



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

April 14, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents and
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Carol Wolenberg, Deputy Superintendent *Carol*

SUBJECT: Community Eligibility Option

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has announced that only ten states, including Michigan, were selected as finalists to participate in a pilot program for an innovative universal free meal service option designed to make it easier for low-income children to receive meals in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. The Community Eligibility Option will allow schools in high-poverty areas to provide free breakfast and lunch to all students, using pre-existing data to determine the eligibility of kids to receive free nutrition assistance. The determination is based on the percentage of directly certified students. The minimum threshold for directly certified students is 40 percent. Any school, or combination of schools, within your district that meet or exceed the 40 percent directly certified student percentage (as a percentage of enrollment) will be eligible to participate in this program. By streamlining the eligibility and enrollment process, no additional application is required to provide nutrition assistance to children in need. This option will eliminate the need for free and reduced applications at the participating schools and simplify the process of counting and claiming meals at participating schools. Full details on this program can be found at:
http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/governance/Policy-Memos/2011/SP23-2011_os.pdf

We send you this information in an effort to be proactive and to alert you of this potential opportunity. We are still gathering data, and many questions related to this program need to be answered by USDA. The deadline for Michigan to submit its application for this program is April 29, 2011. If Michigan is chosen as one of the three states to implement the program, we will be given an effective date of July 1, 2011, for the 2011-2012 school year. We will communicate more information as necessary. Thank you for your time and consideration in this important initiative.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

JOHN C. AUSTIN – PRESIDENT • CASANDRA E. ULBRICH – VICE PRESIDENT
NANCY DANHOF – SECRETARY • MARIANNE YARED MCGUIRE – TREASURER
RICHARD ZEILE – NASBE DELEGATE • KATHLEEN N. STRAUS
DANIEL VARNER • EILEEN LAPPIN WEISER

608 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30008 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909
www.michigan.gov/mde • (517) 373-3324

Page 2
April 14, 2011

Questions regarding the content of this memo may be directed to the Grants Coordination and School Support, School Nutrition Programs unit by e-mail to MDE-schoolnutrition@michigan.gov or phone 517-373-3347.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance