



To: Baltimore County Board of Education and Superintendent Williams

Date: July 13, 2020

Re: Urgent action needed to elect CEP in all eligible schools by the August deadline

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) school meal funding option allows eligible schools to provide free breakfast and lunch to all students – essentially becoming *Hunger-Free Schools*.

During the 2019-2020 school year, more than 106,000 students in Maryland attended one of 242 CEP schools, including four Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS). However, the CEP program in BCPS recently expired on June 30, 2020 and at this time, not a single school in Baltimore County is enrolled in CEP.

Given the current unprecedented number of struggling families in our community, it is urgent that **BCPS elect CEP for all eligible schools before the August deadline.**

High unemployment and increased use of federal benefit programs due to COVID-19 means that more schools are now eligible to use CEP and that CEP is more financially viable than ever before. The number of students receiving SNAP is the major determinant of eligibility for CEP and in just the first month of the pandemic (April 2020), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) applications in Baltimore County **more than quadrupled** to over 24,000, versus about 4,000 applications in March.

When BCPS elects CEP for the 46 schools listed in the following table, **20% of all BCPS students will attend a *Hunger-Free School*** while simultaneously:

- Eliminating school meal debt,
- Ending lunch shaming,
- Removing barriers to participation in school meals (including stigma and cost),
- Ensuring that all students have universal access to school breakfast and lunch,
- Bringing more federal reimbursements into our schools,
- Reducing hunger and food insecurity rates for students and their families, and
- Improving student attendance.

The pandemic has been devastating for many families in our community and the opportunity to elect CEP at our current poverty rates for the next 4 years must not be overlooked.

We strongly urge you to ensure that BCPS students' most basic needs are met by electing CEP in all eligible schools. **Hungry children cannot learn.**

Thank you for your immediate attention to this critical and time sensitive issue.

Sincerely yours,

Maryland PTA

Dr. Edna Harvin Battle, President
5 Central Avenue, Glen Burnie, MD 21061
info@mdpta.org

Maryland State Education Association

Cheryl Bost, President
140 Main Street, Annapolis, MD 21401
szwerling@mseanea.org

Teachers Association of Baltimore County

Cindy Sexton, President
1220 E Joppa Rd Bldg C, Suite 514, Towson, Maryland 21286

PTA Council of Baltimore County

Leslie Weber
laweber@comcast.net

Maryland Hunger Solutions

Michael J. Wilson, Director
711 W. 40th Street, Suite 360, Baltimore, MD 21211
mjwilson@mdhungersolutions.org

No Kid Hungry Maryland

Tam Lynne Kelley, Senior Manager
tkelley@strength.org

“As the President of the Student Support Network, a non-profit working to alleviate hunger and food insecurity in ten Baltimore County Public Schools when schools are open, serving many more through our Spring and Fall Drives, and now serving approximately 3,000 students and their families every week now during the pandemic at our distribution sites. I am writing to express our strong support for the expansion of the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) into all eligible schools for the 2020-2021 school year. Two of our Network schools were eligible for CEP before the pandemic, and others may also be eligible now.”

Student Support Network

Laurie Taylor Mitchell, President

1740 E. Joppa Rd., Suite 200, Baltimore, MD 21234

ltaylor@mitchell.ssn@gmail.com

“You have seen the lines and requests for food and essential supplies. Families are both desperate and scared that they cannot or will not be able to provide for their children. Families are making difficult decisions on how to spend their money. With so many stresses, none of our children should have to worry about food! Food! Not cell phones, not books, not games or even medicine, food and essential items that our students and families cannot do without. This is an investment that will pay off.”

Ridgely Middle School PTA

Kim Beard, President

kimbeardreuse@gmail.com

“BCPS must embrace every opportunity to prepare our students for success by meeting their core needs and eliminating unnecessary barriers. A meal program that offers a nutritional meal will only support our students' efforts to be successful. BCPS, this is an opportunity to support our students as well as our school system, please don't let it slip away.”

Education Support Professionals of Baltimore County

Jeannette Young, President

1220C East Joppa Road, Suite 514, Towson, Maryland 21286-5820

jyoung@mseanea.org

“We strongly support the Community Eligibility Provisions. BHP is dedicated to eliminating childhood hunger and currently support 1,000's of food insecure children each week.”

BALTIMORE HUNGER PROJECT

Lynne B. Kahn, Executive Director

117 Old Padonia Road, Suite E, Cockeysville, Maryland 21030

lynne@baltimorehungerproject.org

“We need to be sure our students are fed. Please support CEP for BCPS students.”

