**SPECIAL NOTE: If your district determines meal benefit eligibility school-by-school:**

If your school district is one of those remaining that certify meal benefit eligibility school-by-school, please follow these instructions.  School districts that determine meal benefit eligibility at the school level ***must pool applications*** for all schools to determine the number of applications to be verified and ensure that each application has an equal chance of being selected.  This step is necessary to prevent oversampling for Verification.

To prevent oversampling from occurring the staff at each school MUST report to you or a designated individual the number of “approved applications” on file as of **October 1st**.  The sum of those approved applications is what is used to establish the number of applications to verify for the whole district.  By *approved application,* we mean a current application *received for this school year* that was approved:

* for free or reduced-price meal benefits based on income, or
* self-reported case number applications for SNAP or RI Works, or
* foster child-only applications.

The number of approved applications does not include:

* applications for children who have been denied, or
* applications for children who have been certified as homeless by the homeless liaison, or
* applications for students residing in residential child care institutions (like group homes) or
* non-applicants approved by local officials.

Once the total number of approved applications district-wide is established, you can determine how many applications must be pulled for Verification district-wide by calculating 3% of that total.  To determine how many applications must be verified, you will need to pool the applications from each school.  It will also be necessary to be sure that separate applications filed by a single household for children attending different schools be considered as a single application. Further, the Verification sample must be selected from error-prone applications.

Please call Sandra Fabrizio (401-222-4682) if you have any questions.