



Community Eligibility: The Key to Hunger-Free Schools

School Year 2022–2023

MAY 2023 | WWW.FRAC.ORG

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About FRAC

The Food Research & Action Center improves the nutrition, health, and well-being of people struggling against poverty-related hunger in the United States through advocacy, partnerships, and by advancing bold and equitable policy solutions. For more information about FRAC, or to [sign up](#) for FRAC's e-newsletters, go to www.frac.org.



Executive Summary

Community Eligibility Participation 2022–2023

 **6,419**

school districts have one or more schools adopting community eligibility, an increase of **876** school districts, or **15.8 percent**, from the 2021–2022 school year.

 **40,235**

schools have adopted community eligibility, an increase of **6,935** schools, or **20.8 percent**, from the previous school year.

 **82 percent**

of eligible schools have adopted community eligibility.

 **19.9 million**

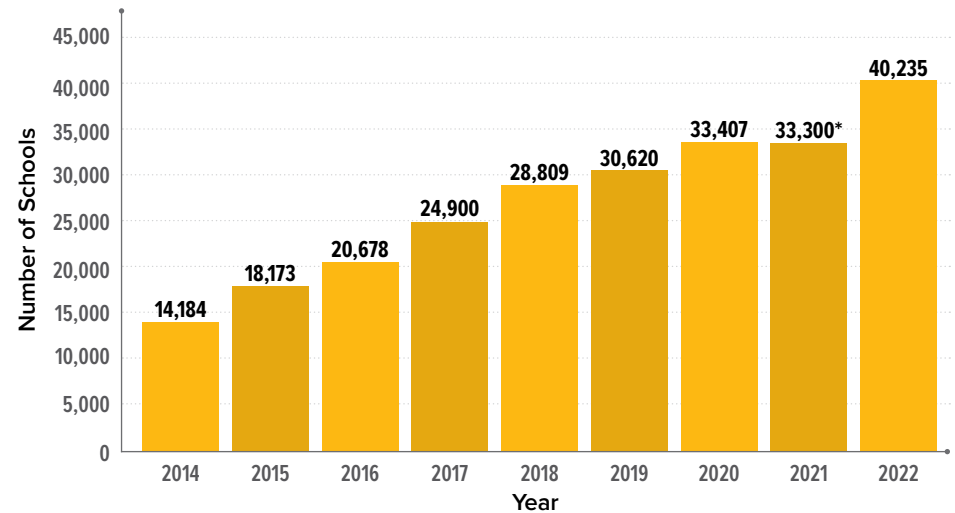
children attend a school that has adopted community eligibility, an increase of nearly **3.7 million** children, or **22.5 percent**, from the previous school year.

The 2022–2023 school year marked the end of the pandemic-related child nutrition waivers that have allowed schools across the country to offer meals to all their students at no charge since spring 2020. Through the waivers, students, families, and schools were able to experience the benefits of Healthy School Meals for All. School districts reported numerous benefits, including reduced childhood hunger, elimination of stigma from participating in school meals, easing administrative work, supporting academic achievement, and eliminating school meal debt.¹ School nutrition professionals did not want to return to pre-pandemic operations,² and according to Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) polling, 63 percent of voters nationwide support legislation that would make healthy school meals for all students a permanent policy.³

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) has offered high-need school districts and schools an important opportunity to continue to offer school breakfast and lunch to all students

- 1 Food Research & Action Center (2022). *Large School District Report: Operating School Nutrition Programs During the Pandemic*. Available at <https://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/large-school-district-report-2022.pdf>.
- 2 School Nutrition Association (2023). *2023 Position Paper: Meals for All Fact Sheet*. Available at <https://schoolnutrition.org/resource/2023-position-paper-meals-for-all-fact-sheet>.
- 3 Food Research & Action Center (2023). *Raise Your Hand for Healthy School Meals for All*. Available at <https://frac.org/healthy-school-meals-for-all>.

GRAPH 1: 9-Year Trend in Schools Participating in Community Eligibility



* The number of students enrolled in CEP schools in 2021 increased even though there was a slight decrease in schools adopting CEP. This was driven by school consolidations in New York City.

at no charge for another four years instead of transitioning back to normal school nutrition operations, resulting in significant growth in community eligibility participation. Created through the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, community eligibility can be adopted by any district, group of schools in a district, or school with 40 percent or more “identified students” — children who are eligible for free school meals and already identified by means other than an individual household application. Schools that participate in community eligibility often see increased participation in school meals, allowing more students to experience the many educational and health benefits linked to school meal participation. A 2022 U.S. Department

of Agriculture (USDA) community eligibility study on school year 2016–2017 found a 6.8 percent increase in school lunch participation and a 12.1 percent increase in school breakfast. Under community eligibility, schools no longer have to collect and process school meal applications, which reduces administrative costs and paperwork, allowing school nutrition staff to focus more on offering healthy, appealing meals. Moreover, offering meals at no charge to all students eliminates the stigma from the perception that school meals are only for “children from low-income families,” and facilitates the implementation of breakfast after the bell service models, such as breakfast in the classroom, which further boosts participation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY CONTINUED

Participation in community eligibility has continued to grow since it became available nationwide in the 2014–2015 school year. During the 2022–2023 school year, there was a significant increase in the number of schools and districts participating in community eligibility. Here are the top-level findings for this year:

- ▶ 6,419 school districts have one or more schools adopting community eligibility, an increase of 876 school districts, or 15.8 percent, from the 2021–2022 school year.
- ▶ 40,235 schools have adopted community eligibility, an increase of 6,935 schools, or 20.8 percent, from the previous school year.

- ▶ 82 percent of eligible schools have adopted community eligibility.
- ▶ 19.9 million children attend a school that has adopted community eligibility, an increase of nearly 3.7 million children, or 22.5 percent, from the previous school year.

Despite these increases, there are many eligible schools and districts across the country that have not adopted community eligibility that stand to benefit. Several factors that existed prior to the pandemic, such as challenges associated with the loss of traditional school meal application data and low rates of direct certification (which is the foundation of community eligibility), have hindered

adoption in some states and school districts, and the low multiplier of 1.6 limits the financial viability of community eligibility for many eligible schools.

Looking ahead to the 2023–2024 school year, strong state, district, and school-level leadership; hands-on technical assistance from national, state, and local stakeholders; peer-to-peer learning among districts; and state efforts to pass Healthy School Meals for All legislation that provide state funding to make offering free school meals to all students financially viable can help overcome these barriers. In addition, Congress can enact Healthy School Meals for All legislation, including by expanding community eligibility, and USDA, state child nutrition agencies, and anti-hunger and education advocates can work together to promote community eligibility to eligible school districts. Taking these important steps will allow more schools to implement community eligibility.



About This Report

This report analyzes community eligibility adoption — nationally and for each state and the District of Columbia — in the 2022–2023 school year, and is based on three measures:

1. the number of eligible and adopting school districts and schools;
2. the share of eligible districts and schools that have adopted community eligibility; and
3. the number and share of eligible schools that have adopted, based on the school's poverty level.

As a companion to this report, FRAC has compiled all data collected in a [database of eligible and adopting schools](#) that can be searched by state and school district.

Community eligibility schools are high-need schools that offer breakfast and lunch to all students at no charge and use significant administrative savings to offset any additional costs, over and above federal reimbursements, of serving free meals to all. Instead of collecting school meal applications, community eligibility schools are reimbursed for a percentage of the meals served, using a formula based on the percentage of students who are certified for free school meals without an application (for example, students whose households participate in specific means-tested programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)).

There are many benefits that community eligibility provides to schools and families:

- ▶ **Schools no longer collect, process, or verify school meal applications**, saving significant time and administrative burdens.
- ▶ **Schools do not need to track each meal served by fee category** (free, reduced-price, paid), and instead report total meal counts.
- ▶ **School nutrition staff do not need to collect fees** from students who are eligible for reduced-price or paid school meals, allowing students to move through the cafeteria line faster, and ensuring that more children can be served.
- ▶ **Offering meals at no charge to all students increases participation among all students** because it eliminates any perception that the school meals programs are just for children from households with low incomes.
- ▶ **Schools no longer have to deal with unpaid school meal debt** for reduced-price and paid students at the end of the school year, or follow up with families when students do not have money to pay for meals.

How Schools Can Participate

Any district, group of schools in a district, or a school with 40 percent or more “identified students” is eligible to participate. Identified students are comprised of students certified for free school meals without an application. This includes:

- ▶ children directly certified for free school meals through data matching because their households receive SNAP, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations benefits, and in most states, Medicaid benefits; and
- ▶ children who are certified for free school meals without an application because they are homeless, migrant, runaway, enrolled in Head Start, or in foster care.



School districts may choose to participate school by school, districtwide, or group schools at their discretion, if the school, school district, or group has an overall identified student percentage (ISP) of 40 percent or higher.

Identified students are a subset of those eligible for free and reduced-price school meals. This is a smaller group than the total number of children who would be certified to receive free or reduced-price school meals if school meal applications were collected. For that reason, a multiplier (discussed below) is applied to the ISP. Schools that qualify for community eligibility typically have free and reduced-price percentages of 65–70 percent or higher if traditional school meal applications were collected from student households.

