



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: Ajit Gopalakrishnan, Chief Performance Officer
John D. Frassinelli, Division Director

DATE: May 11, 2021

SUBJECT: Monthly Student Attendance Data and Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) Benefits

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), in collaboration with the Department of Social Services (DSS), is currently implementing the Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) program in response to COVID-19 for the 2020-21 school year. P-EBT provides food supports via the State's CONNECT cards to help households with children who were receiving free and reduced-price school meals pay for food. It has come to the attention of the CSDE that **some eligible households are not identified as eligible to receive these benefits or received an incorrect benefit level because their students' monthly attendance data has not been accurately reported to the CSDE's Public School Information System (PSIS).**

P-EBT eligibility is based on:

1. The child's enrollment in a school that participates in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or School Breakfast Program (SBP);
2. The school was closed or operating with reduced hours for at least 5 consecutive days during the 2020-21 school year due to COVID-19; and
3. The child was learning remotely for part or all of the 2020-21 school year.

Determining Eligibility

Most Connecticut schools are offering meals at no cost to all students for the 2020-21 school year due to federal waivers allowed during the COVID-19 public health emergency. However, student level P-EBT eligibility is determined using: an approved free or reduced-priced school meals application; direct certification for free or reduced-priced school meals through receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Family Assistance (TFA), or Husky A (< 185% FPL); direct certification for free school meals through determination as foster, homeless, runaway, and some Head Start; or, enrollment in a school participating in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP).

Determining Benefit Levels

The benefit amounts that a student is eligible to receive depends on the percentage of membership days that are remote in each month for each student as reported by the

district to the CSDE; this percentage for a given month can differ from child to child. Three levels of monthly benefits are determined based on the percentage of remote membership days in that month. Students with 0 remote membership days for the month receive no benefit for that month. The benefits are calculated as:

- Fully Remote Monthly Benefit: \$122.76
 - Students for whom 100% of their membership days in the month were remote days;
- Mostly Remote Monthly Benefit: \$88.66
 - