



Support the Community Eligibility Provision – SB 128

What is the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)?

- The current system requires the collection and processing of individual household applications which are used to assign each child to one of the three income eligibility categories: free, reduced-price, and paid. These categories determine the federal reimbursement level the school receives for each meal served.
- Established in the *Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010*, CEP allows schools in high-poverty areas to offer meals through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs to all students at no charge
- CEP simplifies administrative processes by:
 - eliminating the Free and Reduced Price Meal applications (known as “FARMS”), which can be confusing for families and burdensome for schools to collect and process
 - eliminating the need to collect fees for meals from students

What does SB 128 bill do?

- SB 128 enables schools to eliminate school meal applications and implement the CEP, without fear of losing State Compensatory Funding that was tied to the number FARMS students at each school
- SB128 encourages more school districts to implement the CEP, which will provide universal free lunch for more kids on a school-wide or district-wide basis

Why is the Community Eligibility Provision important?

- CEP increases access to healthy school meals and reduces food insecurity
- By eliminating school meal applications, CEP makes school nutrition operations more efficient
- CEP removes many barriers to participation in school meal programs, including the stigma that these programs are only for poor children