How Schools Are Reimbursed

Although all meals are offered at no charge to all students in schools that participate in community eligibility, federal reimbursements are based on the proportion of children from households with low incomes in the school. The ISP is multiplied by 1.6 to calculate the percentage of meals reimbursed at the federal free rate, and the remainder are reimbursed at the lower paid rate. The 1.6 multiplier was determined by Congress to reflect the ratio of six students certified to receive free or reduced-price meals with an application for every 10 students certified for free meals without an application. This serves as a proxy for the percentage of students that would be eligible for free and reduced-price meals if the school districts had collected school meal applications. For example, a school with 50 percent identified students would be reimbursed for 80 percent of the meals eaten at the free reimbursement rate ($50 \times 1.6 = 80$), and 20 percent at the paid rate.



KEY FINDINGS FOR THE 2022–2023 SCHOOL YEAR

School District Adoption

Nationally, 6,419 school districts — 67.5 percent of those eligible — adopted the Community Eligibility Provision in one or more schools for the 2022–2023 school year.⁴ This is a significant increase of 876 school districts from the prior school year, when 5,543 school districts adopted. This increase is likely due to the end of the child nutrition waivers that had allowed schools to offer meals at no charge to all students beginning in spring 2020, which meant the return of pre-pandemic school nutrition operations and to active participation in community eligibility.⁵

The median state's take-up rate in school year 2022–2023 for eligible school districts is 73.9 percent; however, school district take-up rates across the states vary significantly, from 20 percent in New Hampshire to over 90 percent in Louisiana, New Mexico, Oregon, Nevada, West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky, the District of Columbia, Washington, Wyoming, North Dakota, and Hawaii.

Several states saw increases in the 2022–2023 school year. California had the largest growth in the number of school districts adopting, increasing by 221 school districts. Washington and Pennsylvania followed in school district adoption growth with 93 and 90 school districts, respectively.

Eight states have had small decreases — between one and five — in the number of districts

implementing community eligibility in the 2022–2023 school year. Of those that have had fewer school districts adopting community eligibility, five have had a decrease in the number of eligible school districts. Missouri has had the largest decrease in adopting school districts — five school districts — despite adding four more eligible school districts, resulting in the percentage of eligible districts adopting decreasing from 66.7 percent to 61.9 percent.

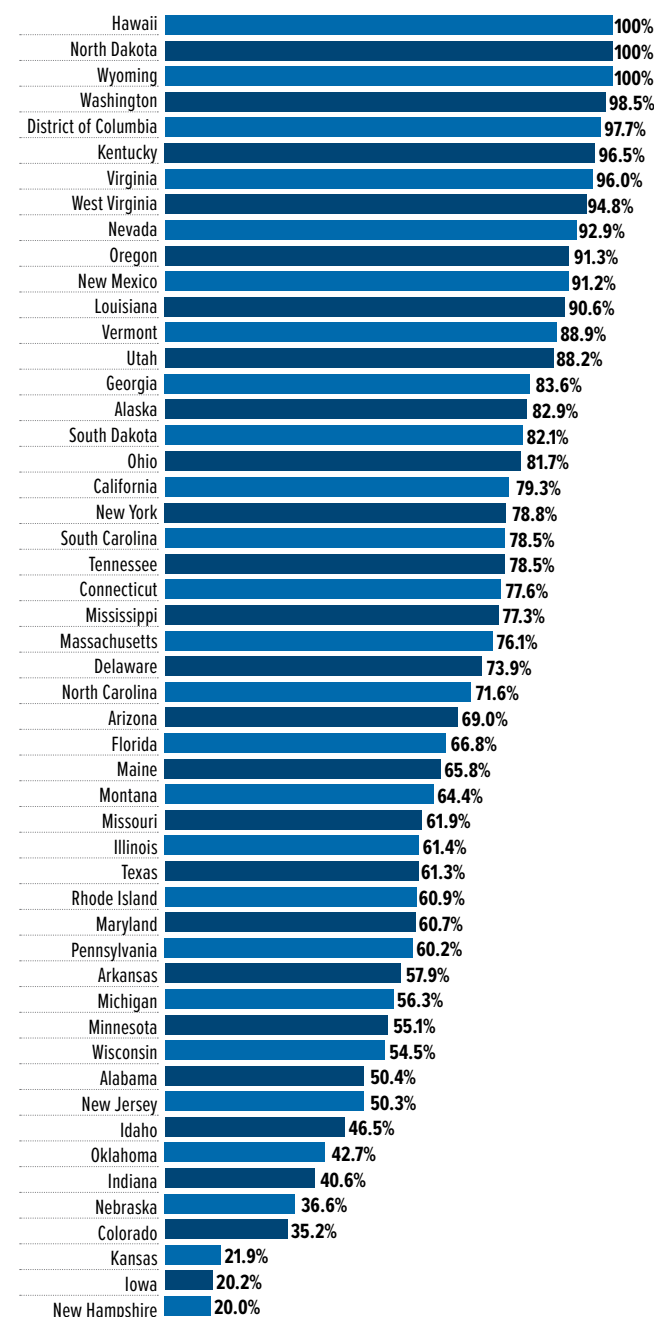
A primary factor in the growth in school district (and school) adoption of community eligibility in the 2022–2023 school year compared with previous years was the desire to continue offering school breakfast and lunch to all students at no charge after the expiration of the pandemic child nutrition waivers. Given the success many schools observed when offering free meals to all students, many eligible schools and districts looked to community eligibility as a way to continue providing healthy school meals to all students through an existing federal program when financially viable.

Furthermore, as more school districts overcome the perceived barrier that community eligibility will change Title I funding allocations dramatically, and those in states that require alternative income applications for state education funding and other purposes work through the challenges of collecting alternative income applications, more school districts have been adopting this provision.

⁴ Under federal law, states are required to publish annually a list of school districts that are eligible for the Community Eligibility Provision districtwide, as well as a list of individual schools that are eligible, by May 1. During the pandemic, USDA has allowed states to extend this deadline and other community eligibility deadlines including for the 2022–2023 school year. For more information on requirements related to the published lists, see <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/SP17-2019os.pdf>.

⁵ In March 2020, USDA issued a series of pandemic-related child nutrition waivers that allowed schools across the country to offer free meals to all students regardless of their household income, which expired in June 2022. As a result, most schools and districts listed as adopting community eligibility in the 2020–2021 and 2021–2022 school years were operating under the waivers and not actively participating in community eligibility.

GRAPH 2: Percentage of Eligible School Districts Adopting Community Eligibility in School Year 2022–2023



KEY FINDINGS FOR THE 2022–2023 SCHOOL YEAR CONTINUED

While the significant increase in community eligibility participation for the 2022–2023 school year is encouraging, states can focus on direct certification and continue to improve their systems to ensure that school districts can maintain the ISPs necessary to become and remain eligible for community eligibility, and to ensure that it continues to be a viable financial option for school districts. In USDA's latest report on state direct certification rates, 12 states did not meet the required benchmark of directly certifying 95 percent of children living in households that participated in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for free school meals in the 2018–2019 school year, pointing to missed opportunities for school districts to increase their ISPs to facilitate easier community eligibility implementation.⁶ In addition, the Medicaid direct certification demonstration pilots offer an important opportunity to improve ISPs, and the 11 states and the District of Columbia that are not included should consider applying to further support participation in community eligibility.

As more school districts consider community eligibility for the upcoming school year, conducting robust direct certification will be critical to support implementation. It also can help reduce the number of school meal applications that districts have to collect and process, even if they do not adopt community eligibility.

School Adoption

In the 2022–2023 school year, there are 40,235 schools adopting community eligibility, including schools from all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Overall, school adoption of community eligibility increased by nearly 7,000 schools from the prior school year. This dramatic increase in the number of schools participating in community eligibility is likely

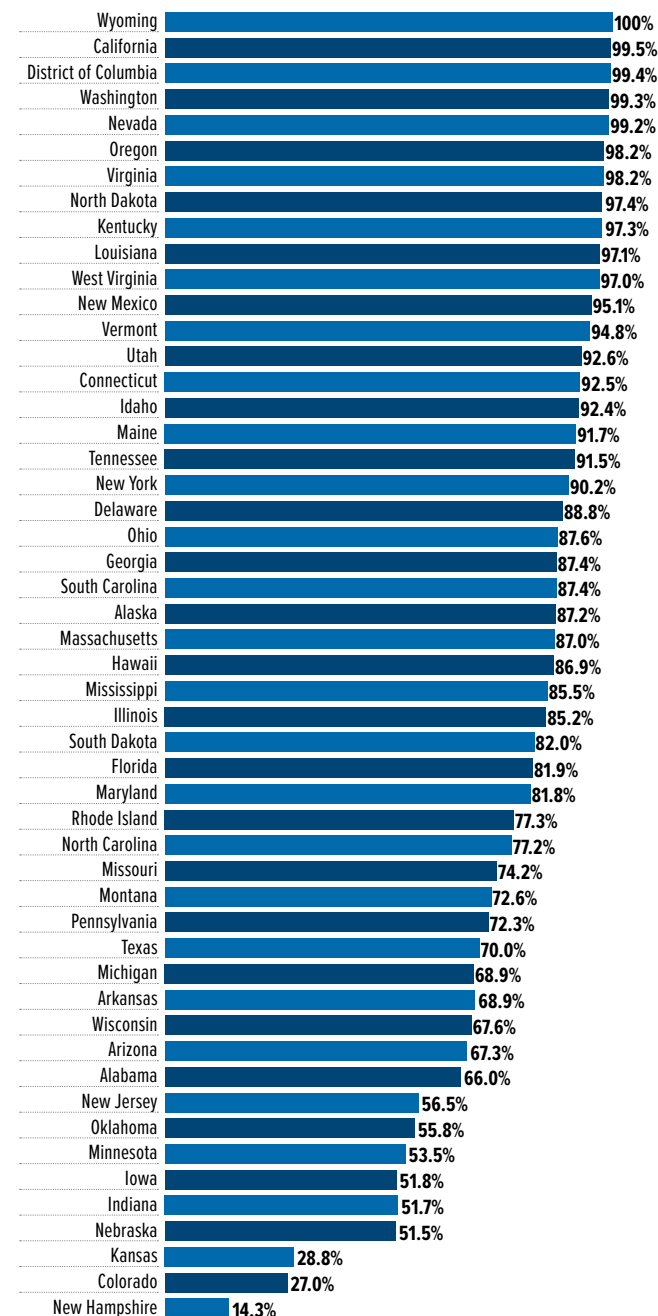
due to many schools' desire to continue offering healthy meals to all students free of charge after the expiration of the pandemic child nutrition waivers. In the 2022–2023 school year, 82 percent of all eligible schools have adopted community eligibility nationally, with a median state take-up rate of 86.9 percent.

