

Free and Reduced Price Meal Eligibility



Marilynn Wells

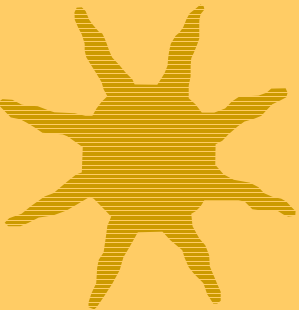
Director, Food Services Branch



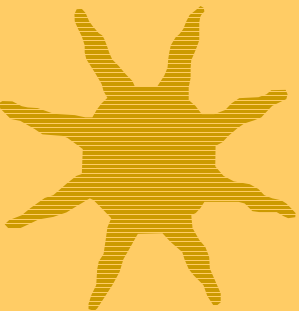


CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS

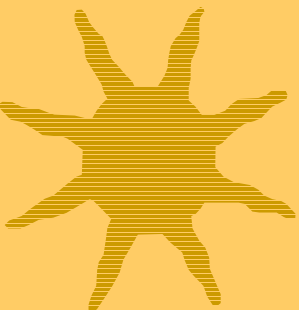
7 CFR Parts 210 and 220



★ Congressional intent that nutritious meals be available to all school children regardless of the household's ability to pay.



★ Code of Federal Regulations, 7 CFR Part 245 outlines eligibility requirements for free and reduced price meals

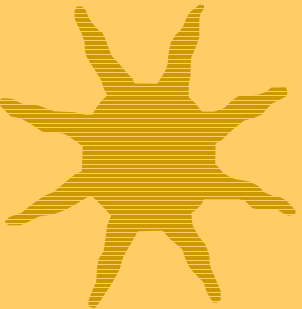


★ USDA is the regulatory agency

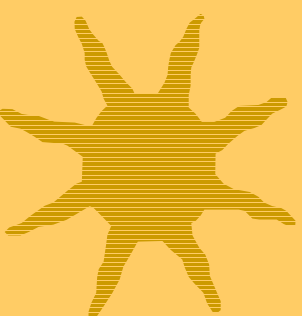
★ SFA's must enter into agreements to operate meal programs to comply with USDA regulations



Free and Reduced Price Policy Statement

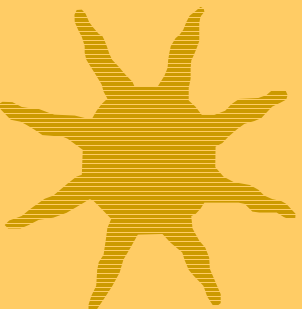
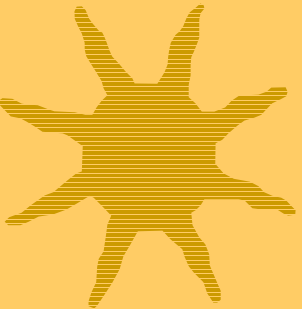


- ★ Names of officials designated to make eligibility determinations
- ★ Assurance that the School Food Authority (SFA) will comply with current income eligibility guidelines
- ★ Description of how the SFA will prevent overt identification of children receiving free or reduced price meals





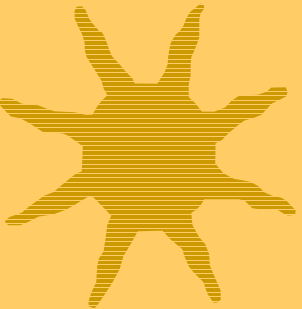
Public (Media) Release



- ★ At the beginning of each school year, public must be notified that the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) are available.
- ★ Must include the eligibility criteria
- ★ Must be provided to the local news media



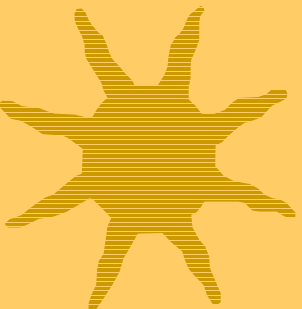
Methods of Eligibility Determination



★ Direct Certification

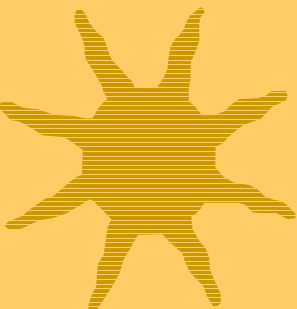
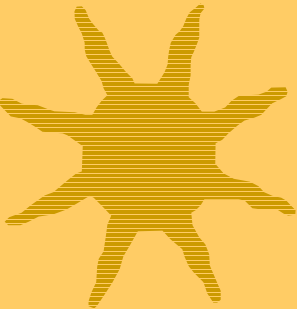
★ Provision 2

