free and reduced-price school meals. It put out a request for proposals (RFP) to states in 2016, 2021, and 2022 to participate in these demonstration projects. Alabama, California, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin are all currently using Medicaid data and income tests to directly certify children for free or reduced-price school meals.⁹

Thirteen additional states — Arizona, Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Montana, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, and Wyoming — were approved through the 2022 RFP and will start in the 2023–2024 school year.

USDA may issue another request for proposals for states to pilot Medicaid Direct Certification. If another request for proposals is issued, FRAC encourages states to apply so they can benefit from the demonstration project's positive impact on children, families, and schools. Learn more about the [Medicaid Direct Certification Demonstration Project on USDA's website](#).

⁸ As defined in section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)).

⁹ It is worth noting that if a child can be directly certified for free school meals through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary

Assistance for Needy Families program, Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, foster care, Head Start, or through being migrant or homeless, that certification always will take precedence over Medicaid direct certification.

Conclusion

Community eligibility allows high-need schools and districts to meet the nutritional needs of the many students they serve. As schools returned to normal school nutrition operations after two years of serving healthy school meals to all students at no charge through pandemic child nutrition waiver authority, community eligibility has allowed high-need schools to continue to offer free meals to all of their students. The option creates hunger-free schools by ensuring that all students have access to the nutritious school breakfasts and lunches they need to be well-nourished and ready to learn, and it allows school nutrition departments to use their limited resources to provide nutritious and appealing meals by streamlining administrative requirements.

To increase the reach of community eligibility, states and school districts must work together to ensure that direct certification systems identify all students so that a school's identified student percentage accurately reflects the need within the school. Outreach and technical assistance by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, state agencies, and anti-hunger advocates also will be critical as schools consider the social, health, and financial benefits of community eligibility to help continue to serve healthy meals to all students.

Looking forward, Congress should pass legislation that allows all schools to offer free breakfast and lunch to all of their students. In lieu of that, an important incremental step is for Congress to bolster the financial viability of community eligibility by increasing the multiplier and creating a statewide community eligibility option that supports the growing number of states passing Healthy School Meals for All legislation.



Additional Resources

- ▶ [Direct Certification Improves Low-Income Student Access to School Meals: An Updated Guide to Direct Certification](#)
- ▶ [School District Strategies for Improving Direct Certification](#)
- ▶ [CEP Financial Calculators](#) (School districts and other stakeholders should use these tools to group schools strategically and to maximize the federal funding received.)
- ▶ [Community Eligibility: Making It Work With Lower ISPs](#)
- ▶ [Community Eligibility Partial Implementation Guide](#)



For more information and additional resources to help determine if community eligibility is a possibility for your school district, go to FRAC's [Community Eligibility webpage](#).



Technical Notes

The Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) obtained information on schools that were approved to operate under community eligibility in the 2022–2023 school year from state education agencies or entities at the state level that administer the federal school nutrition programs. Between November 2022 and April 2023, FRAC collected these data:

- ▶ school name;
- ▶ school district name;
- ▶ identified student percentage;
- ▶ participation in community eligibility as an individual school, part of a group, or a whole district; and
- ▶ enrollment.

FRAC followed up with state education agencies for data clarifications, and when necessary, to obtain missing data.

Under federal law, states are required to publish, by May 1 of each year, a list of schools and districts with ISPs of at least 40 percent and those with ISPs between 30 and just under 40 percent (near-eligible schools and districts). For the 2022–2023 school year, this deadline was extended by USDA to June 30, 2022 for some states who applied for waiver flexibility in order to grant flexibility to state agencies during the COVID-19 pandemic. FRAC compared this published list to the lists of approved schools, and compiled a universe of eligible and approved schools and districts in the 2022–2023 school year. When compiling the universe of eligible schools, FRAC treated a district as eligible if it contained at least one eligible school. FRAC treated a school as eligible if it appeared on a state’s published list of eligible schools. In addition, schools that were missing from a state’s list of eligible schools, but appeared on its list of adopting schools were treated as eligible.

FRAC gave the states the option to report both eligible and adopting schools in the fall data collection. This gave states the opportunity to update their eligible schools list to reflect any school closures or consolidations. Sixteen states — Alabama, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Missouri, Montana, North Carolina, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Nevada, Ohio, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wyoming — chose to provide both eligible and adopting schools for this analysis.

There are two circumstances under which a school might be able to adopt community eligibility even if it did not appear on a state’s list of eligible schools:

1. The U.S. Department of Agriculture permitted states to base their May published lists on proxy data readily available to them. Proxy data are merely an indicator of potential eligibility, not the basis for eligibility. Districts must submit more accurate information, which may be more complete, more recent, or both, when applying to adopt community eligibility.
2. A school can participate as a member of an adopting group (part or all of a district). A group’s eligibility is based on the ISP for the group as a whole.

