Economic Status

Economically disadvantaged students, for the purpose of EPS funding, are students who are eligible for free/reduced meal status. A student can be identified as eligible for free/reduced meal status by

- Direct Certification from DHHS
- Application for Free/Reduced meals
- Alternate Economic Status Form

Direct Certification via DHHS:

These students will be marked within NEO, and this entry point will override data entries uploaded from Synergy.

Free/Reduced Meal form:

Schools can collect and utilize these forms to report students as economically disadvantaged IF the student's status is Free or ReducedPrice – The primary use of this form is for nutrition and/or ESEA Rank & Distribution

Alternate Economic Status form:

All public school administrative units (SAUs) can collect and utilize this form every school year to report students as economically disadvantaged with the AlternateEconomicForm code IF the student's household MEETS low income threshold— This form is ONLY used for EPS funding reporting purposes.

Direct Certification

- Available in the NEO Nutrition Module to Superintendents and Food Service Directors.
- Highly confidential; access is restricted to only Superintendents and Food Service Directors.
- NEO validates that students who qualify for Direct Certification are indicated on EPS
 Reports data entry by SAUs is not required for students on Direct Certification.

Free and Reduced Meal Applications

- Used primarily for Child Nutrition purposes.
- Can also be used to identify student economic status for EPS reporting
- Report students based on income qualifications; FullPrice, ReducedPrice, or Free

Alternate Economic Status Form Use

- ONLY used for EPS Funding reporting
- Reported by Data Staff in SAUs Nutrition Staff should NOT be using these forms.
- Students who <u>MEET low household income threshold</u> via the Alternate Economic
 <u>Status Form</u> can be reported with <u>AlternateEconomicForm</u> to indicate economic disadvantage.
- If a student does NOT meet low household income threshold, report FullPrice
- Retain records at the SAU of students identified using the Alternate Economic Status Form.

Recommended form distribution for different school lunch programs:

Note: EPS economic status must be collected ANNUALLY regardless of nutrition program participation type.

Traditional Meal Operations	Special Provision II BASE YEAR	Special Provision II NON-BASE YEAR	Community Eligibility Provision
Collect Free/Reduced Meal Applications - used for both School Nutrition and EPS Reporting purposes.	Collect Free/Reduced Meal Applications - used for both School Nutrition and EPS Reporting purposes.	Collect the Alternate Economic Status Form – ONLY for EPS Reporting	Collect the Alternate Economic Status Form - ONLY for EPS Reporting
Also:	Also:		
Collect the Alternate Economic Status Form - ONLY for EPS Reporting	Collect the Alternate Economic Status Form - ONLY for EPS Reporting		

^{*}If both the Free/Reduced Meal Application AND the Alternate Economic Status Form are returned and completed by the same student, the data on the Free/Reduced Meal Application would be reported.

Reporting Guidance when both forms are completed by families:

Free/Reduced Meal Application	Alternate Economic Status	Report economic status as
Student QUALIFIES for free or reduced lunch status	Student MEETS lower income household criteria	Free or ReducedPrice (depending on student's qualification)
Student does NOT qualify for free or reduced lunch status	Student does NOT meet lower income household criteria	FullPrice
Student QUALIFIES for free or reduced lunch status	Student does NOT meet lower income household criteria	Free or ReducedPrice (depending on student's qualification)
Student does NOT qualify for free or reduced lunch status	Student MEETS lower income household criteria	FullPrice
Not returned or not distributed to students.	Student MEETS lower income household criteria	AlternateEconomicForm
Not returned or not distributed to students.	Student does NOT meet lower income household criteria	FullPrice