★ Meal Application





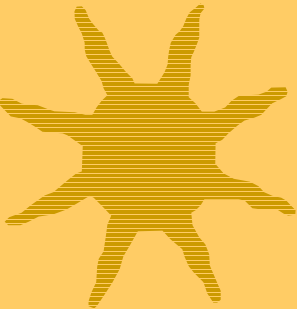
Free/Reduced Meal Eligibility



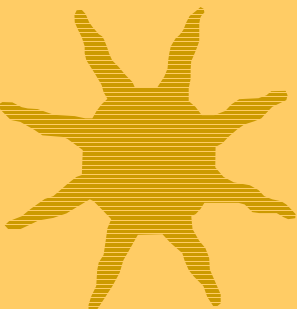
	October 31, 2002	October 31, 2003
Total Enrollment	739,210	737,516
Total Free and Reduced Price	552,873 (75% needy)	556,370 (75% needy)
Provision 2	250,605 (45%)	173,728 (31%)
Direct Certification	75,277 (17%)	87,353 (16%)
Paper Applications	226,991 (41%)	295,289 (53%)



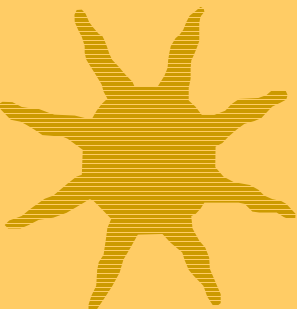
Direct Certification



- ★ Simplified method of determining eligibility for free meals without an application



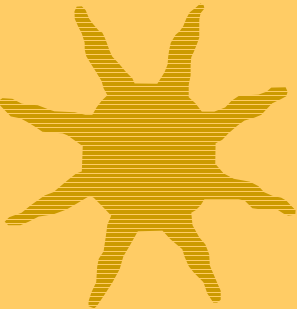
- ★ Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) provides an electronic file containing the names of LAUSD students receiving CalWORKs or food stamps



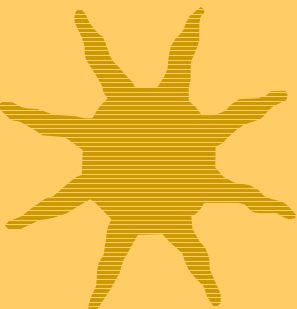
- ★ If a match is made, the student is identified as eligible for free meals
- ★ Households receive notice of direct certification



Benefits of Direct Certification

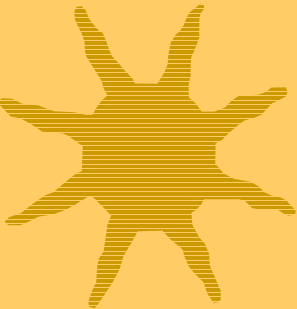


- ★ Customer friendly; no application required
- ★ Reduces paperwork
- ★ No income verification required





Direct Certification in LAUSD



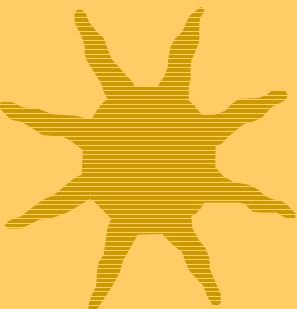
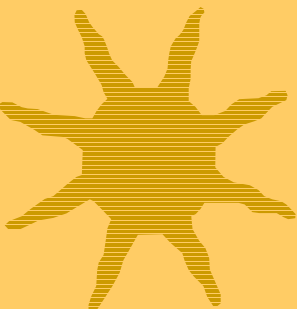
★ FY 02 9,000