The lists obtained from state education agencies indicated whether schools have elected to adopt community eligibility, the ISP the schools use to determine the federal reimbursement for meals served, and the total number of students attending each adopting school.

During the 2020–2021 and 2021–2022 school years, many schools that adopted community eligibility operated under the USDA-issued child nutrition waivers that were made available in

response to the pandemic. These waivers allowed meals to be offered at no charge to all students and provided the higher summer food reimbursement rate for each meal served. These waivers were no longer available during the 2022–2023 school year, and schools transitioned back to normal school nutrition operations. Thus, school districts and schools participated in community eligibility for the first time since the 2019–2020 school year.

The following states had schools that did not provide student enrollment numbers:

- ▶ 62 schools in Alabama
- ▶ 11 schools in Arizona
- ▶ 1 school in Nevada
- ▶ 1 school in New Mexico
- ▶ 29 schools in New York
- ▶ 40 schools in South Carolina

Indiana did not provide the ISP used by adopting community eligibility schools to calculate federal reimbursements for meals served, often referred to as the “claiming ISP” or “grouped ISP,” for three schools. For these schools, the ISPs are shown as N/A in the database.

Some states reported schools’ free claiming percentages (ISP multiplied by 1.6) as 100 percent, so it is impossible to know the exact grouped ISP. It can be determined that the school is participating in community eligibility with an ISP of 62.5 percent or above. In these cases, 62.5 percent was used in the database:

- ▶ 35 schools in the District of Columbia
- ▶ 297 schools in Ohio

Table 1: Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Take-Up Rate in School Districts for School Years (SY) 2021–2022¹ and 2022–2023²

State	School Year 2021–2022			School Year 2022–2023		
	Eligible for CEP	Adopting CEP	Percentage Adopting CEP of Total Eligible	Eligible for CEP	Adopting CEP	Percentage Adopting CEP of Total Eligible
Alabama	76	58	76.3%	131	66	50.4%
Alaska	43	33	76.7%	41	34	82.9%
Arizona	261	179	68.6%	271	187	69.0%
Arkansas	116	73	62.9%	121	70	57.9%
California	677	384	56.7%	763	605	79.3%
Colorado	71	24	33.8%	71	25	35.2%
Connecticut	57	54	94.7%	76	59	77.6%
Delaware	25	20	80.0%	23	17	73.9%
District of Columbia	43	42	97.7%	43	42	97.7%
Florida	316	203	64.2%	325	217	66.8%
Georgia	150	109	72.7%	140	117	83.6%
Hawaii	13	13	100.0%	13	13	100.0%
Idaho	30	23	76.7%	43	20	46.5%
Illinois	523	298	57.0%	627	385	61.4%
Indiana	278	113	40.6%	350	142	40.6%
Iowa	112	21	18.8%	124	25	20.2%
Kansas	78	4	5.1%	32	7	21.9%
Kentucky	172	166	96.5%	173	167	96.5%
Louisiana	129	123	95.3%	138	125	90.6%
Maine	49	28	57.1%	38	25	65.8%
Maryland	29	17	58.6%	28	17	60.7%
Massachusetts	156	99	63.5%	180	137	76.1%
Michigan	606	408	67.3%	739	416	56.3%
Minnesota	150	66	44.0%	136	75	55.1%
Mississippi	89	73	82.0%	97	75	77.3%
Missouri	156	104	66.7%	160	99	61.9%
Montana	65	53	81.5%	87	56	64.4%
Nebraska	115	22	19.1%	71	26	36.6%
Nevada	23	19	82.6%	28	26	92.9%
New Hampshire	5	0	0.0%	10	2	20.0%
New Jersey	137	79	57.7%	159	80	50.3%
New Mexico	139	121	87.1%	147	134	91.2%
New York	598	471	78.8%	647	510	78.8%
North Carolina	156	101	64.7%	155	111	71.6%
North Dakota	25	24	96.0%	23	23	100.0%
Ohio	421	343	81.5%	469	383	81.7%
Oklahoma	205	110	53.7%	262	112	42.7%
Oregon	206	88	42.7%	127	116	91.3%
Pennsylvania	329	248	75.4%	561	338	60.2%
Rhode Island	20	9	45.0%	23	14	60.9%
South Carolina	81	63	77.8%	79	62	78.5%
South Dakota	42	32	76.2%	39	32	82.1%
Tennessee	131	97	74.0%	130	102	78.5%
Texas	926	490	52.9%	918	563	61.3%
Utah	17	14	82.4%	17	15	88.2%
Vermont	28	18	64.3%	27	24	88.9%
Virginia	125	123	98.4%	125	120	96.0%
Washington	178	108	60.7%	204	201	98.5%
West Virginia	58	54	93.1%	58	55	94.8%
Wisconsin	243	114	46.9%	257	140	54.5%
Wyoming	8	7	87.5%	7	7	100.0%
U.S. TOTAL	8,686	5,543	63.8%	9,513	6,419	67.5%

