FISCAL YEAR 2014
CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM
FAMILY DAY CARE HOME SPONSOR MEMORANDUM #5

TO:   Family Day Care Home Sponsors

FROM:  Kyle L. Guerrant, Director
       Office of School Support Services

DATE:  December 12, 2013

SUBJECT:  Use of School and Census Data

ACTION:  Establish procedure to adjust for change in data release date in
determining area eligibility

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide additional guidance on the use of
school and census data to establish area eligibility in the Child and Adult Care Food
Program (CACFP) and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) of the National
School Lunch Program.

In addition, this memorandum consolidates previous guidance and simplifies the
area eligibility determination process to reduce administrative burdens. This
memorandum supersedes:

- SFSP 02-1998 Availability of School and Census Eligibility, February 24, 1998
- SFSP 05-2007 Area Eligibility Duration in the Summer Food Program,
  April 20, 2007
- CACFP 02-20121, Eligibility Based on Census Data, October 31, 2011

The two primary sources of data that may be used to determine whether a site is
area eligible are school data and census data. The Richard B. Russell National
School Lunch Act (NSLA) allows the use of school data to establish area eligibility in
the CACFP [42 U.S.C. 1766(f)(3)(A)(ii)(I)(bb)] and

The NSLA also allows the use of census data to establish tier 1 eligibility for CACFP
sites [42 U.S.C.1761(a)(1)(A)(i)(II)].
Availability of Census Data
CACFP day care homes and SFSP sites are considered area eligible if they are located in a Census Block Group (CBG) where 50 percent or more of the children are eligible for free or reduced price school meals.

In 2005, the Census Bureau began to annually estimate household income using the American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS is an ongoing survey that provides annual estimates, based on sampling data, in order to give communities more current information than the decennial census is able to provide. In 2012, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) began releasing these ACS data annually. For more information see SFSP 04-2014, Census Data Release: Fiscal Year 2014, November 8, 2013. State agencies should use the most recently released census data to determine eligibility under CACFP and SFSP.

Availability of School Data
School data may be used to establish area eligibility for CACFP and SFSP sites, excluding camps. In order for a site to be determined area eligible, school data must indicate that the proposed meal location is located in a school attendance area where at least 50 percent of the children are eligible for free or reduced price school meals.

CACFP regulations require state agencies to coordinate with their NSLP to obtain a list of schools, including elementary, middle, and high schools in the state where at least 50 percent of their enrolled children are eligible for free or reduced price school meals. This information must be provided by the NSLP state agency each year by February 15, and must be based on data from a designated month, most commonly the month of October [7 CFR 226.6(f)(1)(viii)(A) and 226.6(f)(1)(ix)(A)]. While SFSP regulations do not require state agencies to designate the use of school data from one particular month, FNS encourages using school data from the month designated for CACFP.

At the discretion of the applicable CACFP and SFSP, in situations where data from a more recent month in the school year is available and would establish area eligibility for an otherwise ineligible location, school data from that month may now be used to establish area eligibility.

Prioritization of Data
The NSLA permits the use of either school or census data to determine eligibility of CACFP day care homes without prioritizing either data source. However, CACFP regulations currently require institutions to first make a reasonable effort to establish area eligibility with school data prior to using census data [7 CFR 226.15(f)]. Previously, when census data were released decennially, school data were thought to more closely reflect the current socioeconomic status of a given area. Because census data are now annually estimated and released, this
policy is no longer necessary. Therefore, this memorandum amends this policy to now allow the use of either school or census data for applicable area eligibility determinations in the CACFP.

As a reminder, census data may not be used to establish area eligibility for at-risk afterschool centers in the CACFP.

If you have any additional questions concerning this memorandum, contact CACFP at 517-373-7391 or go to http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Care/Regs-Policy/PolicyMemoranda.htm to view the federal guidance. Also, you may access the 2013 Food Research and Action Center’s (FRAC) CACFP mapper at http://216.55.168.186/FairData/CACFP/map.asp?command=scope&map=0.