



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING


GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 24, 2024

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

FROM: Dr. Diane Golzynski, Deputy Superintendent
Division of Business, Health, and Library Services 

SUBJECT: At-Risk (Section 31a) Funding

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is aware that some school districts are experiencing a decrease in the number of children that are directly certified by Medicaid on their Direct Certification Report through the Michigan Student Data System (MSDS). During the Public Health Emergency (PHE), which ended in May 2023, states had a different Medicaid eligibility renewal period. The flexibilities to this renewal period extended through May 2024. This change may be a factor leading to the decrease that some school districts are experiencing in the number of students on their school year 2024-25 Direct Certification Report. It is projected that approximately 10% of school districts will have an anticipated decrease in section 31a At-Risk funding this school year, which may be a direct result of the change in Medicaid eligibility.

MDE is recommending that school districts review their economically disadvantaged (ED)/supplemental nutrition eligibility (SNE) counts reported in the fall general collection. Students who appear on the Direct Certification Report automatically will be identified as eligible for reporting purposes, but districts should continue to run the Direct Certification Report and extend benefits to all children in a household when possible. Districts should be distributing and collecting one of the forms below to determine additional students and family incomes that fall below the poverty level:

- Education Benefits forms for Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) schools or
- Education and Nutrition Benefits application for non-CEP schools

These forms and applications are still important to collect as they permit school buildings and districts to generate Section 31a At-Risk funding and students/families to qualify for other fee waivers such as AP testing and pay to play. With Michigan

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School Meals, these forms and applications are the only other way to determine students who meet the economically disadvantaged criteria.

Districts can get more information about Medicaid eligibility from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) website on [Health Care Programs Eligibility](#). In addition, the MDHHS website has a page on [Summer EBT eligibility](#) that districts can share with families. The MDE website can provide additional information on [Direct Certification Basics](#), [Section 31a At-Risk](#) funding and [Supplemental Nutrition Eligibility](#).

cc: Michigan Education Alliance
Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Departments