TABCO

Cindy Sexton, President

1220 C East Joppa Road, Suite 514, Towson MD 21286

csexton@mseanea.org

“I have 4 kids that will be attending Baltimore County Schools. School lunch is important. As someone who is on a tight budget we just don’t have to send or buy there lunch or it will take from other needs”

Jessica Wolf
Baltimore County resident (21222)
jessw111314@gmail.com

“I work for BCPS at Hawthorne Elementary and I can attest that our often students come to school hungry. This program allows them to have their basic needs met, so that they have the physical energy and attention to engage in rigorous instruction. The first step in closing the socioeconomic achievement gap is meeting the basic needs of students to remove barriers and obstacles that impede learning. This is when our students can reach their fullest potential.”

Kristina M. Haley-Class
Baltimore County resident (21220) and BCPS Teacher at Hawthorne Elementary
khaleyclass@bcps.org

“As a parent and special ed teacher, I cannot plead enough for you to fund and support programs to feed our community members. Children's lives quite literally depend on it. I have taught in Baltimore Co for about a decade.”

Kate Englebrecht
Maryland resident (21214)
keenglebrecht@gmail.com

“Now more than every children are living in poverty and need access to food. We can provide this to thousands of children through CEP.”

Yara Cheikh
Baltimore County resident (21286)
ycheikh@aol.com

“Hungry children do not have the energy to learn. This has been proven over and over. Arranging this funding source for all eligible schools is necessary if you want high achievement. Do not miss this opportunity.”

Camille Marx
Baltimore County resident (21221)
marx7633@comcast.net

“I am a parent and sent my children to Baltimore County Schools for the previous 28 years. As I've volunteered in my children's schools and served on the PTSA I've seen the many behavioral issues that result from hunger.”

Julie Desmarais
Baltimore County resident (21286)
juliedesmietus@aol.com

“A hungry student cannot concentrate to be a good student. Especially now, with the pandemic, implementing CEP is urgent. The program will at least assure all students that they will have food even as they cannot enjoy life as normal. Please, please, if you care at all about our children, implement this program. I am an 86 year old person and I care deeply about every child in our schools. Let's be sure that they have the food--the fuel-- to endure this pandemic and to learn and to move forward to lead our country into a better world.”

Judith B Miller
Baltimore County resident (212099)
brem11@verizon.net

“The CEP program is an enormously cost effective way to feed hungry kids in this unprecedented time. I am a Professor of Medicine at the University of Maryland School of Medicine.”

Braxton D. Mitchell, PhD
Baltimore County resident (21286)
bmitchel@som.umaryland.edu

“Please help our BCPS students.”

Linda Richard
Baltimore County resident (21220)
lrichard@ccbcmd.edu

“I support CEP because I know of the desperate need for this program for children in Baltimore County. I think it is a necessity.”

Joanna Greenwood
Baltimore County resident (21286)
123jogre@gmail.com

“At this extraordinary time, we should all be helping those most compromised by the economic devastation caused by COVID-19. My wife and I have been offering substantial economic and volunteer support to the Student Support Network - this program would greatly supplement the efforts undertaken by SSN and other citizen volunteer organizations like them.”

A. Mitchell Koppelman
Baltimore County resident
coracle2@gmail.com

“I am a parent and the treasurer of Loch Raven High School's PTSA. I also work with the Student Support Network, both at LRHS and across Baltimore County, and see the desperate need for food and essentials in Baltimore County.”

Janet Stevens
Baltimore County resident (21286)
janettstevens@gmail.com

“Food insecurity is rising at an unprecedented rate during this pandemic. The number of SNAP applications in Baltimore County rose over 400% from March to April. Our students need to be able to rely on BCPS to provide universally free meals in this time of need. CEP participation in eligible schools is a tool that works for 242 schools in Maryland. BCPS needs to get on board before August 31!”

Susan Gross
Baltimore County resident (21136)
sgrossphd@hotmail.com

“Everyone in the community matters. No one should be hungry including our children.”

Emily D. S. Marcovitz
Baltimore County resident (21117)
emilysummerfoods@gmail.com

“My children went through the BCPS system. Especially in today's turbulent economic climate, many children enrolled in BCPS schools face hunger every single day. For many, the only meal they may get each day is what they receive through school and now, many families will not be able to afford even that. Enrolling the 46 eligible schools in CEP will provide stability and relief to these families, which will allow our children to be better students.”

