

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Bernard C. "Jack" Young
Mayor, City of Baltimore

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*Chair, Baltimore City Board of
School Commissioners*

Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises
Chief Executive Officer

Letter of Information

Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners Senate Bill 760 Public Schools – Student Meal Programs and Meal Charge Policies

February 18, 2020

The Baltimore City Public School System, because of the large number of students that would be eligible for free meals, participates in the federal Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), districtwide. By participating in the CEP, all students in City Schools are served free lunch and breakfasts. Students are not charged, therefore CEP districts should be exempt from this legislation, if it were to pass, because there is no student meal debt.

Based on direct certification for programs including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance, City Schools provides free breakfast and lunch to all students and does not collect applications for free and reduced-price meals and does not charge students.

As background, the Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010, in part, amended the federal National School Lunch Act to provide an alternative to household applicants for free and reduced-price meals in high poverty local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools. This alternative is referred to as CEP. To be eligible, LEAs and schools must meet a minimum level of students directly certified for free meals (40% enrollment) in the year prior to implementing the option; agree to serve free lunches and breakfasts to all students; and agree to cover with nonfederal funds any costs of providing free meals to all students above amounts provided in federal assistance.

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