Among the states, the percentage of eligible and adopting schools varies significantly. Nineteen states and the District of Columbia have 90 percent or more of their eligible schools adopting community eligibility. Thirty-one states have 80 percent or more of their eligible schools adopting it. Alternatively, Kansas, Colorado, and New Hampshire have less than 40 percent of their eligible schools adopting it: 28.8 percent, 27 percent, and 14.3 percent, respectively.

Thirty-nine states have seen an increase in the number of schools adopting community eligibility. California had the largest increase, with 2,420 more schools adopting community eligibility since the 2021–2022 school year, likely due to their state having passed statewide Healthy School Meals for All legislation in 2022. Florida, Washington, and Texas added 1,080, 731, and 491 schools, respectively. Smaller states with fewer eligible schools also have made strong progress, including Nebraska, which increased by 106 schools, or 235 percent, and Vermont, which increased by 33 schools, or 56 percent.

Four states — Georgia, Hawaii, North Dakota, and Wyoming — have maintained the same number of community eligibility schools during the 2022–2023 school year. Eight states have experienced a decrease in the number of schools eligible to implement community eligibility. The largest decreases were in Missouri (17 schools) and South Dakota (10 schools).

GRAPH 3: Percentage of Eligible Schools Adopting Community Eligibility in School Year 2022–2023



6 U.S. Department of Agriculture (2021). Direct Certification in the National School Lunch Program State Implementation Progress Report to Congress School Year 2017–2018 and School Year 2018–2019. Available at <https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/NSLPDirectCertification2017-1.pdf>.

School Adoption by Poverty Level

All schools that qualify for community eligibility are considered to be high need, but a school's ability to implement community eligibility successfully — and maintain financial viability — typically improves when its ISP is higher. For this report, the Food Research & Action Center examined the number of schools adopting in each state, based on their ISP as a proxy for the school's poverty level.

Schools with higher ISPs receive the free reimbursement rate for more meals, which makes community eligibility a more financially viable option. As a result, schools with ISPs of 60 percent and above — those that receive the free reimbursement rate for 100 percent or nearly 100 percent of their meals — are more likely to participate in community eligibility than schools with lower ISPs; that has been the case since the program became available nationwide. Still, since the 2016–2017 school year, the number of schools participating with an ISP between 40 and 50 has more than quadrupled, and the number of schools participating with an ISP between 50 and 60 percent has increased by over one-third as schools become more familiar with the positive impact of community eligibility on school nutrition finances and the benefits for children and families.⁷

In the 2022–2023 school year, of the 40,235 schools adopting community eligibility, a plurality of schools — 19,883 or 49.4 percent — had ISPs of 60 percent or higher. Of adopting schools with lower ISPs, 10,871 schools, or 27 percent, had ISPs between 50 and 60 percent, and 9,399 schools, or 23.4 percent, had ISPs between 40 and 50 percent. Among schools with ISPs between 40 and 50 percent, the national

average of take-up rate for eligible schools was 60.3 percent, with a median of 58.4 percent.

Among states, the percentage of eligible versus adopting schools in the 40 to 50 percent ISP group varies significantly. Twelve states and the District of Columbia had 90 percent or more eligible low ISP schools adopting. An additional three states had 80 percent or more of their schools adopting. Alternatively, 10 states had less than 30 percent of their eligible low-ISP schools adopting, including New Hampshire, which has only 6.7 percent of eligible low-ISP schools adopting.

Student Enrollment

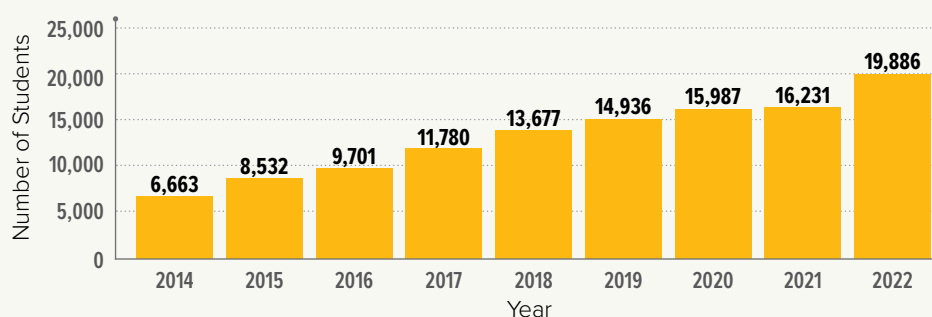
The reach of community eligibility is most evident in the number of students impacted. In the 2022–2023 school year, 19.9 million students attend schools that have adopted the Community Eligibility Provision; this is up from 16.2 million in the 2021–2022 school year. California and Texas have the most children attending schools that are adopting community eligibility, with approximately 3.5 million and 2.3 million in each state, respectively. Nationally, more than one in four students attending a school that is adopting community eligibility lives in California or Texas.

Thirty-seven states have seen increases in the number of students in community eligibility schools in the 2022–2023 school year. The states that saw the biggest increases in the number of enrolled students are California and Florida, having added over 1.3 million and over 854,000

students, respectively. Washington, Texas, and Pennsylvania had significant increases relative to other states as well, adding over 350,000, over 255,000, and over 148,000, respectively.

Fourteen states saw decreases in student enrollment numbers in community eligibility schools in the 2022–2023 school year. Twelve states saw decreases of more than 1,000 students, and two states had decreases of more than 10,000 students, but the driver of these decreases varied. Seven states had a decrease in students, but increased or maintained the same number of schools participating from the prior school year. For example, New York saw a decrease of more than 16,000 students, or less than one percent, from the 2021–2022 school year, but this can be accounted for in the fact that 29 participating schools did not report enrollment data. South Carolina, West Virginia, and Mississippi all had significant decreases as well, with 13,545, 9,136, and 9,037, respectively. While some of these states saw schools fall out of community eligibility, many attribute these losses to overall drops in student enrollment statewide as a continuing result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

GRAPH 4: 9-Year Trend in Student Enrollment in Schools Participating in Community Eligibility (in Thousands)



⁷ Food Research & Action Center (2017). *Community Eligibility Continues to Grow in the 2016–2017 School Year*. Available at https://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/CEP-Report_Final_Links_032317-1.pdf.

Healthy School Meals for All State Legislation

The trial run of Healthy School Meals for All during the pandemic has highlighted the value of offering healthy school meals to all students at no charge regardless of their household income. Schools, families, and students throughout the country do not want to go back to the way the school nutrition programs operated before the pandemic. In lieu of Congressional action, five states — California, Colorado, Maine, Minnesota, and New Mexico — have implemented Healthy School Meals for All permanently. Four more states — Connecticut, Massachusetts, Nevada, and Vermont — have extended Healthy School Meals for All for at least one more year. Other states, such as Oregon and Washington, have provided additional funding to support community eligibility to increase the number of schools able to offer free meals to all of their students. As a result of these legislative efforts, these states have had significant increases in take up of community eligibility in the 2022–2023 school year. Read more at [FRAC's Healthy School Meals for All microsite](#).

Expanding Access to Community Eligibility

In spring 2022, the U.S. Department of Agriculture released a [Community Eligibility Provision Characteristics Study in the 2016–2017 school year](#). The report found that schools and districts participating in community eligibility saw increased meal participation and federal reimbursements, an increase in average daily attendance, the elimination of unpaid school meal fees, and reduced stigma for students from low-income households.

The report also found that three out of four school districts (76 percent) had implemented community eligibility districtwide. The most often cited concerns among eligible nonparticipating districts were districtwide ISPs that kept the district from participating in all schools and the financial viability of using the current multiplier. Fifty-one percent of eligible nonparticipating school districts reported that increasing the 1.6 multiplier would make community eligibility more appealing.

In spring 2023, USDA announced a [proposed rule to lower the eligibility threshold for community eligibility from 40 percent to 25 percent](#), which would address the concern among some eligible districts about qualifying districtwide. FRAC supports the proposed rule, which would make more high-need schools eligible to participate in community eligibility, expand school districts' ability to group schools together, and support states that have passed Healthy School Meals for All legislation.

However, USDA does not have the authority to increase funding for community eligibility, and the proposed rule does not address this challenge. In order to make community eligibility a more financially viable option for high-need school districts and schools, Congress must increase the multiplier that determines the level of federal reimbursement that community eligibility schools receive from 1.6 to 2.5 as proposed in the School Meals Expansion Act (H.R. 2567).

