

Work Plan for CEP Schools that report: NJSMART, ASSA, CHE

Required for: Participating Districts, Charter & Renaissance Schools, Co Vocs, CSSDs, & PSSDs

The State uses students' household income data for assessments and State aid purposes. Most schools determine household income using Free Lunch applications from the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). In place of NSLP applications, CEP districts & schools *must* use the NJDOE Household Information Survey (or an electronic alternative) to determine a student's income status for state reporting; except that surveys are not required for students who are either direct-certified through SNEARS, or have a sibling in a different school who is free/reduced lunch eligible. This Work Plan will guide you through the process of administering the surveys and reporting student income status. All CEP resources linked in this Work Plan, and other related information, can also be found on the Department's [CEP website: www.state.nj.us/education/finance/cep/](http://www.state.nj.us/education/finance/cep/).

1. Distribute to Parents: Household Survey ([Household Survey: English](#) | [Household Survey: Spanish](#)) and Introduction Letter ([Introduction Letter: English](#) | [Introduction Letter: Spanish](#))
 - a. It is important to explain to parents why the survey is necessary. For a better understanding of the process, and the responsibilities of school and district officials, use the [CEP Detailed Procedures](#).
2. Collect Surveys & determine income status (*not* eligibility for free/reduced lunch)
 - a. Directions for determining income status using the survey: [Quick Reference Guide](#)
 - b. If the forms contain an error, follow up with the household to correct it. You may use the Letter Requesting Corrections ([Requesting Corrections: English](#) | [Requesting Corrections: Spanish](#)).
3. Verify income for low-income students
 - a. Use the [Sample Size Calculator](#) to determine the number of low-income students whose income status must be verified.
 - b. Verify that students in the sample are either in SNEARS (Direct Cert), or request income documentation from parents using the Letter Requesting Income Information ([Requesting Income Information: English](#) | [Requesting Income Information: Spanish](#)).
 - i. Refer to CEP [Detailed Procedures](#) for a description of the verification process for districts, and a comprehensive list of acceptable documentation (Appendix A).
 - c. Document each student's income verification details. You may use either the [Verification Tracker](#) for district use, or a comparable document of your choosing. Districts must retain documentation of the verification for seven years for auditing purposes.
4. Report income status on NJSMART by the last school day prior to October 16th
 - a. Use NJ Household Information Survey and Direct Certification counts to report "Free and Reduced Rate Lunch Status" on state enrollment reports (NJSMART, ASSA, and CHE). Since all students in participating CEP schools receive free lunch regardless of income, the student's reported status must be based on household income. For details and directions on how to report income status in NJSMART, refer to the [NJSMART - SID Management Student Data Handbook](#). NJSMART enrollment will be preloaded into ASSA.
5. Update State-reported enrollment data after the verification process by December 1.
 - a. NJSMART enrollments are preloaded into ASSA and CHE. After the verification process is complete, student income status must be updated to reflect the results. If a charter school or district is unable to verify a student's low-income status by the time ASSA & CHE close, the school/district is not permitted to report the student as low-income for state aid purposes.