

WETZEL COUNTY SCHOOLS PROVIDE MEALS TO STUDENTS AT NO COST

New Martinsville, W.Va. - Students in Wetzel County will have the opportunity to eat a no-cost breakfast and lunch at school through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program. The CEP was enacted as a result of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act and provides universal meal service to children in high-poverty areas. This is the eighth year Wetzel County has participated in the option.

The CEP serves as an alternative to collecting, approving, and verifying household eligibility applications for free and reduced-price eligible students in high-poverty Local Education Agencies (LEAs). If at least 40 percent of a school's student population is directly certified for free meal benefits, the entire school qualifies for the option.

"Wetzel County Schools will be participating in the CEP program to help meet a crucial need for many students in our county," said, Tammy Wells, Superintendent of Wetzel County Schools. "The correlation between well nourished students and academic achievement is well documented and we're grateful to have the opportunity to participate in this endeavor for the betterment of our students and families."

Wetzel County expects to have all schools participate in the CEP. The program allows the school system to feed nearly 2,300 students each day.

The 2017 *Feeding America: Map the Meal Gap* data reports high levels of food insecurity and hunger across the country. In West Virginia, more than 14 percent of residents, and over 79,000 children, live in food insecure households.

For more information, contact Director of Child Nutrition for Wetzel County Schools, Amanda McPherson, SNS at 304-455-2441.

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