Medicaid Direct Certification

Medicaid direct certification allows children whose families participate in Medicaid to be automatically certified as eligible for free or reduced-price school

meals. This ensures that they are not missed through the application process, and it increases schools' ISPs, making community eligibility a more financially viable option for more schools.

The Medicaid direct certification demonstration project was first authorized through the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 to allow students who are enrolled in Medicaid and belong to a family whose income, as defined by Medicaid, is below 133 percent of the federal poverty level⁸ to be directly certified to receive free school meals. Kentucky and New York directly certify children for free school meals through this statutory authority.

USDA used its demonstration authority to test using Medicaid data to certify children for free and reduced-price school meals. It put out a request for proposals (RFP) to states in 2016, 2021, and 2022 to participate in these demonstration projects. Alabama, California, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin are all currently using Medicaid data and income tests to directly certify children for free or reduced-price school meals.⁹

Thirteen additional states — Arizona, Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Montana, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, and Wyoming — were approved through the 2022 RFP and will start in the 2023–2024 school year.

USDA may issue another request for proposals for states to pilot Medicaid Direct Certification. If another request for proposals is issued, FRAC encourages states to apply so they can benefit from the demonstration project's positive impact on children, families, and schools. Learn more about the [Medicaid Direct Certification Demonstration Project on USDA's website](#).

⁸ As defined in section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)).

⁹ It is worth noting that if a child can be directly certified for free school meals through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary

Assistance for Needy Families program, Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, foster care, Head Start, or through being migrant or homeless, that certification always will take precedence over Medicaid direct certification.

Conclusion

Community eligibility allows high-need schools and districts to meet the nutritional needs of the many students they serve. As schools returned to normal school nutrition operations after two years of serving healthy school meals to all students at no charge through pandemic child nutrition waiver authority, community eligibility has allowed high-need schools to continue to offer free meals to all of their students. The option creates hunger-free schools by ensuring that all students have access to the nutritious school breakfasts and lunches they need to be well-nourished and ready to learn, and it allows school nutrition departments to use their limited resources to provide nutritious and appealing meals by streamlining administrative requirements.

To increase the reach of community eligibility, states and school districts must work together to ensure that direct certification systems identify all students so that a school's identified student percentage accurately reflects the need within the school. Outreach and technical assistance by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, state agencies, and anti-hunger advocates also will be critical as schools consider the social, health, and financial benefits of community eligibility to help continue to serve healthy meals to all students.

Looking forward, Congress should pass legislation that allows all schools to offer free breakfast and lunch to all of their students. In lieu of that, an important incremental step is for Congress to bolster the financial viability of community eligibility by increasing the multiplier and creating a statewide community eligibility option that supports the growing number of states passing Healthy School Meals for All legislation.



Additional Resources

- ▶ [Direct Certification Improves Low-Income Student Access to School Meals: An Updated Guide to Direct Certification](#)
- ▶ [School District Strategies for Improving Direct Certification](#)
- ▶ [CEP Financial Calculators](#) (School districts and other stakeholders should use these tools to group schools strategically and to maximize the federal funding received.)

- ▶ [Community Eligibility: Making It Work With Lower ISPs](#)
- ▶ [Community Eligibility Partial Implementation Guide](#)



For more information and additional resources to help determine if community eligibility is a possibility for your school district, go to FRAC's [Community Eligibility webpage](#).

Technical Notes

The Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) obtained information on schools that were approved to operate under community eligibility in the 2022–2023 school year from state education agencies or entities at the state level that administer the federal school nutrition programs. Between November 2022 and April 2023, FRAC collected these data:

- ▶ school name;
- ▶ school district name;
- ▶ identified student percentage;
- ▶ participation in community eligibility as an individual school, part of a group, or a whole district; and
- ▶ enrollment.

FRAC followed up with state education agencies for data clarifications, and when necessary, to obtain missing data.

Under federal law, states are required to publish, by May 1 of each year, a list of schools and districts with ISPs of at least 40 percent and those with ISPs between 30 and just under 40 percent (near-eligible schools and districts). For the 2022–2023 school year, this deadline was extended by USDA to June 30, 2022 for some states who applied for waiver flexibility in order to grant flexibility to state agencies during the COVID-19 pandemic. FRAC compared this published list to the lists of approved schools, and compiled a universe of eligible and approved schools and districts in the 2022–2023 school year. When compiling the universe of eligible schools, FRAC treated a district as eligible if it contained at least one eligible school. FRAC treated a school as eligible if it appeared on a state’s published list of eligible schools. In addition, schools that were missing from a state’s list of eligible schools, but appeared on its list of adopting schools were treated as eligible.

FRAC gave the states the option to report both eligible and adopting schools in the fall data collection. This gave states the opportunity to update their eligible schools list to reflect any school closures or consolidations. Sixteen states — Alabama, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Missouri, Montana, North Carolina, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Nevada, Ohio, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wyoming — chose to provide both eligible and adopting schools for this analysis.

There are two circumstances under which a school might be able to adopt community eligibility even if it did not appear on a state’s list of eligible schools:

1. The U.S. Department of Agriculture permitted states to base their May published lists on proxy data readily available to them. Proxy data are merely an indicator of potential eligibility, not the basis for eligibility. Districts must submit more accurate information, which may be more complete, more recent, or both, when applying to adopt community eligibility.
2. A school can participate as a member of an adopting group (part or all of a district). A group’s eligibility is based on the ISP for the group as a whole.

The lists obtained from state education agencies indicated whether schools have elected to adopt community eligibility, the ISP the schools use to determine the federal reimbursement for meals served, and the total number of students attending each adopting school.

During the 2020–2021 and 2021–2022 school years, many schools that adopted community eligibility operated under the USDA-issued child nutrition waivers that were made available in

response to the pandemic. These waivers allowed meals to be offered at no charge to all students and provided the higher summer food reimbursement rate for each meal served. These waivers were no longer available during the 2022–2023 school year, and schools transitioned back to normal school nutrition operations. Thus, school districts and schools participated in community eligibility for the first time since the 2019–2020 school year.

The following states had schools that did not provide student enrollment numbers:

- ▶ 62 schools in Alabama
- ▶ 11 schools in Arizona
- ▶ 1 school in Nevada
- ▶ 1 school in New Mexico
- ▶ 29 schools in New York
- ▶ 40 schools in South Carolina

Indiana did not provide the ISP used by adopting community eligibility schools to calculate federal reimbursements for meals served, often referred to as the “claiming ISP” or “grouped ISP,” for three schools. For these schools, the ISPs are shown as N/A in the database.

Some states reported schools’ free claiming percentages (ISP multiplied by 1.6) as 100 percent, so it is impossible to know the exact grouped ISP. It can be determined that the school is participating in community eligibility with an ISP of 62.5 percent or above. In these cases, 62.5 percent was used in the database:

- ▶ 35 schools in the District of Columbia
- ▶ 297 schools in Ohio

Table 1: Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Take-Up Rate in School Districts for School Years (SY) 2021–2022¹ and 2022–2023²

| State | School Year 2021–2022 | | | School Year 2022–2023 | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------|---|-----------------------|--------------|---|
| | Eligible for CEP | Adopting CEP | Percentage Adopting CEP of Total Eligible | Eligible for CEP | Adopting CEP | Percentage Adopting CEP of Total Eligible |
| Alabama | 76 | 58 | 76.3% | 131 | 66 | 50.4% |
| Alaska | 43 | 33 | 76.7% | 41 | 34 | 82.9% |
| Arizona | 261 | 179 | 68.6% | 271 | 187 | 69.0% |
| Arkansas | 116 | 73 | 62.9% | 121 | 70 | 57.9% |
| California | 677 | 384 | 56.7% | 763 | 605 | 79.3% |
| Colorado | 71 | 24 | 33.8% | 71 | 25 | 35.2% |
| Connecticut | 57 | 54 | 94.7% | 76 | 59 | 77.6% |
| Delaware | 25 | 20 | 80.0% | 23 | 17 | 73.9% |
| District of Columbia | 43 | 42 | 97.7% | 43 | 42 | 97.7% |
| Florida | 316 | 203 | 64.2% | 325 | 217 | 66.8% |
| Georgia | 150 | 109 | 72.7% | 140 | 117 | 83.6% |
| Hawaii | 13 | 13 | 100.0% | 13 | 13 | 100.0% |
| Idaho | 30 | 23 | 76.7% | 43 | 20 | 46.5% |
| Illinois | 523 | 298 | 57.0% | 627 | 385 | 61.4% |
| Indiana | 278 | 113 | 40.6% | 350 | 142 | 40.6% |
| Iowa | 112 | 21 | 18.8% | 124 | 25 | 20.2% |
| Kansas | 78 | 4 | 5.1% | 32 | 7 | 21.9% |
| Kentucky | 172 | 166 | 96.5% | 173 | 167 | 96.5% |
| Louisiana | 129 | 123 | 95.3% | 138 | 125 | 90.6% |
| Maine | 49 | 28 | 57.1% | 38 | 25 | 65.8% |
| Maryland | 29 | 17 | 58.6% | 28 | 17 | 60.7% |
| Massachusetts | 156 | 99 | 63.5% | 180 | 137 | 76.1% |
| Michigan | 606 | 408 | 67.3% | 739 | 416 | 56.3% |
| Minnesota | 150 | 66 | 44.0% | 136 | 75 | 55.1% |
| Mississippi | 89 | 73 | 82.0% | 97 | 75 | 77.3% |
| Missouri | 156 | 104 | 66.7% | 160 | 99 | 61.9% |
| Montana | 65 | 53 | 81.5% | 87 | 56 | 64.4% |
| Nebraska | 115 | 22 | 19.1% | 71 | 26 | 36.6% |
| Nevada | 23 | 19 | 82.6% | 28 | 26 | 92.9% |
| New Hampshire | 5 | 0 | 0.0% | 10 | 2 | 20.0% |
| New Jersey | 137 | 79 | 57.7% | 159 | 80 | 50.3% |
| New Mexico | 139 | 121 | 87.1% | 147 | 134 | 91.2% |
| New York | 598 | 471 | 78.8% | 647 | 510 | 78.8% |
| North Carolina | 156 | 101 | 64.7% | 155 | 111 | 71.6% |
| North Dakota | 25 | 24 | 96.0% | 23 | 23 | 100.0% |
| Ohio | 421 | 343 | 81.5% | 469 | 383 | 81.7% |
| Oklahoma | 205 | 110 | 53.7% | 262 | 112 | 42.7% |
| Oregon | 206 | 88 | 42.7% | 127 | 116 | 91.3% |
| Pennsylvania | 329 | 248 | 75.4% | 561 | 338 | 60.2% |
| Rhode Island | 20 | 9 | 45.0% | 23 | 14 | 60.9% |
| South Carolina | 81 | 63 | 77.8% | 79 | 62 | 78.5% |
| South Dakota | 42 | 32 | 76.2% | 39 | 32 | 82.1% |
| Tennessee | 131 | 97 | 74.0% | 130 | 102 | 78.5% |
| Texas | 926 | 490 | 52.9% | 918 | 563 | 61.3% |
| Utah | 17 | 14 | 82.4% | 17 | 15 | 88.2% |
| Vermont | 28 | 18 | 64.3% | 27 | 24 | 88.9% |
| Virginia | 125 | 123 | 98.4% | 125 | 120 | 96.0% |
| Washington | 178 | 108 | 60.7% | 204 | 201 | 98.5% |
| West Virginia | 58 | 54 | 93.1% | 58 | 55 | 94.8% |
| Wisconsin | 243 | 114 | 46.9% | 257 | 140 | 54.5% |
| Wyoming | 8 | 7 | 87.5% | 7 | 7 | 100.0% |
| U.S. TOTAL | 8,686 | 5,543 | 63.8% | 9,513 | 6,419 | 67.5% |

