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June 28, 2016

TO: Chief School Administrators  
Charter School Lead Persons  
Renaissance School Project Lead Persons  
School Principals

FROM: Yut'se O Thomas, Director  
Office of School Finance

SUBJECT: CEP Documents for 2016-17 Available on Website Friday, July 1

The federal *Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010* provides for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) to include a new universal meal option, the "Community Eligibility Provision" (CEP), to be implemented by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Community eligibility permits eligible schools to provide meal service to all students at no charge, regardless of economic status. Rather than collecting free and reduced price lunch applications, participating CEP schools will rely solely on "direct certification" data for the National School Lunch Program.

The NJ Department of Agriculture has notified districts of their [eligibility to participate in CEP](#) in FY 2017. The Department recognizes that districts will have questions about how their participation in CEP could impact NJDOE's ability to collect the enrollment information used for state aid and other reporting purposes. The NJDOE has developed a unique form for determining household income for those state reporting purposes.

In order to count students as low-income who are not already reported through the direct certification process, each participating CEP school must use the NJ Household Information Survey. Beginning Friday, July 1, the 2016-17 survey will be available on the Department's [website](#) in both English and Spanish, along with other information and resources for participating schools and parents.

The NJDOE encourages all districts considering participation in CEP to review the updated survey and documentation provided on our [CEP website](#). Please do not hesitate to reach out to the Office of School Facilities and Finance at [staid@doe.state.nj.us](mailto:staid@doe.state.nj.us) with any questions you may have.

KD/YOT/spe:

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