1 For the 2021–2022 school year data, school districts are defined as eligible if they include at least one school with an ISP of 40 percent or higher, or at least one school has already adopted community eligibility.

2 For the 2022–2023 school year data, school districts are defined as eligible if they include at least one school with an ISP of 40 percent or higher, or at least one school has already adopted community eligibility.

Table 2: Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Take-Up Rate in Schools for School Years (SY) 2021–2022¹ and 2022–2023²

State	School Year 2021–2022			School Year 2022–2023		
	Eligible for CEP	Adopting CEP	Percentage Adopting CEP of Total Eligible	Eligible for CEP	Adopting CEP	Percentage Adopting CEP of Total Eligible
Alabama	672	490	72.9%	812	536	66.0%
Alaska	240	208	86.7%	242	211	87.2%
Arizona	774	493	63.7%	755	508	67.3%
Arkansas	400	259	64.8%	363	250	68.9%
California	4,952	3,730	75.3%	6,179	6,150	99.5%
Colorado	429	100	23.3%	392	106	27.0%
Connecticut	434	420	96.8%	522	483	92.5%
Delaware	119	114	95.8%	143	127	88.8%
District of Columbia	184	183	99.5%	181	180	99.4%
Florida	2,955	1,462	49.5%	3,105	2,542	81.9%
Georgia	1,090	873	80.1%	999	873	87.4%
Hawaii	115	106	92.2%	122	106	86.9%
Idaho	84	64	76.2%	66	61	92.4%
Illinois	2,340	1,823	77.9%	2,449	2,087	85.2%
Indiana	957	506	52.9%	1,148	593	51.7%
Iowa	382	176	46.1%	427	221	51.8%
Kansas	223	31	13.9%	118	34	28.8%
Kentucky	1,107	1,061	95.8%	1,122	1,092	97.3%
Louisiana	1,145	1,095	95.6%	1,212	1,177	97.1%
Maine	104	75	72.1%	84	77	91.7%
Maryland	443	357	80.6%	434	355	81.8%
Massachusetts	818	718	87.8%	972	846	87.0%
Michigan	1,951	1,468	75.2%	2,378	1,638	68.9%
Minnesota	296	150	50.7%	299	160	53.5%
Mississippi	413	376	91.0%	433	370	85.5%
Missouri	552	433	78.4%	561	416	74.2%
Montana	166	147	88.6%	230	167	72.6%
Nebraska	368	45	12.2%	293	151	51.5%
Nevada	412	388	94.2%	505	501	99.2%
New Hampshire	13	0	0.0%	21	3	14.3%
New Jersey	528	319	60.4%	568	321	56.5%
New Mexico	612	556	90.8%	701	667	95.1%
New York	3,289	3,021	91.9%	3,382	3,051	90.2%
North Carolina	1,302	879	67.5%	1,261	974	77.2%
North Dakota	38	37	97.4%	38	37	97.4%
Ohio	1,205	1,062	88.1%	1,302	1,141	87.6%
Oklahoma	542	326	60.1%	688	384	55.8%
Oregon	904	588	65.0%	722	709	98.2%
Pennsylvania	1,212	1,172	96.7%	2,045	1,478	72.3%
Rhode Island	91	61	67.0%	88	68	77.3%
South Carolina	634	538	84.9%	625	546	87.4%
South Dakota	130	110	84.6%	122	100	82.0%
Tennessee	974	845	86.8%	958	877	91.5%
Texas	5,852	3,740	63.9%	6,045	4,231	70.0%
Utah	60	42	70.0%	54	50	92.6%
Vermont	76	59	77.6%	97	92	94.8%
Virginia	1,018	1,008	99.0%	1,106	1,086	98.2%
Washington	748	482	64.4%	1,221	1,213	99.3%
West Virginia	606	593	97.9%	603	585	97.0%
Wisconsin	820	498	60.7%	874	591	67.6%
Wyoming	14	13	92.9%	13	13	100.0%
U.S. TOTAL	44,793	33,300	74.3%	49,080	40,235	82.0%

1 For the 2021–2022 school year data, school districts are defined as eligible if they include at least one school with an ISP of 40 percent or higher, or at least one school has already adopted community eligibility.