1 For the 2021–2022 school year data, school districts are defined as eligible if they include at least one school with an ISP of 40 percent or higher, or at least one school has already adopted community eligibility.

2 For the 2022–2023 school year data, school districts are defined as eligible if they include at least one school with an ISP of 40 percent or higher, or at least one school has already adopted community eligibility.

Table 2: Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Take-Up Rate in Schools for School Years (SY) 2021–2022¹ and 2022–2023²

| State | School Year 2021–2022 | | | School Year 2022–2023 | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------|---|-----------------------|---------------|---|
| | Eligible for CEP | Adopting CEP | Percentage Adopting CEP of Total Eligible | Eligible for CEP | Adopting CEP | Percentage Adopting CEP of Total Eligible |
| Alabama | 672 | 490 | 72.9% | 812 | 536 | 66.0% |
| Alaska | 240 | 208 | 86.7% | 242 | 211 | 87.2% |
| Arizona | 774 | 493 | 63.7% | 755 | 508 | 67.3% |
| Arkansas | 400 | 259 | 64.8% | 363 | 250 | 68.9% |
| California | 4,952 | 3,730 | 75.3% | 6,179 | 6,150 | 99.5% |
| Colorado | 429 | 100 | 23.3% | 392 | 106 | 27.0% |
| Connecticut | 434 | 420 | 96.8% | 522 | 483 | 92.5% |
| Delaware | 119 | 114 | 95.8% | 143 | 127 | 88.8% |
| District of Columbia | 184 | 183 | 99.5% | 181 | 180 | 99.4% |
| Florida | 2,955 | 1,462 | 49.5% | 3,105 | 2,542 | 81.9% |
| Georgia | 1,090 | 873 | 80.1% | 999 | 873 | 87.4% |
| Hawaii | 115 | 106 | 92.2% | 122 | 106 | 86.9% |
| Idaho | 84 | 64 | 76.2% | 66 | 61 | 92.4% |
| Illinois | 2,340 | 1,823 | 77.9% | 2,449 | 2,087 | 85.2% |
| Indiana | 957 | 506 | 52.9% | 1,148 | 593 | 51.7% |
| Iowa | 382 | 176 | 46.1% | 427 | 221 | 51.8% |
| Kansas | 223 | 31 | 13.9% | 118 | 34 | 28.8% |
| Kentucky | 1,107 | 1,061 | 95.8% | 1,122 | 1,092 | 97.3% |
| Louisiana | 1,145 | 1,095 | 95.6% | 1,212 | 1,177 | 97.1% |
| Maine | 104 | 75 | 72.1% | 84 | 77 | 91.7% |
| Maryland | 443 | 357 | 80.6% | 434 | 355 | 81.8% |
| Massachusetts | 818 | 718 | 87.8% | 972 | 846 | 87.0% |
| Michigan | 1,951 | 1,468 | 75.2% | 2,378 | 1,638 | 68.9% |
| Minnesota | 296 | 150 | 50.7% | 299 | 160 | 53.5% |
| Mississippi | 413 | 376 | 91.0% | 433 | 370 | 85.5% |
| Missouri | 552 | 433 | 78.4% | 561 | 416 | 74.2% |
| Montana | 166 | 147 | 88.6% | 230 | 167 | 72.6% |
| Nebraska | 368 | 45 | 12.2% | 293 | 151 | 51.5% |
| Nevada | 412 | 388 | 94.2% | 505 | 501 | 99.2% |
| New Hampshire | 13 | 0 | 0.0% | 21 | 3 | 14.3% |
| New Jersey | 528 | 319 | 60.4% | 568 | 321 | 56.5% |
| New Mexico | 612 | 556 | 90.8% | 701 | 667 | 95.1% |
| New York | 3,289 | 3,021 | 91.9% | 3,382 | 3,051 | 90.2% |
| North Carolina | 1,302 | 879 | 67.5% | 1,261 | 974 | 77.2% |
| North Dakota | 38 | 37 | 97.4% | 38 | 37 | 97.4% |
| Ohio | 1,205 | 1,062 | 88.1% | 1,302 | 1,141 | 87.6% |
| Oklahoma | 542 | 326 | 60.1% | 688 | 384 | 55.8% |
| Oregon | 904 | 588 | 65.0% | 722 | 709 | 98.2% |
| Pennsylvania | 1,212 | 1,172 | 96.7% | 2,045 | 1,478 | 72.3% |
| Rhode Island | 91 | 61 | 67.0% | 88 | 68 | 77.3% |
| South Carolina | 634 | 538 | 84.9% | 625 | 546 | 87.4% |
| South Dakota | 130 | 110 | 84.6% | 122 | 100 | 82.0% |
| Tennessee | 974 | 845 | 86.8% | 958 | 877 | 91.5% |
| Texas | 5,852 | 3,740 | 63.9% | 6,045 | 4,231 | 70.0% |
| Utah | 60 | 42 | 70.0% | 54 | 50 | 92.6% |
| Vermont | 76 | 59 | 77.6% | 97 | 92 | 94.8% |
| Virginia | 1,018 | 1,008 | 99.0% | 1,106 | 1,086 | 98.2% |
| Washington | 748 | 482 | 64.4% | 1,221 | 1,213 | 99.3% |
| West Virginia | 606 | 593 | 97.9% | 603 | 585 | 97.0% |
| Wisconsin | 820 | 498 | 60.7% | 874 | 591 | 67.6% |
| Wyoming | 14 | 13 | 92.9% | 13 | 13 | 100.0% |
| U.S. TOTAL | 44,793 | 33,300 | 74.3% | 49,080 | 40,235 | 82.0% |

1 For the 2021–2022 school year data, school districts are defined as eligible if they include at least one school with an ISP of 40 percent or higher, or at least one school has already adopted community eligibility.

2 For the 2022–2023 school year data, school districts are defined as eligible if they include at least one school with an ISP of 40 percent or higher, or at least one school has already adopted community eligibility.