Donna Sillick
Baltimore County resident (21136)
donginzu@gmail.com

“I'm a nutritionist and believe no child should be food insecure.”

Lyssa Balick
Baltimore County resident (21228)
catonsvillebanny@yahoo.com

“It's time to feed our children. They can't learn if they're hungry, and no child should be shamed or go hungry because their family can't afford to feed them.”

Diana I. Soucy
Baltimore County resident (21136)
celestdrinkwater@comcast.net

“I am a pediatrician for many of these children.”

Dana Silver
Baltimore County resident (21204)
danapeds@gmail.com

“I agree with the position stated in the letter.”

Spencer Pollock
Baltimore County resident (21093)
sspollock@nilesbarton.com

“I strongly urge BCPS to support this initiative. Hunger is something that no child should have to experience. Do the right thing!!!”

Pat Hauptman
Baltimore County resident (21286)
pathauptman@gmail.com

“I am a parent and education advocate and I support CEP to ensure that our most vulnerable students receive much needed support.”

Christina Pumphrey
Baltimore County resident (21234)
cpumphrey31@gmail.com

“Child hunger lowers IQ”

Stuart Stainman
Baltimore County resident (21204)
ssainman@gmail.com

“Parents of current BCPS students”

Huichun Xu
Baltimore County resident (21093)
huixu99@gmail.com

“I work in a county elementary school and see how important free food is to these kids. No child can learn if they are hungry.”

Jemma Fulop
Baltimore County resident (21030)
jemfulop@gmail.com

“More than ever, this is needed to support children and families across BCPS. This program helps to Eliminate school meal debt, End lunch shaming, Remove barriers to participation in school meals (including stigma and cost), Ensure that all students have universal access to school breakfast and lunch, Brings more federal reimbursements into our schools, Reduces hunger and food insecurity rates for students and their families, and Improves student attendance.”

Shelbi R. Bardoff
Baltimore County resident (21234)
sbardoff@bcps.org

“Do not remove this program. It makes a big difference in students lives.”

Rachael Dittmar
Baltimore County resident (21222)
rachaeldit0708@gmail.com

“I am a teacher in Baltimore County. Our students depend on this program. Students in our community utilize this program and because of it have two meals a day. Without this program I worry that many of our students will go hungry throughout the year.”

Amanda Boyd
Baltimore County resident (21220)
aboyd4@bcps.org

“I am a parent & a clergyperson”

Kim Komrad
Baltimore County resident (21136)
kimshalom@me.com

“As a teacher in the county at a Title 1 school I constantly see just how hungry my students are. Even with breakfast provided and lunch I often have to give students food that I personally buy that meet the qualifications in order for my students to be able to focus and learn. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is still very real and prevalent in this communities. Please ensure that they students do not go hungry.”

Kimberly Young
Baltimore County resident (21234)
ky7455@gmail.com

“I am an employee of BCPS I believe that the children should not be without food.”

Janis Brent
Baltimore County resident (21236)
jteapot@gmail.com

“I support the Community Eligibility Provision because children deserve to have food in their bellies. Many of the children in the qualifying areas go hungry. When they are hungry in school, they are unable to learn, process, grow, etc. They are living in a survival state at all times, never knowing when they will get their next meal. Having consistent meals at school helps them relax knowing that there will always be food. A fed child is available for learning and growing. My tax dollars pay for 3 free meals a day in prison. Those individuals are there due to their own actions. Let them work for their meals while we provide free lunch to ALL school age children despite their home incomes. No child should have their lunch taken due to lack of funds from their parents. We need to provide for these children. They are our future!!!!”

Desiree' Wheatley
Baltimore County resident (21221)
dezwheatley@gmail.com

“No child should be hungry EVER.”

Camila Januario
Baltimore County resident (21093)
camilasjanuario@gmail.com

“I support the Community Eligibility Provision because children deserve to have food in their bellies. Many of the children in the qualifying areas go hungry. When they are hungry in school, they are unable to learn, process, grow, etc. They are living in a survival state at all times, never knowing when they will get their next meal. Having consistent meals at school helps them relax knowing that there will always be food. A fed child is available for learning and growing. My tax dollars pay for 3 free meals a day in prison. Those individuals are there due to their own actions. Let them work for their meals while we provide free lunch to ALL school age children despite their home incomes.”

