P-EBT FAQs for School Leaders

UPDATED March 2023

WHAT IS P-EBT?

- Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) is a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) program that helps children who would have received free or reduced-price meals at their schools if not for the COVID-19 pandemic. In Oklahoma, the Department of Human Services (OKDHS) administers the program through funding provided by a federal grant. The Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) assists through a collaborative data-sharing agreement to ensure hundreds of thousands of eligible households across the state will automatically receive P-EBT benefits without having to complete an application. Children who qualify will receive a debit card by mail preloaded with funds that can be used for groceries.

WHAT PERIOD DOES THE CURRENT P-EBT PROGRAM COVER?

- The current P-EBT program covers the 2021-22 school year. OKDHS will distribute funds for Summer 2023 after distribution of funds is complete for the 2021-22 school year.

WHAT ROLE DO SCHOOLS PLAY?

- The student data you submit determines student eligibility for the program and how much each student will receive. Student P-EBT data is located in the Accountability app on the student data tab. There will be an opportunity to correct 2021-22 student data for the purposes of adding eligibility and benefits for your students in March 2023.

HOW MUCH WILL EACH STUDENT RECEIVE?

- This will vary by student. Students who are eligible will receive a P-EBT benefits card equivalent to $7.00 per day for school days in which the student was enrolled in a participating school AND received virtual instruction/distance learning due to COVID. No benefits will be issued for those days in which the student received in-person instruction or was counted absent from virtual instruction. Families rely on the accuracy of your data to receive the correct amount of federal funding.

WHO QUALIFIES FOR P-EBT?

- For the 2021-22 school year, schoolchildren must first meet three important eligibility requirements:

  - Children must have been enrolled in a school district that participates in a federal meal program where meals are served at a school. This excludes fully virtual charter schools.

  - The student's school is closed or operating at reduced hours or reduced attendance due to the pandemic for at least five consecutive days due to COVID in the 2021-22 school year.

  - Children must be coded in the Wave as *Free, Reduced, Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), Provision 2 or Provision 3.*

ARE STUDENTS WHO PICKED UP FREE MEALS TO-GO EXCLUDED FROM THE PROGRAM?

- No. OSDE does not collect data on individual meal issuance on a daily basis from Oklahoma local education agencies. Therefore, a proxy (educational environment) was used to determine if a student "missed" a meal. All students who participated in at least some virtual/distance learning qualify if they meet the above requirements.

HOW SHOULD LEARNING ENVIRONMENT BE REPORTED FOR ELIGIBILITY?

- If it is determined that a student was learning in a distance or virtual environment, then that student, for that day, is identified as "potentially eligible for P-EBT." To determine if a student was learning in a distance or virtual environment, OSDE looked at a variety of factors detailed in the 2021-22 Enrollment and Attendance Guidance. Three factors are used to calculate benefits.

  - **Factor 1: School Calendar**
    Each student enrollment is assigned to a district, school site and calendar. This information is then sent to the Wave. Due to a site's ability to offer different educational environments (in-person, hybrid, remote), a site may have multiple calendars.

  - Determination: Each student's educational environment was determined by identifying which calendar they were assigned. Next, the calendar coding was checked to confirm that *Calendar Date Type* of INST showed (Instructional) and the *Calendar Date Other Code* showed *03* (Distance/Virtual Day). Then for each date that the school site identified as a virtual day, each student assigned to that

calendar was identified as learning in a distance or virtual environment.

- **Factor 2: Basis of Admission**
  Basis of Admission is a field that must be assigned to each student upon enrollment and is reported to the Wave.

- Determination: For P-EBT, there are only two options that would have identified a student as learning in a distance or virtual environment:

  1. *RVON* means Resident Virtual On Campus (Full-time blended/ hybrid student)

  2. *RVOFF* means Resident Virtual Off Campus (Full-time virtual student)

- If a student's basis of admission was identified as RVON or RVOFF, the student was identified as learning in a distance or virtual environment for each instructional day identified in the calendar to which they were assigned for the length of their enrollment.

- **Factor 3: Attendance**
  Attendance codes are also used to determine if a student was learning in a distance or virtual environment.

- Determination: In the cases in which there were no virtual days identified within the entire calendar, and an individual student was not identified as full-time virtual or blended/hybrid, OSDE used one of three attendance codes to determine if the student was learning in a distance or virtual environment.

  1. *DVAP* – Distance/Virtual Attendance Present

  2. *DVA* – Distance/Virtual Attendance Full Day Absence

  3. *DVA5* – Distance/ Virtual Attendance Half Day Absence

- Because the *COV* attendance code does not indicate that a student was learning in a distance or virtual environment, a student coded COV will not qualify for P-EBT. *COV* is used when a student is absent due to a COVID-19 related reason and is not assigned to a distance learning environment.

HOW SHOULD ATTENDANCE BE REPORTED FOR ELIGIBILITY?

- To be eligible, the student must have been indicated as "in-attendance" to be identified as "potentially eligible" for P-EBT.

- Students identified as learning in a distance or virtual environment, outlined above, must have met the local board policies for distance or

virtual learning and have been marked as "present" for the day. Due to some local Student Information Systems' (SIS) inability to send an attendance code for "present," it is assumed that each student is "present" when the Wave does not receive anything that would indicate that the student was absent. In these cases, one day of eligibility was counted when it could be determined that student was present based on attendance codes *DVAP* or *DVA5*. For dates where attendance is reported as *DVA* (Distance/Virtual Absent), the student would not be eligible for that particular day.

HOW CAN WE CORRECT THE STUDENT DATA?

- There may be cases in which the student does not qualify for P-EBT because the data was not reported correctly. A data correction request (DVR) can be made in the Accountability app where the P-EBT data is located. The corrections window will be open March 20 – April 28, 2023.

WHEN WILL FAMILIES START RECEIVING P-EBT FUNDS?

- OKDHS has distributed P-EBT funds for school year 2021-22. The correction window will allow for parents to request assistance and districts to request corrections to student data. Please direct parent/guardian inquiries to the P-EBT FAQs for Families or www.sde.ok.gov/pebt for more information.

WAS THERE A P-EBT PROGRAM LAST YEAR?

- Yes. There was a second round of P-EBT benefits for 2020-21. The period for requesting corrections has closed.

IS THE SUMMER PROGRAM DIFFERENT FROM 2021-22?

- Yes. Eligible students received a standard benefit of $391 each. All students who qualified for 2021-22 school year P-EBT benefits as of May 2022 qualified for Summer 2022 P-EBT benefits. This includes students who were graduating seniors.

Will THERE BE A SUMMER PROGRAM FOR 2023?

- OKDHS intends to issue benefits for students for Summer 2023 after the distribution of benefits for the 2021-22 school year is complete for students who qualified for 2022-23 school year P-EBT benefits as of May 2023.

WHAT CAN I DO TO ENSURE MY STUDENTS RECEIVE BENEFITS FOR SUMMER 2023?

- Please encourage your families to fill out a free and reduced-price meal form for the 2021-22 if they have not already done so.

WHERE CAN I FIND ADDITIONAL TRAINING FOR P-EBT DATA REPORTING?

- OSDE provided a detailed Canvas P-EBT Training Course including training for creating DVRs for student data corrections.