



Maryland Hunger Solutions

Ending hunger and promoting well-being

Community Eligibility Can Create Hunger-Free Schools in Dorchester County

Poverty and Food Insecurity in Dorchester County

- Of the 32,638 people living in Dorchester County, 5,837 are living below the **poverty** line.
- Over 30% of **children** in Dorchester County live below the poverty line.
- Households that are food insecure don't have adequate access to the food they need. Food insecurity is linked with poor health and development in children as well as academic and behavioral problems. The **food insecurity** rate in Dorchester County is 15.8%.
- Over 64% of children qualify for Free and Reduced Price Meals (FARMS) in Dorchester County.

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

- CEP, introduced in the *Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010*, allows schools to combat hunger and food insecurity by providing a free breakfast and lunch for **all** students.
- The stigma that low-income students often experience when accessing school meals is eliminated.
- By removing the need to collect fees from students and forms from families, CEP also increases efficiency, reduces paperwork, and simplifies administrative processes.

Which Schools are Qualified to use CEP?

- During the 2014-2015 school year, over **three hundred** schools in Maryland are eligible to elect CEP and become a "**Hunger-Free School**," including these 9 Dorchester schools:

CAMBRIDGE-SOUTH DORCHESTER

*CHOPTANK ELEMENTARY

HURLOCK ELEMENTARY

*JUDY HOYER CENTER

*MACES LANE MIDDLE

*MAPLE ELEMENTARY

NEW DIRECTIONS LEARNING ACADEMY

SANDY HILL ELEMENTARY

VIENNA ELEMENTARY

- For more information about school meals, please contact Dorchester County Public Schools, Department of Food & Nutrition Services at 410-221-1111 ext. 1016.
- *Note: An asterisk indicates the schools that qualify for federal reimbursement at the highest "free meal rate" for over 96% of school meals served.