



STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: July 29, 2026

To: Local Educational Agency Leads, Administrators of Approved Private Schools for Students with Disabilities

Route To: Principals

From: Allen Dupree, Director
Office of School Finance
Division of Finance and Business Services

Guidelines for Reporting Enrollment, Income Status

For the October 15, 2026, enrollment reporting, please use the following guidance when reporting income status for students in the Application for State School Aid (ASSA), Charter School Enrollment System (CHE) and NJSLEDS:

- A school district may choose to certify its ASSA low-income count supported by 2026-2027 school lunch applications received as of October 15, 2026, and carryover applications from 2025-2026; or
- A school district may update its low income counts through the date of the final ASSA certification. If the district updates its low income counts using current year applications, then no carryover applications may be included.
- For schools and districts participating in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), low income counts on the ASSA must be supported by SY 2026-2027 School Meals and Summer EBT Application (For Both Standard & CEP Schools/Sites), or Direct Certification.
- There is no change for students who are eligible through the Direct Certification process; current year status must be used.

For NJSLEDS only, students who qualify under the New Jersey Expanded Income Eligibility Guidelines pursuant to the Working-Class Families' Anti-Hunger Act (families with an annual household income between 186 and 224 percent of the federal poverty level) will be categorized as Federal Paid but New Jersey Free. Please refer to the "FreeandReducedRateLunchStatus" data element in the 2026-2027 NJSLEDS Student Management Data Handbook for more information. On the ASSA and CHE, students with an annual household income between 186 and 224 percent of the federal poverty level are not included in the Free/Reduced counts.

Contact information

For questions concerning ASSA reporting, please email assa@doe.nj.gov. For questions concerning reporting in the Charter School Enrollment System, email school-funding@doe.nj.gov. For general questions, please contact the NJDOE's Office of School Finance through staid@doe.nj.gov.