



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., *State Superintendent*

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TO Title I Directors

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COMMUNITY ELIGIBILITY PROVISION AND TITLE I, PART A

As a follow up to the webinar conducted on April 16, 2014, *Community Eligibility Provision and Title I, Part A*, this is written to provide additional information regarding determining the poverty percentages of Title I schools for with-in district allocations. Specifically, we have discussed with the US Department of Education alternative ways to determine poverty percentages for this purpose.

When selecting the schools that will be served each year, a local education agency (LEA) must first rank all of its schools according to their percent of poverty. As you are aware, an LEA must rank each school based on the percentage (not the number) of low-income children in each school. The poverty percentage for each school is typically determined by comparing the number of children attending each school (e.g., ADM) with the number of low-income children for the same school, heretofore considered to be those students eligible for free or reduced-priced meals based on household applications. Historically the children included in the counts were those students between 5 and 17 years old (i.e., not including 4-year olds or 18-year olds). This process was aligned to the poverty census data that is used to determine State Title I allotments each year.

In North Carolina, Public School Law grants authority to local boards of education to classify their schools. For example, "An 'elementary school' is a school that includes all or part of the first through eighth grade and that may have a kindergarten or other early childhood program." [GS 115C-75] So if a school has a local designation of PK-5, then the school may consider preschool students a part of their elementary program.

Beginning in 2014-15, districts may include any students in the poverty counts that are included in the grades served under the school's designation. Including all students in the school poverty counts is aligned to the data collection for direct certification that will be used for implementing the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). If the school is PK-5, then preschool children may be included. If the school is 9-12, then any secondary school student may be included regardless of the student's age. All low-income students in the grade span designation for the school may be counted toward the poverty percentage regardless of whether the LEA uses direct certification data or household applications to determine which students are low-income.

We are pleased to provide this alternative to determining school poverty percentages. We hope this will reduce some of the administrative burden on local districts and better support decisions around CEP participation.

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