

**New Campuses Added to List of Community Eligibility Provision Schools**

*Aug. 11, 2017*- This fall, nearly 124,000 Houston ISD students will have access to free lunch and breakfast. The increase is a result of seven schools *(Ashford, Benbrook, Bell, DeAnda, Shadowbriar, Elementary Schools, Clifton Middle School and Young Learners School)*being added to the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) list, bringing the total to 191 HISD campuses.

CEP is a federal initiative that funds the School Nutrition Program for schools that meet various eligibility requirements, including economic data and use of state and federal programs like SNAP and WIC. **All students who attend these campuses are able to eat a school lunch at no charge.*\****

"Increasing the number of schools on the CEP list ensures that more students are able to eat lunch without the worry of money being on their account. Instead, students can focus on what's important -- learning," said Chief Operating Officer Brian Busby. "Our goal is to get every school in the district qualified for the program and we are working with the Texas Department of Agriculture to make it happen. Once it does, every student in HISD will have access to free lunch and breakfast."

The CEP program started as a pilot in only a few states in 2011, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture expanded it to all states in 2014 for any schools that meet the eligibility requirements. The number of HISD schools that meet the requirements has incrementally increased in the last few years.

The CEP designation does not require parents and guardians to complete federal free/reduced applications. But the district encourages families that complete the income survey to ensure each campus can collect important data that is tied to school funding.

"The meal benefit forms collect important information that enables schools to maximize the compensatory funding that is received each year. The data also unlocks access to various programs and discounts for families," said Nutrition Services Officer Betti Wiggins. "The forms are easy to complete and parents can even fill them out online now.”

Anyone who wishes to complete the form online should visit <https://mealapps.houstonisd.org>. The school meal application is also available at each campus and will be sent home with students during the first week of school. If completed online, there’s not a need to return the paper application. For more information call 713-491-5944.

\*Please note that there will still be a charge for any food that is not part of a reimbursable meal.  This includes some a la carte and snack items.