Jack Wheatley, Breanna Wheatley, and Caitlin Wheatley
Baltimore County residents (21221)
jwwheatley419@gmail.com
brewheatley2006@gmail.com
caitlinwheatley2010@gmail.com

“I am a teacher that has a million and one things to worry about, let’s not add my kids being hungry to that list! Adults have difficulty focusing when they are hungry, imagine a 7year old?”

Destiny Cromer
Baltimore County resident (21237)
destinycromer@yahoo.com

“As a teacher at a low income, CEP eligible school I feel very strongly about how this program benefits the students and families in our community. There are many families in our community that rely on the CEP program to receive filling and nutritious meals. I have been able to see the benefits first hand of what a good meal can do for students in terms of their ability to sustain attention and focus on tasks within the school building. I hope that you will consider renewing the CEP to allow for families to help provide for their children.”

Libby Wallace
Baltimore County resident (21234)
lwallace6@bcps.org

“I have been teaching in a title one school for four years. Every year, every one of my children take advantage of the free meals. Without these meals, these children would be going hungry during the day. I already personally supply snacks for these children for snack time as they often do not bring their own snacks. Our children should not be punished for their socioeconomic status. Hungry children cannot learn.”

Leah Hunt
Baltimore County resident (21234)
lhunt@bcps.org

“Every child has a basic need; this is a No brainer”

Norman Anderson
Baltimore County resident (21102)
naanderson@baltimorecountymd.gov

“Students in our school and many other schools rely on free meals to meet basic needs not received at home. There is no shame associated with free meals as all kiddos receive them. This is a necessity for our school.”

Jillian Pospisil
Baltimore County resident (21234)
jpospasil@bcps.org

“I am a school counselor at Hawthorne and witness how important this program is to our students and families. We all know students can’t learn unless basic needs, like being fed, are met.”

Caitlin Arena
Maryland resident (21224)
carena@bcps.org

“This program is vital. During our Prek class meetings I saw students eating breakfast as I taught lessons. Some students were eating fruit, cereal, and apple sauce provided by the school while others were eating popcorn and soda.”

Kathryn Mahoney
Baltimore County resident (21220)
kmahoney2@bcps.org

“Many of my students come to school hungry, agitated and tired. Through classroom surveys, my students enjoy the quiet time first thing in the morning to settle down from their troubles at home, eat, hydrate and be greeted by the teacher and classmates.”

April Johnson
Baltimore County resident (21220)
ajohnson10@bcps.org

“Children are the innocent ones in our society. They are not in control of much in their lives; providing nourishment is the least we should be doing for them.”

Betty J Marlow
Baltimore County resident (21236)
bettyjmarlow@gmail.com

“I have been teaching in a title one school for four years. Every year, every one of my children take advantage of the free meals. Without these meals, these children would be going hungry during the day. I already personally supply snacks for these children for snack time as they often do not bring their own snacks. Our children should not be punished for their socioeconomic status. Hungry children cannot learn.”

Leah Hunt
Baltimore County resident (21234)
lhunt@bcps.org

“No child should go hungry or be shamed because they can’t afford a meal. Let’s take care of our children—our future!”

Kristina Kriss
Baltimore County resident (21286)
krisswrites@gmail.com

“With a background in public health and educational psychology, I deeply understand the detrimental impact of hunger on our students. Our students deserve having this basic needs met as a precondition to their academic success. Please support this program.”

Beth Wolff
Baltimore County resident (21286)
ewolff@comcast.net

“I am a support personnel at the elementary level and hope that BCPS elects to utilize the CEP program so that our students can receive the nutritious meals they may depend on.”

Carol Gordon
Baltimore County resident (21220)
cgordon@bcps.org

“Kids need to eat. They MUST have their basic needs met fully and consistently. Knowing a meal is definitely coming alleviates much stress and anxiety, not only for the child, but for the entire family. Basic needs met and a security in that promotes increased and improved participation in family, home, community, & LIFE.”

Natalie Cardin
Baltimore County resident (21234)
ncardin@bcps.org

“I have been volunteering with the Student Support Network and OMHS Food pantry in food distributions in Owings Mills. It’s very humbling the amount of people who are grateful for these food distributions.”

Margarita Ugarte-Caffyn
Baltimore County resident (21228)
edymarga@verizon.net

“I am a parent and health care provider. The foundation of good health is adequate and consistent nutrition. In 2020, no child should be hungry. My family volunteers for the Student Support Network providing meals and goods to families that are food insecure. So we see first hand the great need in Baltimore County. Please continue funding for CEP. Really a no-brainer.”