★ FY 03 146,000 July 2002

75,277 December 2002

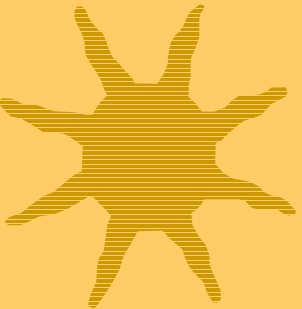
★ FY 04 159,000 July 2003

87,185 October 2003





Changes in Direct Certification Status as of 11/7/03



★ Free 16,398



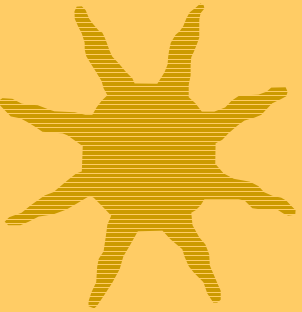
★ Reduced 398



★ Paid 253



Provision 2



- ★ Applications required only in the base year; 4 year cycle

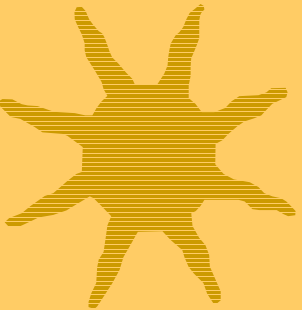
- ★ All students receive meals at no charge

- ★ Parents not motivated to submit meal application

- ★ Reimbursement based on participation in each eligibility category

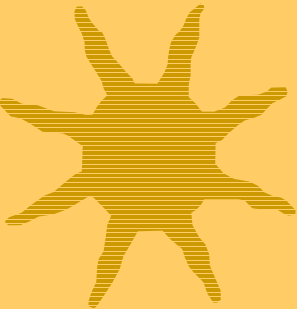
- ★ Revenue minimized if students who are eligible for free or reduced priced meals do not submit meal application; counted as paying students

- ★ Example: \$2.21 (free) compared to \$.23 (paid)

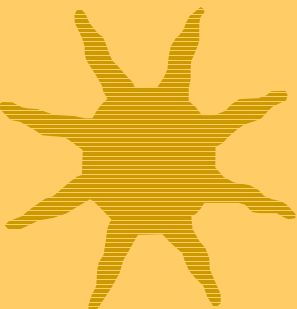




Meal Applications

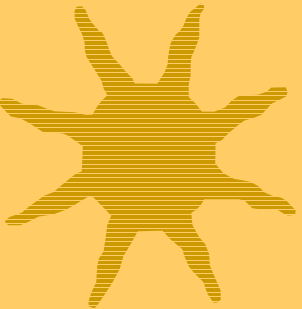


- ★ Must be accompanied by “letter to households” listing instructions on how to complete form
- ★ Privacy Act statement – disclosure of social security number or “none” is required for approval of the application; SSN is required under provisions of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act





Distribution of Meal Applications

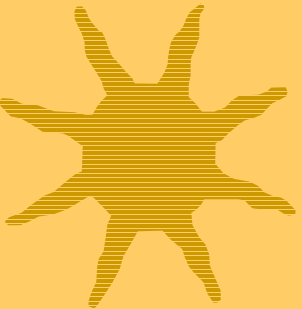


- ★ On or about July 1 or soon thereafter
- ★ SFA's are required to distribute applications at the beginning of the school year to parents of all children in attendance in school except those who were directly certified.



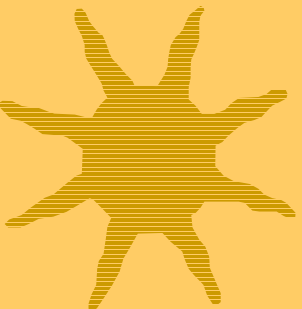
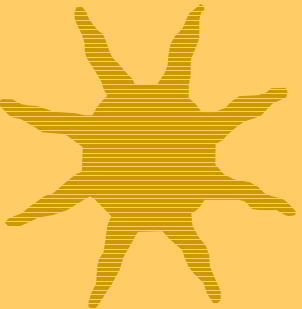


Application Campaign



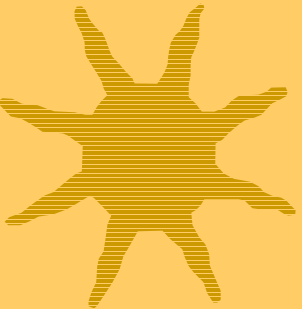
★ Sports celebrities:

- Antonio Martinez, L.A. Galaxy
 - KMEX, Univision, Channel 32 and KVEA - Telemundo, Channel 52, KWHY, Channel 22, KRCA, Channel 62, KLCS
- Hong Myung Bo, L.A. Galaxy
 - KLCS
- Tyrone Marshall, L.A. Galaxy
 - KLCS, KCBS, KNBC, KTLA, KABC, KCAL, KTTV, KCOP, KSCI, KCET, KLCS
- Nikki Teasley, Shaquala Williams, L.A. Sparks



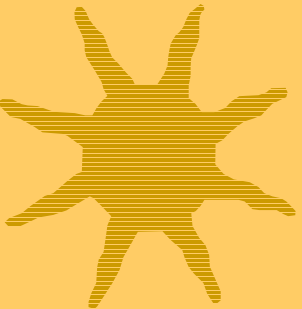


Application Campaign



★ Television PSA's

- Board President, Jose Huizar
- Kevork Keushkerian, Assistant Principal Le Conte
- Others



★ Radio PSA's

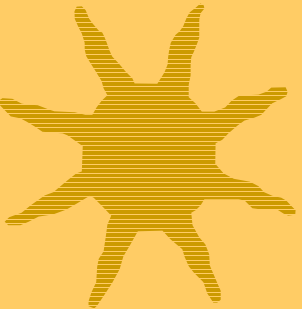
★ Posters

★ Newspapers



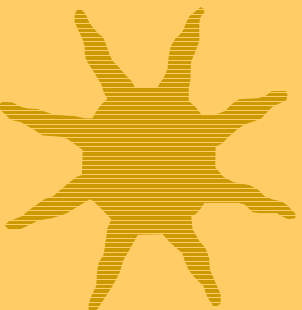


Application Campaign



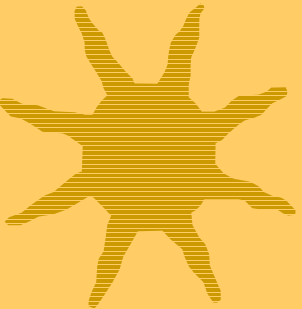
★ Partnerships with

- Big Saver Foods
- Los Angeles County
- MTA





Translations



★ Spanish

★ Chinese

★ Korean

★ Vietnamese

★ Russian

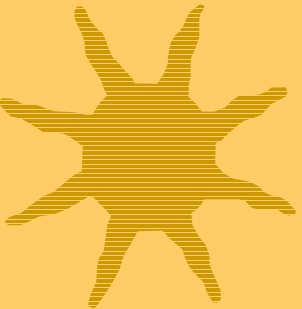
★ Armenian

★ Farsi

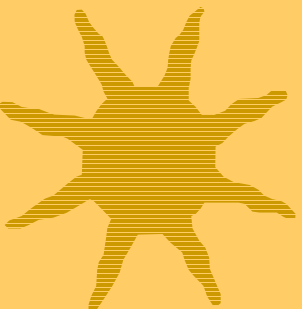
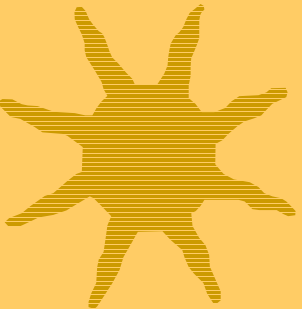




Processing of Applications

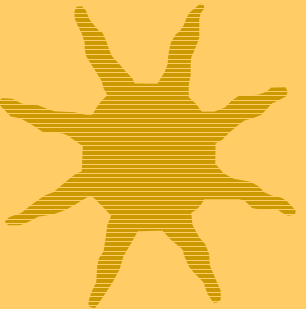


- ★ Eligibility determination made within 10 working days of the receipt of the application
- ★ U.S. citizenship is not a condition of eligibility for free and reduced price benefits
- ★ Eligibility may be determined by categorical eligibility (CalWORKs, food stamps, FDPIR, foster child) or by income and household size
- ★ Household must be notified of eligibility

