



State of Arizona
Department of Education

Tom Horne
Superintendent of
Public Instruction

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MEMORANDUM

To: School Nutrition Program Sponsors

From: Mary Szafranski, Deputy Associate Superintendent
Arizona Department of Education, Health & Nutrition Services

Lynn Ladd, Director
Arizona Department of Education, School Health & Nutrition Programs

Date: December 27, 2010

RE: Effects of Busing on Area Eligibility in the Summer Food Service Program and the Afterschool Snack and the Seamless Summer Option served through the National School Lunch Program

Original Signed

A potential barrier to Child Nutrition Program (CNP) participation can occur when school children in public school systems are being assigned (by way of busing) to a school outside the attendance area of their neighborhood school. For purposes of this memorandum, we will refer to this practice as “busing”.

Busing can cause a site located in an area in which poor economic conditions exist to be designated as ineligible based on enrollment data which has been adjusted to reflect student reassignments.

This situation may occur in any CNP in which site eligibility is based on the percentage of children eligible for free and reduced-price meals in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The effect of busing is especially significant to sites applying to participate in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), the Seamless Summer Option, and afterschool snacks served under the NSLP. This is because the eligibility of meal service sites for these situations is generally associated with the neighborhood school where the children live rather than where children actually attend school.

To address this issue the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has determined that, in situations where public schools routinely bus children from their neighborhood school to other schools, site eligibility based on school data may be determined using one of two methods. The program sponsor may determine eligibility based on the enrollment/attendance data obtained for:

- the school the children attend and are bused to, or
- the school the children would have attended were it not for the school's busing policy (the neighborhood school where the children live)

Program sponsors may determine a site to be area eligible in situations as described above only if the School Food Authority is able to document the percentage of children eligible for free and reduced-price meals at each school before and after students are reassigned. The same method of determining site eligibility must be used for all sites participating under that program sponsor to avoid duplicate counting.

Currently the CNP Web Site Application for the SFSP and afterschool snacks under the NSLP are not programmed to automatically capture this type of data. Program sponsors in Arizona wishing to utilize one of the aforementioned methods when applying for the SFSP or afterschool snacks under NSLP, will need to work directly with the School Nutrition Program specialist assigned to approve CNP Web applications.

If you have questions or concerns regarding this memo, please contact your School Nutrition Program Specialist at (602) 542-8700.