

DATE: April 30, 2013
FROM: DESE School Food Services

Dear Authorized Representative:

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) [School Food Services](#) received a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to improve its current process for directly certifying eligible students for free meals. Missouri was eligible to apply for the grant because of the low direct certification rate in the state. With input from several school districts, the process will be changed so that Missouri's direct certification rate will improve. This change will take place for the School Year 13-14. The current zip code process will no longer be available.

In the new process, the school district's staff that works with the DESE Missouri Student Information System (MOSIS) will conduct the matching process with the students' records in the school district's student information system. MOSIS is the Missouri Student Information System maintained by DESE staff. Only designated individuals at the State Agency and school district are issued credentials to enter the area where the Direct Certification files will be available.

DESE will place a file of Direct Certification eligible children on the MOSIS webpage monthly; the information will be provided in Excel and CSV formats. The school district staff that work with MOSIS will then upload their local students to conduct the match. The school district staff that work with MOSIS will provide the list of eligible students to the School Food Service Section.

Instructions for the new Direct Certification procedure will be available in the Free and Reduced Price Application and Direct Certification Information Procedures booklet which will be available by mid-May. Also, in the booklet, a link to a PowerPoint presentation which includes screen shots will be provided.

While grant funds are extremely limited, your school district can request funding to assist in making the transition from using the zip code file to using the Direct Certification file on the MOSIS website. Only items directly related to Direct Certification can be requested. Provided is a link to the [grant application](#) and it is also located on the [School Food Services](#) homepage under News and Updates.

Sincerely,