2 For the 2022–2023 school year data, school districts are defined as eligible if they include at least one school with an ISP of 40 percent or higher, or at least one school has already adopted community eligibility.

Table 3: Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Take-Up Rate by Schools' Identified Student Percentage (ISP) for School Year 2022–2023^{2,3}

State	Total Adopting	40-<50%			50-<60%			60%+		
		Eligible	Adopting	Percentage Adopting	Eligible	Adopting	Percentage Adopting	Eligible	Adopting	Percentage Adopting
Alabama	536	245	90	36.7%	268	191	71.3%	299	255	85.3%
Alaska	211	59	47	79.7%	62	55	88.7%	120	109	90.8%
Arizona	508	307	133	43.3%	256	212	82.8%	179	160	89.4%
Arkansas	250	170	95	55.9%	125	96	76.8%	68	59	86.8%
California	6150	2,649	2,644	99.8%	1,540	1,534	99.6%	1,990	1,972	99.1%
Colorado	106	227	49	21.6%	103	24	23.3%	62	33	53.2%
Connecticut	483	159	129	81.1%	127	120	94.5%	236	234	99.2%
Delaware	127	94	85	90.4%	43	39	90.7%	6	2	33.3%
District of Columbia	180	25	25	100.0%	17	17	100.0%	139	138	99.3%
Florida	2,542	428	250	58.4%	680	557	81.9%	1,997	1,735	86.9%
Georgia	873	164	91	55.5%	330	307	93.0%	505	475	94.1%
Hawaii	106	45	31	68.9%	23	22	95.7%	54	52	96.3%
Idaho	61	39	28	71.8%	17	16	94.1%	10	9	90.0%
Illinois	2,087	509	289	56.8%	446	352	78.9%	1,494	1,443	96.6%
Indiana ¹	593	323	79	24.5%	356	200	56.2%	469	311	66.3%
Iowa	221	158	17	10.8%	157	111	70.7%	112	93	83.0%
Kansas	34	64	13	20.3%	42	19	45.2%	13	2	15.4%
Kentucky	1,092	144	124	86.1%	334	328	98.2%	644	640	99.4%
Louisiana	1,177	200	189	94.5%	401	391	97.5%	611	597	97.7%
Maine	77	61	46	75.4%	20	17	85.0%	3	3	100.0%
Maryland	355	138	82	59.4%	105	94	89.5%	191	179	93.7%
Massachusetts	846	176	83	47.2%	164	139	84.8%	632	624	98.7%
Michigan	1638	532	227	42.7%	592	424	71.6%	1,254	987	78.7%
Minnesota	160	103	29	28.2%	86	61	70.9%	110	69	62.7%
Mississippi	370	49	8	16.3%	50	35	70.0%	334	327	97.9%
Missouri	416	199	108	54.3%	145	116	80.0%	217	192	88.5%
Montana	167	82	44	53.7%	54	35	64.8%	94	88	93.6%
Nebraska	151	95	14	14.7%	54	22	40.7%	144	114	79.2%
Nevada	501	235	230	97.9%	146	146	100.0%	124	124	100.0%
New Hampshire	3	15	1	6.7%	6	2	33.3%	0	0	0%
New Jersey	321	234	69	29.5%	158	91	57.6%	176	154	87.5%
New Mexico	667	167	138	82.6%	344	339	98.5%	190	190	100.0%
New York	3,051	460	309	67.2%	368	314	85.3%	2,516	2,428	96.5%
North Carolina	974	316	99	31.3%	383	327	85.4%	562	548	97.5%
North Dakota	37	10	10	100.0%	4	4	100.0%	24	23	95.8%
Ohio	1,141	374	260	69.5%	408	377	92.4%	520	492	94.6%
Oklahoma	384	403	184	45.7%	188	128	68.1%	97	53	54.6%
Oregon	709	647	637	98.5%	45	41	91.1%	30	29	96.7%
Pennsylvania	1,478	573	229	40.0%	414	319	77.1%	1,058	930	87.9%
Rhode Island	68	25	8	32.0%	33	24	72.7%	30	30	100.0%
South Carolina	546	191	129	67.5%	202	185	91.6%	232	232	100.0%
South Dakota	100	25	10	40.0%	34	28	82.4%	63	62	98.4%
Tennessee	877	271	211	77.9%	536	525	97.9%	151	139	92.1%
Texas	4,231	1,104	301	27.3%	1,838	1,320	71.8%	3,103	2,610	84.1%
Utah	50	19	18	94.7%	23	21	91.3%	12	11	91.7%
Vermont	92	82	80	97.6%	11	10	90.9%	3	2	66.7%
Virginia	1,086	380	363	95.5%	404	403	99.8%	322	320	99.4%
Washington	1,213	799	792	99.1%	263	262	99.6%	159	158	99.4%
West Virginia	585	186	173	93.0%	334	331	99.1%	83	81	97.6%
Wisconsin	591	309	98	31.7%	187	134	71.7%	378	359	95.0%
Wyoming	13	1	1	100.0%	6	6	100.0%	6	6	100.0%
U.S. TOTAL	40,235	14,270	9,399	65.9%	12,932	10,871	84.1%	21,826	19,883	91.1%