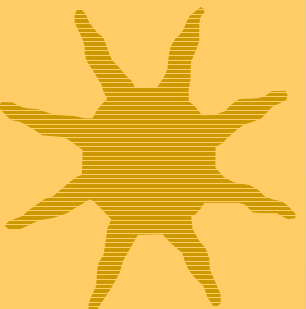




Workload Reduction Provided to School Sites

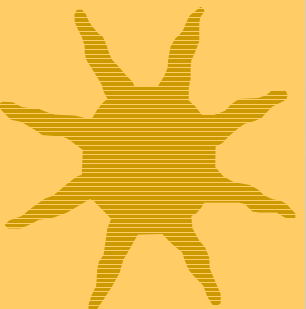


★ Meal applications processed at Beaudry – 60,000; 26,386 scanned



★ Siblings certified – 1,600

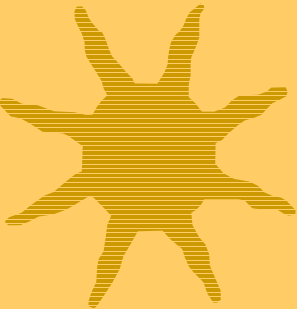
★ Direct Certification – 159,000



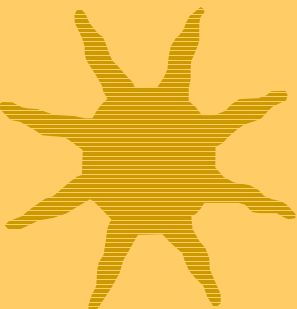
★ Provision 2 – 173,728



Confidentiality



★ Information on meal application is confidential



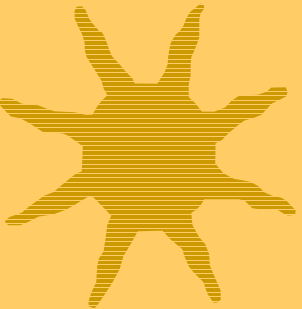
★ Aggregate information may be disclosed to any program or individual



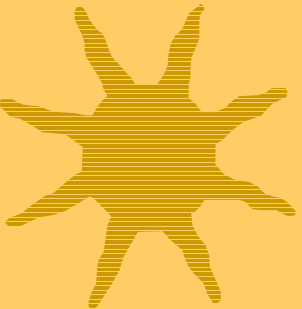
★ Prior parental consent is required in some cases



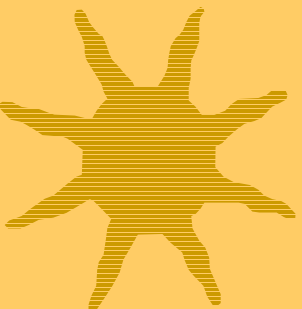
Non-Compliance Issues



★ USDA APB: SP 02-02; Title 7, Code of Federal Regulations Section 245.5:

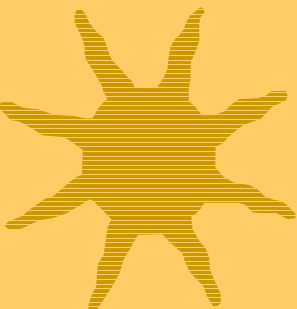
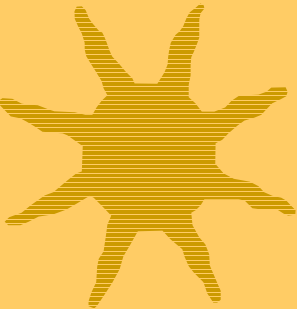


“A school nutrition sponsor may not require households to submit an application to participate in school nutrition programs.”





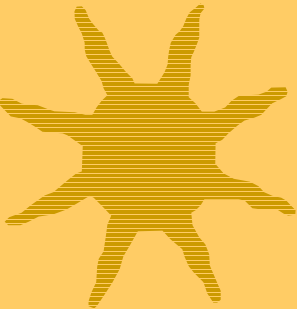
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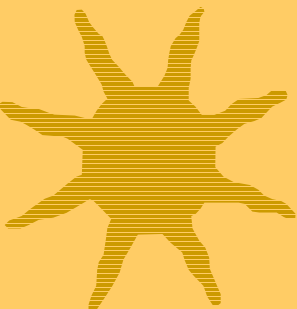
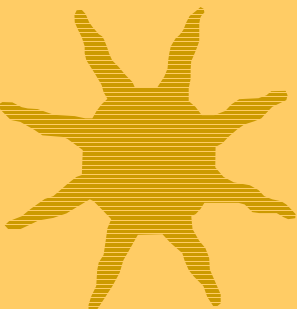
- ★ 7CFR, Chap 11, 245.6 (2): “...the person signing the application certifies that all information furnished in the application is true and correct, that the application is being made in connection with the receipt of Federal funds, that school officials may verify the information on the application, and that deliberate misrepresentation of the information may subject the applicant to prosecution under State and Federal statutes.”



