

Alaska Department of Education and Early Development
School Nutrition Programs State Wavier Request for
Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

1. State agency submitting waiver request and responsible State agency staff contact information:

Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (AK DEED)

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2. Region:

Western Region

3. Eligible service providers participating in waiver and affirmation that they are in good standing:

AK DEED requests this Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) waiver on behalf of Hydaburg City School District. Hydaburg City School District is in good standing with AK DEED and has demonstrated efforts to improve their food service program locally.

4. Description of the challenge the State agency is seeking to solve, the goal of the waiver to improve services under the Program, and the expected outcomes if the waiver is granted. [Section 12(l)(2)(A)(iii) and 12(l)(2)(A)(iv) of the NSLA]:

There are very few staff in the Hydaburg City School District; it is a one-school district on an island in Southeast with a high staff-turnover in a small community whose demographic is predominantly Haida. A specific teacher was assigned to submit their CEP election to DEED but left his position before the application was submitted, which election the

superintendent thought was completed and submitted. October 2025 data shows their district at a 62.12% ISP, a 99.39% free claiming percentage; this is a very high-need community, and not receiving this waiver would be a hardship on both staff (administratively) and students; many of the students depend on the school for breakfast and lunch each day. Without CEP, families would have to complete meal applications, which creates another barrier for families and more paperwork for the small district.

High staff turnover in this district has made it difficult to keep up with all of the Child Nutrition Program requirements. If they lose CEP, the additional cost and workload could force the district to make difficult decisions, such as cutting breakfast and only serving lunch.

Receiving the waiver will allow all students to participate in breakfast and lunch without barriers. In addition, going from processing F/R applications to CEP will alleviate the administrative burden associated with processing and verification, allowing time for other areas of improvement.

Going forward, the district will implement a better system so this does not happen again (missing the June 30 deadline). The district will establish a small committee and make sure at least two employees are trained on the Child Nutrition Program requirements. They will also keep a calendar of important deadlines and review the program requirements each month. Most importantly, they will improve the communication and respond more quickly when the Department of Education requests information. Their goal is simple: keep the program in compliance and make sure the students continue receiving breakfast and lunch.

5. Specific Program requirements to be waived (include statutory and regulatory citations). [Section 12(l)(2)(A)(i) of the NSLA]:

June 30 election documentation and deadline under section 11(a)(1)(F)(x)(I) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA), 42 U.S.C. 1759a, and Food and Nutrition Service regulations at Title 7, Code of Federal Regulations Section 245.9(f)(4)(i).

Request: AK DEED requests the authority to grant Hydaburg City School District the flexibility to elect the CEP for School Year 2026–27 beyond the June 30 election date.

6. Detailed description of alternative procedures and anticipated impact on Program operations, including technology, State systems, and monitoring:

If Hydaburg City School District is granted this authority, AK DEED staff will process their CEP application and conduct the validation process that we complete for all CEP applicants.

7. Description of any steps the State has taken to address regulatory barriers at the State level. [Section 12(l)(2)(A)(ii) of the NSLA]:

No regulatory barriers at the State level.

8. Anticipated challenges State or eligible service providers may face with the waiver implementation:

AK DEED does not anticipate challenges with the waiver implementation as it will allow the SFA to apply for CEP.

9. Description of how the waiver will not increase the overall cost of the Program to the Federal Government. If there are anticipated increases, confirm that the costs will be paid from non-Federal funds. [Section 12(l)(1)(A)(iii) of the NSLA]:

Granting the waiver will not increase the overall cost of administering the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program to the federal government. There are no additional costs to implement the waiver.

10. Anticipated waiver implementation date and time period:

Implementation date: July 1, 2026

Time period: July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027

11. Proposed monitoring and review procedures:

AK DEED will continue to monitor program operations, including any approved waivers, during the normal School Nutrition Program administrative review process. Furthermore,

AK DEED performs a thorough analysis of CEP data, ensuring School Food Authorities submit and are approved with accurate data.

12. Proposed reporting requirements (include type of data and due date(s) to FNS):

By September 31, 2027, AK DEED will report the results of the Hydaburg City School District application to the Western Regional Office with a list of the school sites approved to establish a new CEP cycle.

13. Link to or a copy of the public notice informing the public about the proposed waiver [Section 12(l)(1)(A)(ii) of the NSLA]:

The waiver will be posted to the AK DEED website at <https://education.alaska.gov/cnp/nslp>.

14. Signature and title of requesting official:

National School Lunch Program Coordinator, AK DEED