Tracy Whittington
Baltimore County resident (21286)
t3_whitt@yahoo.com

“As a teacher, I support CEP. Students can not learn if they are hungry and the majority of my students do not eat breakfast as home. They rely on the free breakfast that is provided by the school. They also depend on the free lunch.”

Mary Claire Holmes
Baltimore County resident (21087)
mholmes@bcps.org

“I am a support personnel at the elementary level and hope that BCPS elects to utilize the CEP program so that our students can receive the nutritious meals they may depend on.”

Carol Gordon
Baltimore County resident (21220)
cgordon@bcps.org

“I have been volunteering with the Student Support Network and OMHS Food pantry in food distributions in Owings Mills. It’s very humbling the amount of people who are grateful for these food distributions.”

Margarita Ugarte-Caffyn
Baltimore County resident (21228)
edymarga@verizon.net

“I’m a single mom of 4 children that go to school and all receive this help and we struggle with out it.”

Smith
Baltimore County resident (21222)
smith.krys.ks@gmail.com

“Please support this vital initiative.”

Tracey Myers-Preston
Baltimore County resident (21296)
gungy3720@gmail.com

“As a graduate of Baltimore County Public Schools and a health and wellness advocate this issue is of deep importance to me. I urge you to re-enroll in CEP before the August deadline. Students deserve access to healthy food in order to support their learning and development. Accrual of school meal debt is an unnecessary burden for student and families. Your immediate action is necessary.”

Elyse Preston
Baltimore County resident (21286)
elysepreston@comcast.net

“I support this effort for all students to have access to school breakfast and lunch with no school lunch shaming, no hungry students, and no unpaid school meal debt.”

Michael Preston
Baltimore County resident (21286)
michaelwpreston@comcast.net

“No child can learn when they are hungry or worried about food. Please extend provision”

Loretta Cullinan
Baltimore County resident (21286)
lcullinan68@yahoo.com

“Help get assistance wherever possible - many families are struggling very much!”

Laura Calvert
Maryland resident (21231)
calvert.laura@gmail.com

“Please!”

Brenda Prevas
Maryland resident (21286)
bprevas@verizon.net

“Hunger is an issue for many students and must be addressed before learning can happen. Please review Maslow’s hierarchy.”

Amber Baxter
Baltimore County resident (21221)
abaxter@bcps.org

“Not one person should be hungry”

Marycatherine Augustyn
Baltimore County resident (21212)
emceea@gmail.com

“I see the importance of this program every day. I distribute food on Fridays with the Student Support Network. If you believe that children are our priority, then please let no child go hungry in Baltimore County.”

Vicki Almond
Baltimore County resident (21136)
vickialmond9@aol.com

CEP-Eligible Schools in BCPS

The following group of 46 schools, with 23,000 students, are eligible to elect CEP based on data from October 2019, i.e. before the pandemic. Many more schools have recently become eligible, but they are not listed here because more recent data is not yet publicly available.

1. Arbutus Elementary
2. Baltimore Highlands Elementary
3. Battle Grove Elementary
4. Battle Monument School
5. Bear Creek Elementary
6. Berkshire Elementary
7. Catonsville Center for Alt Studies
8. Charlesmont Elementary
9. Chase Elementary
10. Crossroads Center
11. Deep Creek Elementary
12. Deep Creek Middle
13. Dundalk Elementary
14. Dundalk Middle
15. Edmondson Heights Elementary
16. Elmwood Elementary
17. General John Stricker Middle
18. Glyndon Elementary
19. Grange Elementary
20. Halethorpe Elementary
21. Halstead Academy
22. Hawthorne Elementary
23. Hernwood Elementary
24. Holabird Middle
25. Lansdowne Elementary
26. Lansdowne Middle
27. Logan Elementary
28. Mars Estates Elementary
29. Martin Boulevard Elementary
30. McCormick Elementary
31. Meadowood Education Center
32. Middlesex Elementary
33. Norwood Elementary
34. Oakleigh Elementary
35. Riverview Elementary
36. Rosedale Center
37. Sandalwood Elementary
38. Sandy Plains Elementary
39. Scotts Branch Elementary
40. Seneca Elementary
41. Stemmers Run Middle
42. Sussex Elementary
43. Victory Villa Elementary
44. White Oak School
45. Woodholme Elementary
46. Woodlawn Middle