



August 14, 2023

Ohio County, WV - Students in Ohio County Schools will continue to have the opportunity to eat a FREE breakfast and lunch meal daily at school, through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program of USDA. CEP was enacted within the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act and provides universal free meal service to children in school districts that qualify.

The CEP serves as an alternative to collecting, approving and verifying household eligibility applications with income guidelines for free and reduced-priced meals for eligible students in high-poverty school districts. If at least 40 percent of a school's student population is directly certified for free meal benefits, the entire school qualifies for the CEP option. No applications for free or reduced-priced meals will be accepted for students who attend Ohio County Schools, as they are not required.

Ohio County plans to have all 13 schools participate in the CEP, which allows the Child Nutrition Department of the district to provide more than 4,000 meals each day. Every student can have one free breakfast meal and one free lunch meal each school day through this program.

Ohio County had an identified student percentage of 52.69% as of April 1, 2023 which was the qualifying date for data in the CEP for the following school year. With the multiplier provided by USDA under the CEP, Ohio County Schools has a percent needy of 84.30%, enabling them to participate in the program.

"We are happy to be able to continue to provide free breakfast and lunch meals daily for our students under the CEP", said Child Nutrition Director, Renee Griffin, M.S., R.D., L.D. "This program helps with a crucial need for so many students in our county. Knowing our students are provided healthy meals at school, they are ready to learn and achieve at the highest level possible."

For more information, please contact the Ohio County Schools Child Nutrition Office at 304-243-0477, or visit the county website: [boe.ohio.k12.wv.us](http://boe.ohio.k12.wv.us).

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