



April 28, 2014

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact:

Justin Rumenapp

Center for Civil Justice

Communications Specialist

(810) 244-8044

[jrumenapp@cci-mi.org](mailto:jrumenapp@cci-mi.org)

Marybeth Laisure

Center for Civil Justice

Child Nutrition Director

(810) 244-8044

[mlaisure@cci-mi.org](mailto:mlaisure@cci-mi.org)

Judy Putnam

Michigan League for Public Policy

Communications Director

(517) 487-5436

[jputnam@mlpp.org](mailto:jputnam@mlpp.org)

**Schools in Low-Income Areas May Offer Free Breakfast and Lunch This Fall**

FLINT, Mich. – Over 800 schools located in high-poverty areas have the option to offer school lunches and breakfasts to all students at no charge this fall. The lunches and breakfasts will be offered as part of what is known as the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), and the Michigan Department of Education is taking applications through June 30. While the main goal of CEP is to reduce hunger among at-risk student populations, the provision also helps to reduce school paperwork and erase meal debt.

"When schools offer meals to all students, it's really a benefit to all stakeholders," says Marybeth Laisure, Center for Civil Justice's Child Nutrition Director. "Children are better prepared to learn on full stomachs, and teachers report fewer behavioral outbursts."

Schools are allowed to serve meals under CEP if 40 percent or more of the student population qualifies for other assistance programs, such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly food stamps). There are 562 schools buildings currently utilizing the program in Michigan, and the state saw a 10 percent increase in student lunches and breakfasts participation as a result.

"This is an exciting opportunity for Michigan's eligible schools to make sure the students they serve get enough to eat," said Gilda Z. Jacobs, president & CEO of the Michigan League for Public Policy. "Offering free breakfasts and lunches is a win-win for everybody."

Thanks to the success of pilot schools in Michigan and ten other states, the Community Eligibility Provision is expanding nationwide. All State Agencies must publish a list of eligible and near-eligible schools by May 1. Michigan Department of Education's list of eligible buildings can be found here: [https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/2012-2013\\_CEO\\_Eligible\\_Buildings\\_383192\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/2012-2013_CEO_Eligible_Buildings_383192_7.pdf).

Center for Civil Justice 436 S. Saginaw, Suite 400 Flint, Michigan 48502 (810) 244-8044 (800) 481-4989