Table 3: Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Take-Up Rate by Schools' Identified Student Percentage (ISP) for School Year 2022–2023^{2,3}

| State | Total Adopting | 40-<50% | | | 50-<60% | | | 60%+ | | |
|----------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------|
| | | Eligible | Adopting | Percentage Adopting | Eligible | Adopting | Percentage Adopting | Eligible | Adopting | Percentage Adopting |
| Alabama | 536 | 245 | 90 | 36.7% | 268 | 191 | 71.3% | 299 | 255 | 85.3% |
| Alaska | 211 | 59 | 47 | 79.7% | 62 | 55 | 88.7% | 120 | 109 | 90.8% |
| Arizona | 508 | 307 | 133 | 43.3% | 256 | 212 | 82.8% | 179 | 160 | 89.4% |
| Arkansas | 250 | 170 | 95 | 55.9% | 125 | 96 | 76.8% | 68 | 59 | 86.8% |
| California | 6150 | 2,649 | 2,644 | 99.8% | 1,540 | 1,534 | 99.6% | 1,990 | 1,972 | 99.1% |
| Colorado | 106 | 227 | 49 | 21.6% | 103 | 24 | 23.3% | 62 | 33 | 53.2% |
| Connecticut | 483 | 159 | 129 | 81.1% | 127 | 120 | 94.5% | 236 | 234 | 99.2% |
| Delaware | 127 | 94 | 85 | 90.4% | 43 | 39 | 90.7% | 6 | 2 | 33.3% |
| District of Columbia | 180 | 25 | 25 | 100.0% | 17 | 17 | 100.0% | 139 | 138 | 99.3% |
| Florida | 2,542 | 428 | 250 | 58.4% | 680 | 557 | 81.9% | 1,997 | 1,735 | 86.9% |
| Georgia | 873 | 164 | 91 | 55.5% | 330 | 307 | 93.0% | 505 | 475 | 94.1% |
| Hawaii | 106 | 45 | 31 | 68.9% | 23 | 22 | 95.7% | 54 | 52 | 96.3% |
| Idaho | 61 | 39 | 28 | 71.8% | 17 | 16 | 94.1% | 10 | 9 | 90.0% |
| Illinois | 2,087 | 509 | 289 | 56.8% | 446 | 352 | 78.9% | 1,494 | 1,443 | 96.6% |
| Indiana ¹ | 593 | 323 | 79 | 24.5% | 356 | 200 | 56.2% | 469 | 311 | 66.3% |
| Iowa | 221 | 158 | 17 | 10.8% | 157 | 111 | 70.7% | 112 | 93 | 83.0% |
| Kansas | 34 | 64 | 13 | 20.3% | 42 | 19 | 45.2% | 13 | 2 | 15.4% |
| Kentucky | 1,092 | 144 | 124 | 86.1% | 334 | 328 | 98.2% | 644 | 640 | 99.4% |
| Louisiana | 1,177 | 200 | 189 | 94.5% | 401 | 391 | 97.5% | 611 | 597 | 97.7% |
| Maine | 77 | 61 | 46 | 75.4% | 20 | 17 | 85.0% | 3 | 3 | 100.0% |
| Maryland | 355 | 138 | 82 | 59.4% | 105 | 94 | 89.5% | 191 | 179 | 93.7% |
| Massachusetts | 846 | 176 | 83 | 47.2% | 164 | 139 | 84.8% | 632 | 624 | 98.7% |
| Michigan | 1638 | 532 | 227 | 42.7% | 592 | 424 | 71.6% | 1,254 | 987 | 78.7% |
| Minnesota | 160 | 103 | 29 | 28.2% | 86 | 61 | 70.9% | 110 | 69 | 62.7% |
| Mississippi | 370 | 49 | 8 | 16.3% | 50 | 35 | 70.0% | 334 | 327 | 97.9% |
| Missouri | 416 | 199 | 108 | 54.3% | 145 | 116 | 80.0% | 217 | 192 | 88.5% |
| Montana | 167 | 82 | 44 | 53.7% | 54 | 35 | 64.8% | 94 | 88 | 93.6% |
| Nebraska | 151 | 95 | 14 | 14.7% | 54 | 22 | 40.7% | 144 | 114 | 79.2% |
| Nevada | 501 | 235 | 230 | 97.9% | 146 | 146 | 100.0% | 124 | 124 | 100.0% |
| New Hampshire | 3 | 15 | 1 | 6.7% | 6 | 2 | 33.3% | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| New Jersey | 321 | 234 | 69 | 29.5% | 158 | 91 | 57.6% | 176 | 154 | 87.5% |
| New Mexico | 667 | 167 | 138 | 82.6% | 344 | 339 | 98.5% | 190 | 190 | 100.0% |
| New York | 3,051 | 460 | 309 | 67.2% | 368 | 314 | 85.3% | 2,516 | 2,428 | 96.5% |
| North Carolina | 974 | 316 | 99 | 31.3% | 383 | 327 | 85.4% | 562 | 548 | 97.5% |
| North Dakota | 37 | 10 | 10 | 100.0% | 4 | 4 | 100.0% | 24 | 23 | 95.8% |
| Ohio | 1,141 | 374 | 260 | 69.5% | 408 | 377 | 92.4% | 520 | 492 | 94.6% |
| Oklahoma | 384 | 403 | 184 | 45.7% | 188 | 128 | 68.1% | 97 | 53 | 54.6% |
| Oregon | 709 | 647 | 637 | 98.5% | 45 | 41 | 91.1% | 30 | 29 | 96.7% |
| Pennsylvania | 1,478 | 573 | 229 | 40.0% | 414 | 319 | 77.1% | 1,058 | 930 | 87.9% |
| Rhode Island | 68 | 25 | 8 | 32.0% | 33 | 24 | 72.7% | 30 | 30 | 100.0% |
| South Carolina | 546 | 191 | 129 | 67.5% | 202 | 185 | 91.6% | 232 | 232 | 100.0% |
| South Dakota | 100 | 25 | 10 | 40.0% | 34 | 28 | 82.4% | 63 | 62 | 98.4% |
| Tennessee | 877 | 271 | 211 | 77.9% | 536 | 525 | 97.9% | 151 | 139 | 92.1% |
| Texas | 4,231 | 1,104 | 301 | 27.3% | 1,838 | 1,320 | 71.8% | 3,103 | 2,610 | 84.1% |
| Utah | 50 | 19 | 18 | 94.7% | 23 | 21 | 91.3% | 12 | 11 | 91.7% |
| Vermont | 92 | 82 | 80 | 97.6% | 11 | 10 | 90.9% | 3 | 2 | 66.7% |
| Virginia | 1,086 | 380 | 363 | 95.5% | 404 | 403 | 99.8% | 322 | 320 | 99.4% |
| Washington | 1,213 | 799 | 792 | 99.1% | 263 | 262 | 99.6% | 159 | 158 | 99.4% |
| West Virginia | 585 | 186 | 173 | 93.0% | 334 | 331 | 99.1% | 83 | 81 | 97.6% |
| Wisconsin | 591 | 309 | 98 | 31.7% | 187 | 134 | 71.7% | 378 | 359 | 95.0% |
| Wyoming | 13 | 1 | 1 | 100.0% | 6 | 6 | 100.0% | 6 | 6 | 100.0% |
| U.S. TOTAL | 40,235 | 14,270 | 9,399 | 65.9% | 12,932 | 10,871 | 84.1% | 21,826 | 19,883 | 91.1% |

1 Indiana did not report ISP data for three schools listed as participating in community eligibility for the 2022–2023 school year.

2 In addition to the state that did not report the identified student percentage (ISP) that community eligibility schools use for federal reimbursements for all adopting schools, some states reported ISPs for adopting schools that are below the 40 percent eligibility threshold (three schools in Arizona, one school in Delaware, three schools in the District of Columbia, one school in Hawaii, eight schools in Idaho, three schools in Illinois, 11 schools in Maine, one school in Minnesota, one school in Nebraska, one school in Nevada, seven schools in New Jersey, 12 schools in Ohio, 19 schools in Oklahoma, two schools in Oregon, six schools in Rhode Island, two schools in Tennessee, one school in Washington). These schools are not included in the total number of adopting schools by each ISP category. These schools could be participating because of a grace year or as part of a group, but reported separately.

3 The data referenced in footnotes 1 and 2 account for the difference between the U.S. total number of adopting schools and the total number of adopting schools by identified student percentage category.

Table 4: Student Enrollment for School Years (SY) 2014–2015,¹ 2015–2016,² 2016–2017,³ 2017–2018,⁴ 2018–2019,⁵ 2019–2020,⁶ 2020–2021,⁷ 2021–2022,⁸ and 2022–2023¹⁰

