Reply to
Attn of:       CACFP-703
               SFSP-482
               SP-03-16

Subject:       Effects of Busing on Area Eligibility in the Child and Adult Care Food Program,
               the Summer Food Service Program, and the National School Lunch Program

To:            STATE AGENCY DIRECTORS - Colorado ED, Colorado DPH,
               (Special Nutrition Programs) Iowa, Kansas, Missouri ED,
               Missouri DHSS, Montana OPI,
               Montana DPHHS, Nebraska,
               North Dakota, South Dakota,
               Utah and Wyoming

We have been made aware of potential barriers to program participation where school children, in
public school systems, are being assigned (by way of busing) to a school outside the attendance area
of their neighborhood school. For purposes of this memorandum, we will refer to this practice as
"bussing".

Bussing can have the effect of causing a site, located in an area in which poor economic conditions
exist, to be designated as ineligible based on enrollment data which has been adjusted to reflect
student reassignments.

This situation may occur in any program in which site eligibility is based on the percentage of children
eligible for free and reduced-price meals in the National School Lunch Program. The effect of
bussing is especially significant to sites applying to participate in the Summer Food Service Program,
in At-risk Afterschool programs participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, and in the
snack service in afterschool care programs under the National School Lunch Program. This is because
meal service sites for these situations are generally associated with the neighborhood school of the
children, rather than where children attend school.
State Agency Directors

To address this issue, we have determined that, in situations where public schools routinely bus children from their neighborhood school to other schools, site eligibility may be based on one of two methods. The Program sponsor may determine eligibility based on the enrollment/attendance data obtained for:

- the school the children attend and are bussed (this represents currently established policy), or
- the school the children would have attended were it not for the school's bussing policy (the neighborhood school where the children live).

Program sponsors may determine a site to be area eligible in situations as described above only if the school food authority is able to document the percentage of children eligible for free and reduced-price meals at each school, before and after students are reassigned. The same method of determining site eligibility must be used for all sites participating under that Program sponsor to avoid duplicate counting.

If you have any questions, please contact our office at (303) 844-0355.


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Special Nutrition Programs