1 Indiana did not report ISP data for three schools listed as participating in community eligibility for the 2022–2023 school year.

2 In addition to the state that did not report the identified student percentage (ISP) that community eligibility schools use for federal reimbursements for all adopting schools, some states reported ISPs for adopting schools that are below the 40 percent eligibility threshold (three schools in Arizona, one school in Delaware, three schools in the District of Columbia, one school in Hawaii, eight schools in Idaho, three schools in Illinois, 11 schools in Maine, one school in Minnesota, one school in Nebraska, one school in Nevada, seven schools in New Jersey, 12 schools in Ohio, 19 schools in Oklahoma, two schools in Oregon, six schools in Rhode Island, two schools in Tennessee, one school in Washington). These schools are not included in the total number of adopting schools by each ISP category. These schools could be participating because of a grace year or as part of a group, but reported separately.

3 The data referenced in footnotes 1 and 2 account for the difference between the U.S. total number of adopting schools and the total number of adopting schools by identified student percentage category.

Table 4: Student Enrollment for School Years (SY) 2014–2015,¹ 2015–2016,² 2016–2017,³ 2017–2018,⁴ 2018–2019,⁵ 2019–2020,⁶ 2020–2021,⁷ 2021–2022,⁸ and 2022–2023¹⁰

State	Enrollment									Change
	SY 2014–2015	SY 2015–2016	SY 2016–2017	SY 2017–2018	SY 2018–2019	SY 2019–2020	SY 2020–2021	SY 2021–2022	SY 2022–2023	SY 2021–2022 to SY 2022–2023
Alabama	180,789	196,802	195,853	208,748	208,929	208,068	101,387	222,189	240,153	17,964
Alaska	27,666	29,234	34,106	36,575	37,244	36,560	38,089	33,465	35,400	1,935
Arizona	30,763	55,048	94,229	116,488	145,273	178,535	193,750	171,028	187,541	16,513
Arkansas	791	20,060	55,605	71,475	80,732	91,510	104,128	103,678	99,022	-4,656
California	113,513	435,900	748,533	799,646	1,690,225	1,944,304	2,207,703	2,174,949	3,524,445	1,349,496
Colorado	12,455	34,920	36,198	39,244	39,950	39,028	40,165	33,404	33,798	394
Connecticut	66,524	105,547	110,322	118,067	151,552	175,155	208,824	206,444	233,711	27,267
Delaware	46,096	50,837	56,306	58,154	62,920	61,047	61,156	58,917	65,164	6,247
District of Columbia	47,013	51,524	56,143	58,085	62,424	61,909	65,025	62,651	65,187	2,536
Florida	274,071	474,006	579,138	705,602	858,135	872,443	913,549	933,123	1,787,164	854,041
Georgia	354,038	420,383	467,411	472,296	490,319	510,532	494,963	524,495	521,529	-2,966
Hawaii	2,640	4,650	20,150	28,750	28,994	27,747	33,120	48,964	47,228	-1,736
Idaho	18,828	32,299	33,058	33,898	28,876	21,953	21,646	22,852	17,142	-5,710
Illinois	552,751	672,831	685,101	725,241	731,062	762,195	804,574	793,894	870,519	76,625
Indiana	96,604	117,187	127,405	136,855	172,969	224,192	247,399	241,398	282,269	40,871
Iowa	32,103	46,021	50,589	53,880	67,192	81,424	83,660	83,234	107,405	24,171
Kansas	5,992	19,641	22,661	25,722	26,338	26,038	13,563	10,912	9,648	-1,264
Kentucky	279,144	385,043	436,419	479,450	501,059	522,512	539,460	532,628	549,813	17,185
Louisiana	146,141	217,496	341,492	455,318	399,190	493,727	523,957	518,791	554,714	35,923
Maine ⁹	5,284	17,977	20,411	20,435	23,733	19,975	Not Reported	Not Reported	21,882	21,882
Maryland	7,624	94,496	99,484	103,814	106,218	102,788	171,613	173,972	171,905	-2,067
Massachusetts	134,071	200,948	238,872	260,364	282,030	301,465	274,211	330,684	389,055	58,371
Michigan	266,249	275,579	273,071	287,801	418,447	466,540	544,806	541,554	586,515	44,961
Minnesota	20,688	49,944	57,003	57,957	63,057	51,818	53,982	50,873	54,787	3,914
Mississippi	136,095	148,781	151,815	147,677	164,297	145,097	162,110	158,523	149,486	-9,037
Missouri	106,126	111,319	121,962	134,996	139,884	143,692	142,542	142,654	134,522	-8,132
Montana	15,802	21,161	23,290	26,180	24,777	21,741	22,340	20,656	26,032	5,376
Nebraska	180	2,425	4,277	7,411	7,276	6,173	12,100	12,090	67,351	55,261
Nevada	7,917	15,970	71,345	95,001	100,957	218,746	293,179	271,504	362,578	91,074
New Hampshire	0	644	1,125	1,082	1,100	652	621	0	569	569
New Jersey	99,840	107,277	127,108	140,199	153,533	144,312	143,586	143,264	148,078	4,814
New Mexico	119,300	149,057	164,569	177,388	175,756	186,116	187,301	176,450	220,400	43,950
New York	505,859	528,748	603,795	1,586,981	1,646,409	1,742,005	1,719,661	1,755,995	1,739,621	-16,374
North Carolina	310,850	357,307	367,705	433,204	418,820	455,237	463,666	415,375	458,418	43,043
North Dakota	5,284	5,661	5,698	6,039	6,525	7,424	9,420	9,420	8,893	-527
Ohio	305,451	354,727	363,860	397,594	409,467	410,400	412,116	416,274	431,250	14,976

