



Community Eligibility: Helping low-income children receive healthy, well-balanced meals *Leaders Voice Their Support*



“ School children throughout America will benefit from these nutrition and wellness standards and from the national implementation of community eligibility. Low-income children are the biggest winners. More low-income children will receive healthy school lunches and breakfasts as community eligibility moves from the 11 pilot states to the nation as a whole. As to competitive foods, when peer pressure and stigma drive low-income students to purchase less healthy but appealing competitive foods, instead of eating healthy school meals, they lose out nutritionally in a much bigger way than their more affluent peers, and their families lose financially. ”

Jim Weill
President, Food Research Action Center

“Programs like school breakfast help more kids struggling with hunger get the healthy meals they need. But only about half of the students in the U.S. who eat a free or reduced-price school lunch are also eating school breakfast. The Community Eligibility Provision helps close this gap by allowing schools to cut through red tape and target kids in need. Its early track record suggests that Community Eligibility is an innovative solution that will help us get much closer to ending child hunger in America.”

Billy Shore
Founder and CEO, Share Our Strength

“NASBE is committed to helping state boards of education implement the new local wellness policy requirements, as well as increasing participation in school meal programs through the Community Eligibility Provision of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act.”

Whitney Meagher
Director, National Association of State Boards of Education Center for Safe and Healthy Schools

“We saw a jump of 30-40% in breakfast participation which was absolutely wonderful for us in that more children were eating breakfast. We think the program, the Community Eligibility Program, has worked wonderfully for the Cabell County Schools. Some advantages that we saw with the improvement of student nutritional well-being, an increase in meal participation, and student performance increased. Schools that were near the bottom scoring scale have raised up with the top scoring schools, that there has been a decrease in student absences, and a decrease in student tardiness.”

Rhonda McCoy
Food Service Director, Cabell County Schools, West Virginia

“For us, the Community Eligibility Provision has been a no-brainer. We are very, very excited about it. CEP is such a positive thing, it has definitely improved our children’s test scores and now we have a 96% attendance rate. Georgia is really excited to be participating this year, and I just encourage any of you who think it might work for you to try it.”

Donna S. Martin
Director School Nutrition Program, Burke County Board of Education, Georgia