Verification

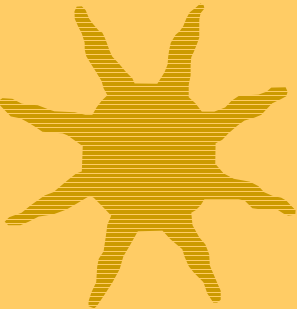


- ★ Confirmation of eligibility
- ★ Annually, SFA must select and verify a sample of applications
- ★ Verification efforts must be completed by December 15
- ★ Under random sampling, the SFA must verify a minimum of the lesser of 3 percent or 3,000 of the total number of approved applications





2002 – 2003 Verification Results



★ Number of Households Verified - 3,103

★ Household cleared – 1,316 (42%)

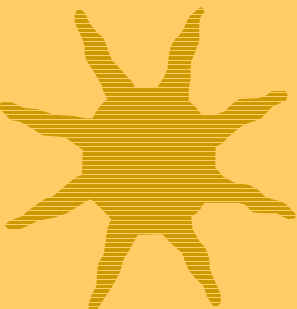
★ Households terminated – 1,787 (58%)

– Free to ineligible – 61

– Reduced Price to ineligible – 40

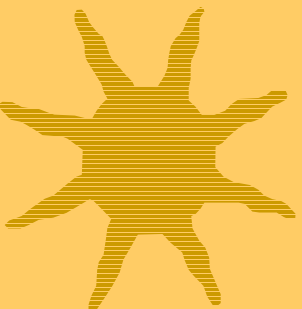
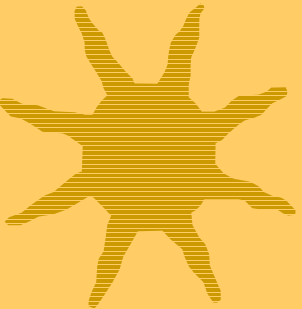
– Withdrew from program – 3

– No response – 1,683





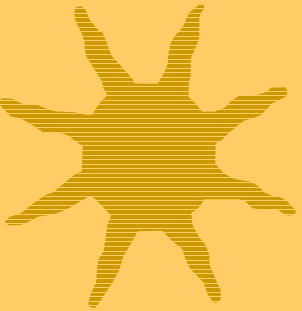
Over-certification



- ★ The U.S. Congress is concerned about the number of children approved for free or reduced price meals who may not be eligible based on other poverty indicators such as the Current Population Survey (CPS).



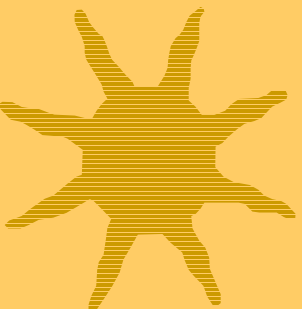
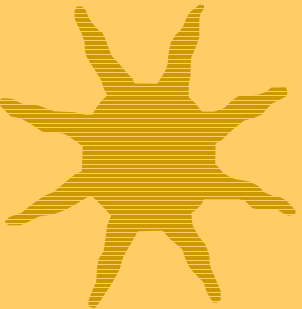
Over-certification



- ★ In 1999, the percentage of children determined to be eligible for free meals was estimated to be 127% of the CPS estimate of school-aged children at or below 130% of the poverty guidelines (income level required for free participation)



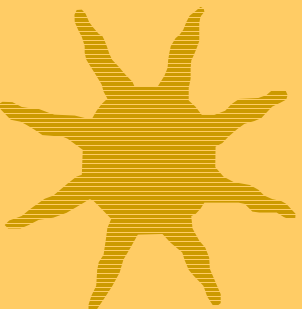
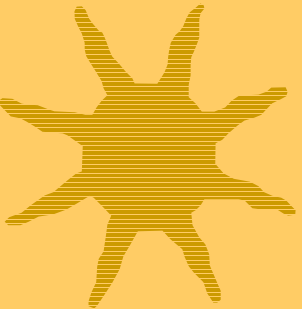
Over-certification



- ★ The USDA's Office of Inspector General determined that in one state nearly 20% of the approved free or reduced price meal applications selected for verification resulted in a loss of those benefits because either the households did not respond or benefits were changed if they did respond.