Table 4: Student Enrollment for School Years (SY) 2014–2015,¹ 2015–2016,² 2016–2017,³ 2017–2018,⁴ 2018–2019,⁵ 2019–2020,⁶ 2020–2021,⁷ 2021–2022,⁸ and 2022–2023¹⁰ (continued)

State	Enrollment									Change
	SY 2014–2015	SY 2015–2016	SY 2016–2017	SY 2017–2018	SY 2018–2019	SY 2019–2020	SY 2020–2021	SY 2021–2022	SY 2022–2023	SY 2021–2022 to SY 2022–2023
Oklahoma	43,433	66,323	104,162	148,994	152,695	154,078	99,447	123,293	124,882	1,589
Oregon	103,601	129,635	130,336	129,766	122,553	133,615	240,052	245,362	277,613	32,251
Pennsylvania	327,573	394,630	426,984	470,275	509,073	540,877	565,014	556,188	704,553	148,365
Rhode Island	838	6,531	10,350	16,675	18,043	30,915	32,220	31,774	37,426	5,652
South Carolina	111,453	173,364	201,587	235,711	249,036	255,006	265,027	254,439	240,894	-13,545
South Dakota	13,056	14,626	15,981	15,499	19,409	18,332	20,310	20,824	15,661	-5,163
Tennessee	417,165	436,821	428,424	437,641	389,163	382,428	367,184	362,507	362,551	44
Texas	941,262	1,015,384	984,976	1,184,559	1,566,088	1,873,513	2,111,019	2,088,076	2,343,402	255,326
Utah	7,019	8,565	8,880	12,353	20,148	20,900	19,194	15,159	19,066	3,907
Vermont	7,386	12,751	13,508	13,946	13,768	12,053	12,239	13,045	21,019	7,974
Virginia	42,911	99,404	119,051	156,687	204,610	241,056	385,041	512,500	567,126	54,626
Washington	53,369	69,432	75,357	95,514	110,815	126,278	158,518	195,397	545,548	350,151
West Virginia	124,978	145,057	177,875	195,075	208,960	209,566	212,362	225,803	216,667	-9,136
Wisconsin	133,232	146,330	156,519	158,325	165,513	172,782	188,219	189,098	204,917	15,819
Wyoming	1,255	1,255	1,370	1,500	1,886	1,931	2,043	1,928	1,854	-74
U.S. TOTAL	6,663,073	8,531,558	9,701,469	11,780,137	13,677,429	14,936,390	15,987,261	16,231,697	19,886,373	3,654,676

1 Data for the 2014–2015 school year are from *Take Up of Community Eligibility This School Year* (Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, February 2015).

2 Data for the 2015–2016 school year are from *Community Eligibility Adoption Rises for the 2015–2016 School Year, Increasing Access to School Meals* (Food Research & Action Center and Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, updated May 2016).

