



“Serving Kids, Changing Lives”

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Date: May 15, 2024
 To: Board of Directors
 From: Mary Pittala, Director of Finance & Operations
 Subject: Approval of Community Eligibility Provision

Background Information

SVN would like to participate in the Community Eligibility Provision or CEP. CEP provides the option to offer free meals to all students in eligible high poverty schools without collecting household applications. Eligible schools use a claiming percentage based on the number of identified students, or ISP (primarily directly certified students) of at least 25% (lowered from 40% to 25% beginning with the 2024-25 school year) multiplied by a factor of 1.6% to determine a free claiming percentage. The difference between the free claiming percentage and 100% determines the percentage of meals to claim in the paid category.

Based on SVN’s April 1, 2024 direct certification report (154 students/383 enrollment = an ISP of 40.2089%), SVN’s free claiming percentage would be 64% (40.2089×1.6) with a paid reimbursement rate of 36% (100%-64%). SVN would pick up the difference between the reimbursement rate for students qualifying under the current method (i.e., applications and direct certification) and reimbursement under CEP. The estimated cost using DESE’s CEP estimator tool amounts to \$6,046 per month or roughly \$54,000 annually. The school is eligible for 4 years at which time would re-apply based on the direct certification method as of April 1st in that 4th year to begin another 4 year cycle. Note, the free/reduced count that is part of the basic formula calculation would be locked in at the current year number. More information about the program can be found here <https://dese.mo.gov/financial-admin-services/food-nutrition-services/community-eligibility-provision-cep>

Fiscal Note

- The cost to SVN so that all students can eat free breakfast and lunch is estimated to be \$54,000 annually.
- The cost will need to be included in the FY25 budget.

Action Requested

The Finance Committee is seeking approval from the Board of Directors to give the school the authority to participate in CEP.

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me at mpittala@svncharter.org if you have any questions or need additional information.