



P-EBT FAQs for School Leaders

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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. Oklahoma families will receive up to \$335 million in federal aid for this program.

WHAT PERIOD DOES THE CURRENT P-EBT PROGRAM COVER?

- The current P-EBT program covers the 2020-21 school year. OKDHS will distribute funds for Summer 2021 after distribution of funds is complete for the 2020-21 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. All data must have been uploaded to Single Sign On with your year-end data by July 12, 2021. However, there will be an opportunity to correct 2020-21 student data for the purposes of adding eligibility and benefits for your students in October 2021.

HOW MUCH WILL EACH STUDENT RECEIVE?

- This will vary by student. Students who are eligible will receive a P-EBT benefits card equivalent to \$6.82 per day for school days in which the student was enrolled in a participating school AND received virtual instruction/distance learning. 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 2020-21 school year, schoolchildren must first meet both 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.
 - 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 [2020-21 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. OSDE is currently developing a process for districts to correct specific information for previously missed students to receive benefits. To save time when that process becomes available, please start reviewing your data now to determine what corrections may be needed. These corrections will be made in the Accountability Reporting application, available in Single Sign On. Instructions and deadlines will be issued in October 2021, so that sites can make needed corrections. The corrected data from districts will then be compiled and sent to OKDHS for P-EBT benefit issuance.

WHEN WILL FAMILIES START RECEIVING P-EBT FUNDS?

- OKDHS will begin mailing the cards directly to families in mid-September 2021. They may arrive in a nondescript envelope, so you may wish to inform families to look for this piece of mail and not throw it away. The envelope will also contain a short buck slip that gives some information about the program, but families may still have questions. Please direct them 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. The first round of P-EBT benefits for 2019-20 was a set amount of \$250 for each eligible student and distributed in September 2020 to offset the price of free and reduced-price meals when school sites were closed March through May 2020. The period for reporting and distribution of funds for 2019-20 is now closed.

IS THE SUMMER PROGRAM DIFFERENT FROM 2020-21?

- Yes. Eligible students will receive a standard benefit of \$375 each. All students who qualified for 2020-21 school year P-EBT benefits as of May 2021 will qualify for Summer 2021 P-EBT benefits. This includes students who were graduating seniors. OKDHS intends to issue benefits for students for Summer 2021 after the distribution of benefits for the 2020-21 school year is complete.

WHAT CAN I DO TO ENSURE MY STUDENTS RECEIVE BENEFITS NEXT YEAR?

- We do anticipate that the P-EBT program will continue for the 2021-22 school year. Please encourage your families to fill out a free and reduced-price meal form for the 2021-22 school year even if your school is serving all meals free through the USDA SSO waiver flexibility for SY 2021-22.

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

- OSDE provided a detailed video on P-EBT reporting in a May 2021 edition of the Weekly Wave. Watch that video at www.youtube.com/watch?v=hL56YShwGr4.