3 Data for the 2016–2017 school year are from *Community Eligibility Continues to Grow in the 2016–2017 School Year* (Food Research & Action Center, March 2017). Some schools did not provide student enrollment information for the 2016–2017 school year: one school in California, two schools in Georgia, four schools in Idaho, three schools in Maine, 26 schools in Tennessee, and four schools in South Carolina.

4 Data for the 2017–2018 school year are from *Community Eligibility: The Key to Hunger-Free Schools, School Year 2018–2019* (Food Research & Action Center, May 2019). Some schools did not provide student enrollment information for the 2017–2018 school year: 12 schools in Alaska, 19 schools in Louisiana, four schools in Mississippi, five schools in Oklahoma, one school in South Carolina, and two schools in Vermont.

5 Data for the 2018–2019 school year are from *Community Eligibility: The Key to Hunger-Free Schools, School Year 2018–2019* (Food Research & Action Center, May 2019). Some schools did not provide student enrollment information for the 2018–2019 school year: four schools in Hawaii, 182 schools in Louisiana, 25 schools in Mississippi, 14 schools in South Carolina, and three schools in Utah.

6 Data for the 2019–2020 school year are from *Community Eligibility: The Key to Hunger-Free Schools, School Year 2019–2020* (Food Research & Action Center, May 2020). Some schools did not provide student enrollment information for the 2019–2020 school year: 19 schools in Alabama, 11 schools in California, four schools in the District of Columbia, five schools in Indiana, two schools in Louisiana, seven schools in Maine, two schools in Massachusetts, 10 schools in Michigan, one school in Nevada, four schools in Oregon, 18 schools in South Carolina, one school in South Dakota, five schools in Texas, and one school in Virginia.

7 Data for the 2020–2021 school year are from *Community Eligibility: The Key to Hunger-Free Schools, School Year 2020–2021* (Food Research & Action Center, June 2021). Some schools did not provide student enrollment information for the 2020–2021 school year: eight schools in Alabama, 43 schools in California, six schools in Florida, eight schools in Georgia, one school in Idaho, one school in Louisiana, 149 schools in Massachusetts, two schools in Michigan, three schools in Missouri, one school in New Mexico, 115 schools in New York, four schools in South Carolina, five schools in Tennessee, eight schools in Texas, one school in Washington.

8 Data for the 2021–2022 school year are from *Community Eligibility: The Key to Hunger-Free Schools, School Year 2020–2021* (Food Research & Action Center, June 2022). Some schools did not provide student enrollment information for the 2021–2022 school year: 17 schools in Alabama, three schools in Alaska, one school in Colorado, one school in Idaho, two schools in Kentucky, four schools in Louisiana, one school in Maryland, one school in Montana, one school in North Carolina, two schools in Oregon, three schools in Tennessee.

9 Maine did not report student enrollment data for the 2020–2021 or 2021–2022 school years.

10 Some schools did not provide student enrollment information for the 2022–2023 school year: 62 schools in Alabama, 11 schools in Arizona, one school in Nevada, one school in New Mexico, 29 schools in New York, 40 schools in South Carolina.

Table 5: Number of Schools Adopting the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) for School Years (SY) 2014–2015,¹ 2015–2016,² 2016–2017,³ 2017–2018,⁴ 2018–2019,⁵ 2019–2020,⁶ 2020–2021,⁷ 2021–2022,⁸ and 2022–2023