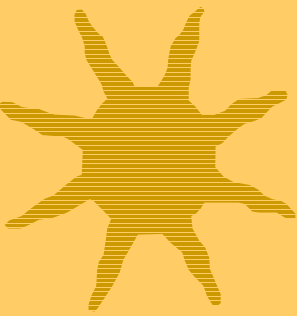
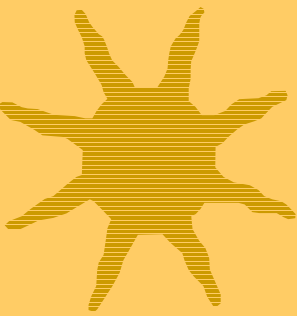
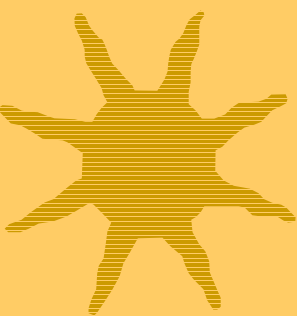
2002/03 Free Reduced Eligibility



County	% Free and Reduced
Kern	60%
Los Angeles	62%
Orange	39%
Riverside	50%
Sacramento	43%
San Bernardino	51%
San Diego	43%
San Francisco	59%
Ventura	36%



2002-2003 Free/Reduced Eligibility – Major Cities

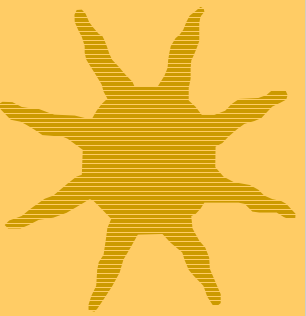
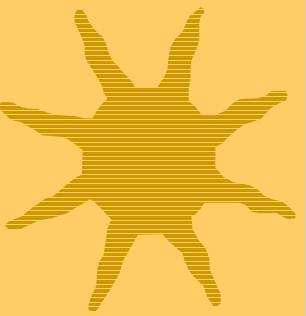
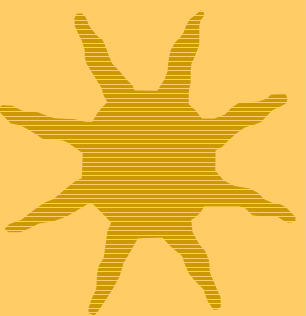


Fresno Unified	76%
Long Beach Unified	65%
Los Angeles Unified	75%
Oakland Unified	66%
Sacramento City	63%
Santa Ana Unified	75%
San Francisco Unified	59%
San Diego Unified	59%



2002-2003 Free/Reduced Eligibility

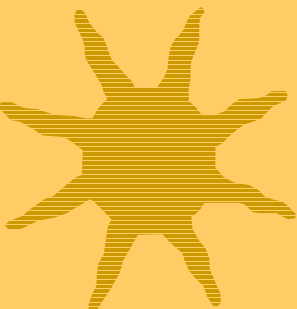
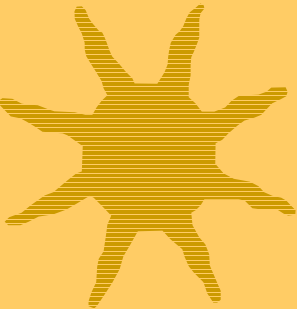
– Neighboring School Districts