| State | Enrollment | | | | | | | | | Change |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------------------------|
| | SY 2014–2015 | SY 2015–2016 | SY 2016–2017 | SY 2017–2018 | SY 2018–2019 | SY 2019–2020 | SY 2020–2021 | SY 2021–2022 | SY 2022–2023 | SY 2021–2022 to SY 2022–2023 |
| Alabama | 180,789 | 196,802 | 195,853 | 208,748 | 208,929 | 208,068 | 101,387 | 222,189 | 240,153 | 17,964 |
| Alaska | 27,666 | 29,234 | 34,106 | 36,575 | 37,244 | 36,560 | 38,089 | 33,465 | 35,400 | 1,935 |
| Arizona | 30,763 | 55,048 | 94,229 | 116,488 | 145,273 | 178,535 | 193,750 | 171,028 | 187,541 | 16,513 |
| Arkansas | 791 | 20,060 | 55,605 | 71,475 | 80,732 | 91,510 | 104,128 | 103,678 | 99,022 | -4,656 |
| California | 113,513 | 435,900 | 748,533 | 799,646 | 1,690,225 | 1,944,304 | 2,207,703 | 2,174,949 | 3,524,445 | 1,349,496 |
| Colorado | 12,455 | 34,920 | 36,198 | 39,244 | 39,950 | 39,028 | 40,165 | 33,404 | 33,798 | 394 |
| Connecticut | 66,524 | 105,547 | 110,322 | 118,067 | 151,552 | 175,155 | 208,824 | 206,444 | 233,711 | 27,267 |
| Delaware | 46,096 | 50,837 | 56,306 | 58,154 | 62,920 | 61,047 | 61,156 | 58,917 | 65,164 | 6,247 |
| District of Columbia | 47,013 | 51,524 | 56,143 | 58,085 | 62,424 | 61,909 | 65,025 | 62,651 | 65,187 | 2,536 |
| Florida | 274,071 | 474,006 | 579,138 | 705,602 | 858,135 | 872,443 | 913,549 | 933,123 | 1,787,164 | 854,041 |
| Georgia | 354,038 | 420,383 | 467,411 | 472,296 | 490,319 | 510,532 | 494,963 | 524,495 | 521,529 | -2,966 |
| Hawaii | 2,640 | 4,650 | 20,150 | 28,750 | 28,994 | 27,747 | 33,120 | 48,964 | 47,228 | -1,736 |
| Idaho | 18,828 | 32,299 | 33,058 | 33,898 | 28,876 | 21,953 | 21,646 | 22,852 | 17,142 | -5,710 |
| Illinois | 552,751 | 672,831 | 685,101 | 725,241 | 731,062 | 762,195 | 804,574 | 793,894 | 870,519 | 76,625 |
| Indiana | 96,604 | 117,187 | 127,405 | 136,855 | 172,969 | 224,192 | 247,399 | 241,398 | 282,269 | 40,871 |
| Iowa | 32,103 | 46,021 | 50,589 | 53,880 | 67,192 | 81,424 | 83,660 | 83,234 | 107,405 | 24,171 |
| Kansas | 5,992 | 19,641 | 22,661 | 25,722 | 26,338 | 26,038 | 13,563 | 10,912 | 9,648 | -1,264 |
| Kentucky | 279,144 | 385,043 | 436,419 | 479,450 | 501,059 | 522,512 | 539,460 | 532,628 | 549,813 | 17,185 |
| Louisiana | 146,141 | 217,496 | 341,492 | 455,318 | 399,190 | 493,727 | 523,957 | 518,791 | 554,714 | 35,923 |
| Maine ⁹ | 5,284 | 17,977 | 20,411 | 20,435 | 23,733 | 19,975 | Not Reported | Not Reported | 21,882 | 21,882 |
| Maryland | 7,624 | 94,496 | 99,484 | 103,814 | 106,218 | 102,788 | 171,613 | 173,972 | 171,905 | -2,067 |
| Massachusetts | 134,071 | 200,948 | 238,872 | 260,364 | 282,030 | 301,465 | 274,211 | 330,684 | 389,055 | 58,371 |
| Michigan | 266,249 | 275,579 | 273,071 | 287,801 | 418,447 | 466,540 | 544,806 | 541,554 | 586,515 | 44,961 |
| Minnesota | 20,688 | 49,944 | 57,003 | 57,957 | 63,057 | 51,818 | 53,982 | 50,873 | 54,787 | 3,914 |
| Mississippi | 136,095 | 148,781 | 151,815 | 147,677 | 164,297 | 145,097 | 162,110 | 158,523 | 149,486 | -9,037 |
| Missouri | 106,126 | 111,319 | 121,962 | 134,996 | 139,884 | 143,692 | 142,542 | 142,654 | 134,522 | -8,132 |
| Montana | 15,802 | 21,161 | 23,290 | 26,180 | 24,777 | 21,741 | 22,340 | 20,656 | 26,032 | 5,376 |
| Nebraska | 180 | 2,425 | 4,277 | 7,411 | 7,276 | 6,173 | 12,100 | 12,090 | 67,351 | 55,261 |
| Nevada | 7,917 | 15,970 | 71,345 | 95,001 | 100,957 | 218,746 | 293,179 | 271,504 | 362,578 | 91,074 |
| New Hampshire | 0 | 644 | 1,125 | 1,082 | 1,100 | 652 | 621 | 0 | 569 | 569 |
| New Jersey | 99,840 | 107,277 | 127,108 | 140,199 | 153,533 | 144,312 | 143,586 | 143,264 | 148,078 | 4,814 |
| New Mexico | 119,300 | 149,057 | 164,569 | 177,388 | 175,756 | 186,116 | 187,301 | 176,450 | 220,400 | 43,950 |
| New York | 505,859 | 528,748 | 603,795 | 1,586,981 | 1,646,409 | 1,742,005 | 1,719,661 | 1,755,995 | 1,739,621 | -16,374 |
| North Carolina | 310,850 | 357,307 | 367,705 | 433,204 | 418,820 | 455,237 | 463,666 | 415,375 | 458,418 | 43,043 |
| North Dakota | 5,284 | 5,661 | 5,698 | 6,039 | 6,525 | 7,424 | 9,420 | 9,420 | 8,893 | -527 |
| Ohio | 305,451 | 354,727 | 363,860 | 397,594 | 409,467 | 410,400 | 412,116 | 416,274 | 431,250 | 14,976 |

Table 4: Student Enrollment for School Years (SY) 2014–2015,¹ 2015–2016,² 2016–2017,³ 2017–2018,⁴ 2018–2019,⁵ 2019–2020,⁶ 2020–2021,⁷ 2021–2022,⁸ and 2022–2023¹⁰ (continued)

| State | Enrollment | | | | | | | | | Change |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| | SY 2014–2015 | SY 2015–2016 | SY 2016–2017 | SY 2017–2018 | SY 2018–2019 | SY 2019–2020 | SY 2020–2021 | SY 2021–2022 | SY 2022–2023 | SY 2021–2022 to SY 2022–2023 |
| Oklahoma | 43,433 | 66,323 | 104,162 | 148,994 | 152,695 | 154,078 | 99,447 | 123,293 | 124,882 | 1,589 |
| Oregon | 103,601 | 129,635 | 130,336 | 129,766 | 122,553 | 133,615 | 240,052 | 245,362 | 277,613 | 32,251 |
| Pennsylvania | 327,573 | 394,630 | 426,984 | 470,275 | 509,073 | 540,877 | 565,014 | 556,188 | 704,553 | 148,365 |
| Rhode Island | 838 | 6,531 | 10,350 | 16,675 | 18,043 | 30,915 | 32,220 | 31,774 | 37,426 | 5,652 |
| South Carolina | 111,453 | 173,364 | 201,587 | 235,711 | 249,036 | 255,006 | 265,027 | 254,439 | 240,894 | -13,545 |
| South Dakota | 13,056 | 14,626 | 15,981 | 15,499 | 19,409 | 18,332 | 20,310 | 20,824 | 15,661 | -5,163 |
| Tennessee | 417,165 | 436,821 | 428,424 | 437,641 | 389,163 | 382,428 | 367,184 | 362,507 | 362,551 | 44 |
| Texas | 941,262 | 1,015,384 | 984,976 | 1,184,559 | 1,566,088 | 1,873,513 | 2,111,019 | 2,088,076 | 2,343,402 | 255,326 |
| Utah | 7,019 | 8,565 | 8,880 | 12,353 | 20,148 | 20,900 | 19,194 | 15,159 | 19,066 | 3,907 |
| Vermont | 7,386 | 12,751 | 13,508 | 13,946 | 13,768 | 12,053 | 12,239 | 13,045 | 21,019 | 7,974 |
| Virginia | 42,911 | 99,404 | 119,051 | 156,687 | 204,610 | 241,056 | 385,041 | 512,500 | 567,126 | 54,626 |
| Washington | 53,369 | 69,432 | 75,357 | 95,514 | 110,815 | 126,278 | 158,518 | 195,397 | 545,548 | 350,151 |
| West Virginia | 124,978 | 145,057 | 177,875 | 195,075 | 208,960 | 209,566 | 212,362 | 225,803 | 216,667 | -9,136 |
| Wisconsin | 133,232 | 146,330 | 156,519 | 158,325 | 165,513 | 172,782 | 188,219 | 189,098 | 204,917 | 15,819 |
| Wyoming | 1,255 | 1,255 | 1,370 | 1,500 | 1,886 | 1,931 | 2,043 | 1,928 | 1,854 | -74 |
| U.S. TOTAL | 6,663,073 | 8,531,558 | 9,701,469 | 11,780,137 | 13,677,429 | 14,936,390 | 15,987,261 | 16,231,697 | 19,886,373 | 3,654,676 |

1 Data for the 2014–2015 school year are from *Take Up of Community Eligibility This School Year* (Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, February 2015).

2 Data for the 2015–2016 school year are from *Community Eligibility Adoption Rises for the 2015–2016 School Year, Increasing Access to School Meals* (Food Research & Action Center and Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, updated May 2016).

3 Data for the 2016–2017 school year are from *Community Eligibility Continues to Grow in the 2016–2017 School Year* (Food Research & Action Center, March 2017). Some schools did not provide student enrollment information for the 2016–2017 school year: one school in California, two schools in Georgia, four schools in Idaho, three schools in Maine, 26 schools in Tennessee, and four schools in South Carolina.

4 Data for the 2017–2018 school year are from *Community Eligibility: The Key to Hunger-Free Schools, School Year 2018–2019* (Food Research & Action Center, May 2019). Some schools did not provide student enrollment information for the 2017–2018 school year: 12 schools in Alaska, 19 schools in Louisiana, four schools in Mississippi, five schools in Oklahoma, one school in South Carolina, and two schools in Vermont.

5 Data for the 2018–2019 school year are from *Community Eligibility: The Key to Hunger-Free Schools, School Year 2018–2019* (Food Research & Action Center, May 2019). Some schools did not provide student enrollment information for the 2018–2019 school year: four schools in Hawaii, 182 schools in Louisiana, 25 schools in Mississippi, 14 schools in South Carolina, and three schools in Utah.