State	Adopting									Change
	SY 2014–2015	SY 2015–2016	SY 2016–2017	SY 2017–2018	SY 2018–2019	SY 2019–2020	SY 2020–2021	SY 2021–2022	SY 2022–2023	SY 2021–2022 to SY 2022–2023
Alabama	347	392	391	425	444	445	454	490	536	46
Alaska	123	137	174	213	208	208	216	208	211	3
Arizona	73	133	227	296	372	446	500	493	508	15
Arkansas	4	57	139	178	201	229	255	259	250	-9
California	208	651	1,070	1,311	2,833	3,275	3,777	3,730	6,150	2,420
Colorado	34	82	91	101	105	105	108	100	106	6
Connecticut	133	212	228	241	307	364	426	420	483	63
Delaware	95	108	117	116	212	116	166	114	127	13
District of Columbia	96	107	115	116	119	115	116	183	180	-3
Florida	548	831	1,001	1,142	1,356	1,374	1,440	1,462	2,542	1,080
Georgia	589	700	768	787	818	834	819	873	873	0
Hawaii	6	25	43	65	69	68	80	106	106	0
Idaho	50	88	92	92	82	61	62	64	61	-3
Illinois	1,041	1,322	1,363	1,499	1,541	1,588	1,693	1,823	2,087	264
Indiana	214	253	283	287	362	462	515	506	593	87
Iowa	78	110	119	123	156	176	177	176	221	45
Kansas	18	64	69	72	75	70	44	31	34	3
Kentucky	611	804	888	948	984	1,028	1,060	1,061	1,092	31
Louisiana	335	484	741	968	1,016	1,029	1,087	1,095	1,177	82
Maine	21	59	72	71	87	73	73	75	77	2
Maryland	25	227	228	242	242	238	364	357	355	-2
Massachusetts	294	462	525	574	613	685	720	718	846	128
Michigan	625	662	652	715	1,105	1,259	1,466	1,468	1,638	170
Minnesota	56	125	153	154	163	146	153	150	160	10
Mississippi	257	298	333	342	410	337	390	376	370	-6
Missouri	298	330	367	402	420	427	432	433	416	-17
Montana	93	127	138	158	157	150	154	147	167	20
Nebraska	2	9	15	26	26	26	43	45	151	106
Nevada	13	36	122	153	167	316	399	388	501	113
New Hampshire	0	2	3	3	4	3	3	0	3	3
New Jersey	197	227	270	306	331	319	315	319	321	2
New Mexico	343	429	487	535	546	568	574	556	667	111
New York	1,246	1,351	1,561	3,381	3,565	3,481	3,633	3,021	3,051	30
North Carolina	648	752	787	914	882	941	955	879	974	95
North Dakota	23	24	25	26	29	31	37	37	37	0

Table 5: Number of Schools Adopting the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) for School Years (SY) 2014–2015,¹ 2015–2016,² 2016–2017,³ 2017–2018,⁴ 2018–2019,⁵ 2019–2020,⁶ 2020–2021,⁷ 2021–2022,⁸ and 2022–2023 (continued)

State	Adopting									Change
	SY 2014–2015	SY 2015–2016	SY 2016–2017	SY 2017–2018	SY 2018–2019	SY 2019–2020	SY 2020–2021	SY 2021–2022	SY 2022–2023	SY 2021–2022 to SY 2022–2023
Ohio	739	842	918	998	998	1,022	1,025	1,062	1,141	79
Oklahoma	100	184	301	413	427	408	306	326	384	58
Oregon	262	340	346	344	341	353	622	588	709	121
Pennsylvania	646	795	861	959	1,031	1,112	1,171	1,172	1,478	306
Rhode Island	1	10	21	34	37	58	61	61	68	7
South Carolina	226	348	412	471	515	531	531	538	546	8
South Dakota	142	109	124	89	97	97	102	110	100	-10
Tennessee	862	924	909	914	836	840	831	845	877	32
Texas	1,477	1,665	1,678	2,070	2,716	3,250	3,700	3,740	4,231	491
Utah	22	28	29	35	52	51	54	42	50	8
Vermont	32	56	60	68	62	53	56	59	92	33
Virginia	87	206	255	341	428	511	782	1,008	1,086	78
Washington	122	172	193	232	273	314	394	482	1,213	731
West Virginia	369	428	492	518	540	545	558	593	585	-8
Wisconsin	348	381	415	422	438	468	494	498	591	93
Wyoming	5	5	7	10	11	14	14	13	13	0
US Total	14,184	18,173	20,678	24,900	28,809	30,620	33,407	33,300	40,235	6,935

1 Data for the 2014–2015 school year are from *Take Up of Community Eligibility This School Year* (Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, February 2015).

2 Data for the 2015–2016 school year are from *Community Eligibility Adoption Rises for the 2015–2016 School Year, Increasing Access to School Meals* (Food Research & Action Center and Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, updated May 2016).

3 Data for the 2016–2017 school year are from *Community Eligibility Continues to Grow in the 2016–2017 School Year* (Food Research & Action Center, March 2017).

4 Data for the 2017–2018 school year are from *Community Eligibility: The Key to Hunger-Free Schools, School Year 2018–2019* (Food Research & Action Center, May 2019).

5 Data for the 2018–2019 school year are from *Community Eligibility: The Key to Hunger-Free Schools, School Year 2018–2019* (Food Research & Action Center, May 2019).

6 Data for the 2019–2020 school year are from *Community Eligibility: The Key to Hunger-Free Schools, School Year 2019–2020* (Food Research & Action Center, May 2020).

7 Data for the 2020–2021 school year are from *Community Eligibility: The Key to Hunger-Free Schools, School Year 2020–2021* (Food Research & Action Center, June 2021).

8 Data for the 2021–2022 school year are from *Community Eligibility: The Key to Hunger-Free Schools, School Year 2021–2022* (Food Research & Action Center, June 2022).



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