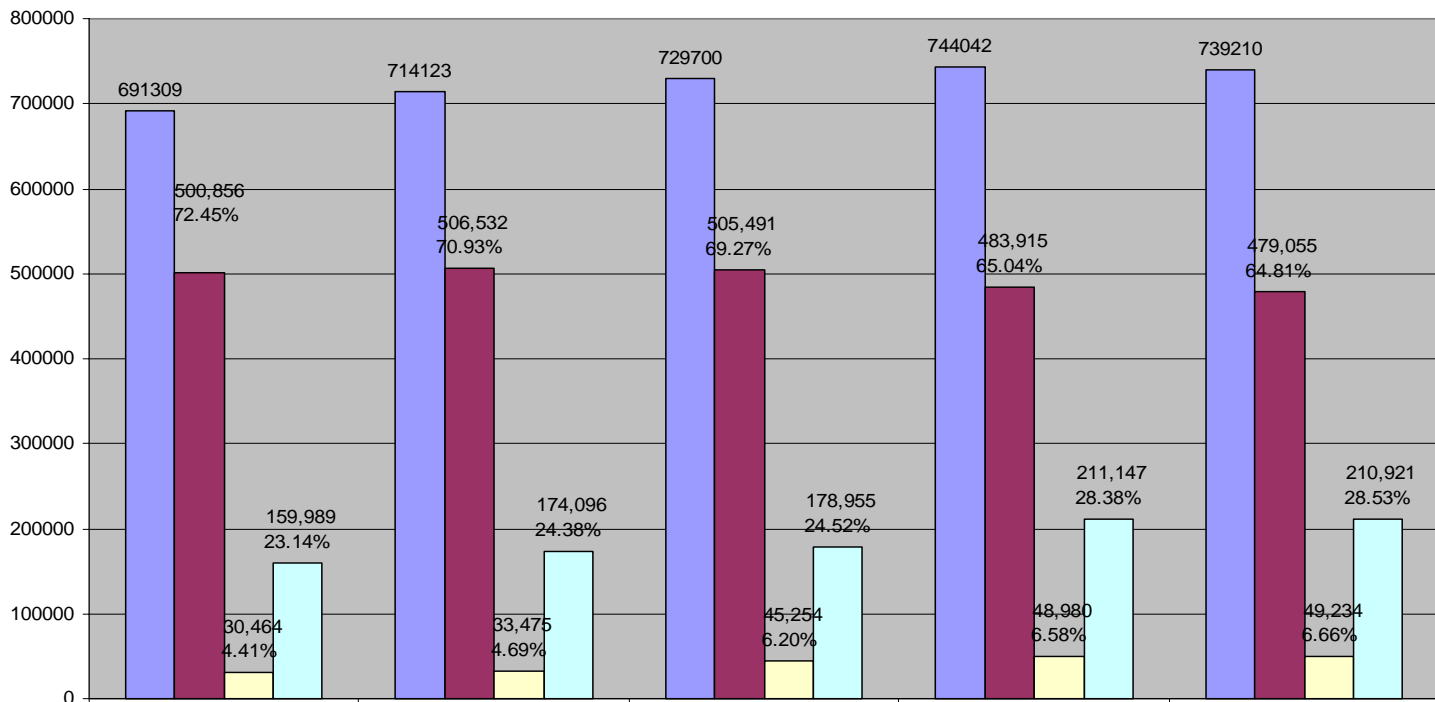
Alhambra City Elem	66%
Alhambra City High	63%
El Monte City Elem	80%
El Monte Union High	64%
Hawthorne Elementary	84%
Inglewood Unified	56%
Lynwood Unified	62%
Montebello Unified	74%
Pomona Unified	69%



Meal Eligibility



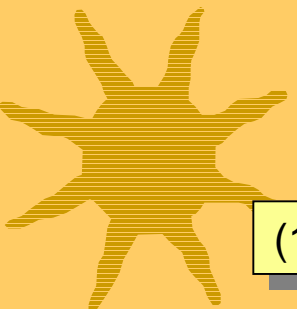
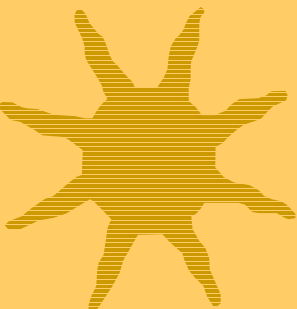
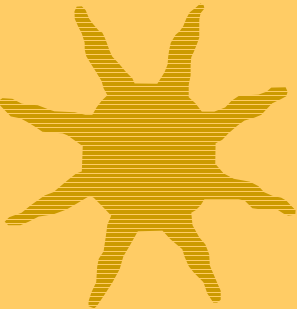
Meal Eligibility



■ Enrollment	691309	714123	729700	744042	739210
■ Free Elig.	500856	506532	505491	483915	479055
■ Reduced Price	30464	33475	45254	48980	49234
■ Full Price	159989	174096	178955	211147	210921



Projected Title 1 Eligibility



Title 1 Category	SIS 12/18/02	SIS 10/31/03	Survey 10/31/03
65% +	261	256	296
40% - 64%	85	114	98
Below 40%	63	96	72
Other (1)	57	0	0
Total	466	466	466

(1) Includes 1 Special ed, 3 continuation high schools and 52 Provision 2 schools