6 Data for the 2019–2020 school year are from *Community Eligibility: The Key to Hunger-Free Schools, School Year 2019–2020* (Food Research & Action Center, May 2020). Some schools did not provide student enrollment information for the 2019–2020 school year: 19 schools in Alabama, 11 schools in California, four schools in the District of Columbia, five schools in Indiana, two schools in Louisiana, seven schools in Maine, two schools in Massachusetts, 10 schools in Michigan, one school in Nevada, four schools in Oregon, 18 schools in South Carolina, one school in South Dakota, five schools in Texas, and one school in Virginia.

7 Data for the 2020–2021 school year are from *Community Eligibility: The Key to Hunger-Free Schools, School Year 2020–2021* (Food Research & Action Center, June 2021). Some schools did not provide student enrollment information for the 2020–2021 school year: eight schools in Alabama, 43 schools in California, six schools in Florida, eight schools in Georgia, one school in Idaho, one school in Louisiana, 149 schools in Massachusetts, two schools in Michigan, three schools in Missouri, one school in New Mexico, 115 schools in New York, four schools in South Carolina, five schools in Tennessee, eight schools in Texas, one school in Washington.

8 Data for the 2021–2022 school year are from *Community Eligibility: The Key to Hunger-Free Schools, School Year 2020–2021* (Food Research & Action Center, June 2022). Some schools did not provide student enrollment information for the 2021–2022 school year: 17 schools in Alabama, three schools in Alaska, one school in Colorado, one school in Idaho, two schools in Kentucky, four schools in Louisiana, one school in Maryland, one school in Montana, one school in North Carolina, two schools in Oregon, three schools in Tennessee.

9 Maine did not report student enrollment data for the 2020–2021 or 2021–2022 school years.

10 Some schools did not provide student enrollment information for the 2022–2023 school year: 62 schools in Alabama, 11 schools in Arizona, one school in Nevada, one school in New Mexico, 29 schools in New York, 40 schools in South Carolina.

Table 5: Number of Schools Adopting the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) for School Years (SY) 2014–2015,¹ 2015–2016,² 2016–2017,³ 2017–2018,⁴ 2018–2019,⁵ 2019–2020,⁶ 2020–2021,⁷ 2021–2022,⁸ and 2022–2023

| State | Adopting | | | | | | | | | Change |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------------------------|
| | SY 2014–2015 | SY 2015–2016 | SY 2016–2017 | SY 2017–2018 | SY 2018–2019 | SY 2019–2020 | SY 2020–2021 | SY 2021–2022 | SY 2022–2023 | SY 2021–2022 to SY 2022–2023 |
| Alabama | 347 | 392 | 391 | 425 | 444 | 445 | 454 | 490 | 536 | 46 |
| Alaska | 123 | 137 | 174 | 213 | 208 | 208 | 216 | 208 | 211 | 3 |
| Arizona | 73 | 133 | 227 | 296 | 372 | 446 | 500 | 493 | 508 | 15 |
| Arkansas | 4 | 57 | 139 | 178 | 201 | 229 | 255 | 259 | 250 | -9 |
| California | 208 | 651 | 1,070 | 1,311 | 2,833 | 3,275 | 3,777 | 3,730 | 6,150 | 2,420 |
| Colorado | 34 | 82 | 91 | 101 | 105 | 105 | 108 | 100 | 106 | 6 |
| Connecticut | 133 | 212 | 228 | 241 | 307 | 364 | 426 | 420 | 483 | 63 |
| Delaware | 95 | 108 | 117 | 116 | 212 | 116 | 166 | 114 | 127 | 13 |
| District of Columbia | 96 | 107 | 115 | 116 | 119 | 115 | 116 | 183 | 180 | -3 |
| Florida | 548 | 831 | 1,001 | 1,142 | 1,356 | 1,374 | 1,440 | 1,462 | 2,542 | 1,080 |
| Georgia | 589 | 700 | 768 | 787 | 818 | 834 | 819 | 873 | 873 | 0 |
| Hawaii | 6 | 25 | 43 | 65 | 69 | 68 | 80 | 106 | 106 | 0 |
| Idaho | 50 | 88 | 92 | 92 | 82 | 61 | 62 | 64 | 61 | -3 |
| Illinois | 1,041 | 1,322 | 1,363 | 1,499 | 1,541 | 1,588 | 1,693 | 1,823 | 2,087 | 264 |
| Indiana | 214 | 253 | 283 | 287 | 362 | 462 | 515 | 506 | 593 | 87 |
| Iowa | 78 | 110 | 119 | 123 | 156 | 176 | 177 | 176 | 221 | 45 |
| Kansas | 18 | 64 | 69 | 72 | 75 | 70 | 44 | 31 | 34 | 3 |
| Kentucky | 611 | 804 | 888 | 948 | 984 | 1,028 | 1,060 | 1,061 | 1,092 | 31 |
| Louisiana | 335 | 484 | 741 | 968 | 1,016 | 1,029 | 1,087 | 1,095 | 1,177 | 82 |
| Maine | 21 | 59 | 72 | 71 | 87 | 73 | 73 | 75 | 77 | 2 |
| Maryland | 25 | 227 | 228 | 242 | 242 | 238 | 364 | 357 | 355 | -2 |
| Massachusetts | 294 | 462 | 525 | 574 | 613 | 685 | 720 | 718 | 846 | 128 |
| Michigan | 625 | 662 | 652 | 715 | 1,105 | 1,259 | 1,466 | 1,468 | 1,638 | 170 |
| Minnesota | 56 | 125 | 153 | 154 | 163 | 146 | 153 | 150 | 160 | 10 |
| Mississippi | 257 | 298 | 333 | 342 | 410 | 337 | 390 | 376 | 370 | -6 |
| Missouri | 298 | 330 | 367 | 402 | 420 | 427 | 432 | 433 | 416 | -17 |
| Montana | 93 | 127 | 138 | 158 | 157 | 150 | 154 | 147 | 167 | 20 |
| Nebraska | 2 | 9 | 15 | 26 | 26 | 26 | 43 | 45 | 151 | 106 |
| Nevada | 13 | 36 | 122 | 153 | 167 | 316 | 399 | 388 | 501 | 113 |
| New Hampshire | 0 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| New Jersey | 197 | 227 | 270 | 306 | 331 | 319 | 315 | 319 | 321 | 2 |
| New Mexico | 343 | 429 | 487 | 535 | 546 | 568 | 574 | 556 | 667 | 111 |
| New York | 1,246 | 1,351 | 1,561 | 3,381 | 3,565 | 3,481 | 3,633 | 3,021 | 3,051 | 30 |
| North Carolina | 648 | 752 | 787 | 914 | 882 | 941 | 955 | 879 | 974 | 95 |
| North Dakota | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 29 | 31 | 37 | 37 | 37 | 0 |

Table 5: Number of Schools Adopting the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) for School Years (SY) 2014–2015,¹ 2015–2016,² 2016–2017,³ 2017–2018,⁴ 2018–2019,⁵ 2019–2020,⁶ 2020–2021,⁷ 2021–2022,⁸ and 2022–2023 (*continued*)

| State | Adopting | | | | | | | | | Change |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------------|
| | SY 2014–2015 | SY 2015–2016 | SY 2016–2017 | SY 2017–2018 | SY 2018–2019 | SY 2019–2020 | SY 2020–2021 | SY 2021–2022 | SY 2022–2023 | SY 2021–2022 to SY 2022–2023 |
| Ohio | 739 | 842 | 918 | 998 | 998 | 1,022 | 1,025 | 1,062 | 1,141 | 79 |
| Oklahoma | 100 | 184 | 301 | 413 | 427 | 408 | 306 | 326 | 384 | 58 |
| Oregon | 262 | 340 | 346 | 344 | 341 | 353 | 622 | 588 | 709 | 121 |
| Pennsylvania | 646 | 795 | 861 | 959 | 1,031 | 1,112 | 1,171 | 1,172 | 1,478 | 306 |
| Rhode Island | 1 | 10 | 21 | 34 | 37 | 58 | 61 | 61 | 68 | 7 |
| South Carolina | 226 | 348 | 412 | 471 | 515 | 531 | 531 | 538 | 546 | 8 |
| South Dakota | 142 | 109 | 124 | 89 | 97 | 97 | 102 | 110 | 100 | -10 |
| Tennessee | 862 | 924 | 909 | 914 | 836 | 840 | 831 | 845 | 877 | 32 |
| Texas | 1,477 | 1,665 | 1,678 | 2,070 | 2,716 | 3,250 | 3,700 | 3,740 | 4,231 | 491 |
| Utah | 22 | 28 | 29 | 35 | 52 | 51 | 54 | 42 | 50 | 8 |
| Vermont | 32 | 56 | 60 | 68 | 62 | 53 | 56 | 59 | 92 | 33 |
| Virginia | 87 | 206 | 255 | 341 | 428 | 511 | 782 | 1,008 | 1,086 | 78 |
| Washington | 122 | 172 | 193 | 232 | 273 | 314 | 394 | 482 | 1,213 | 731 |
| West Virginia | 369 | 428 | 492 | 518 | 540 | 545 | 558 | 593 | 585 | -8 |
| Wisconsin | 348 | 381 | 415 | 422 | 438 | 468 | 494 | 498 | 591 | 93 |
| Wyoming | 5 | 5 | 7 | 10 | 11 | 14 | 14 | 13 | 13 | 0 |
| US Total | 14,184 | 18,173 | 20,678 | 24,900 | 28,809 | 30,620 | 33,407 | 33,300 | 40,235 | 6,935 |

1 Data for the 2014–2015 school year are from *Take Up of Community Eligibility This School Year* (Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, February 2015).

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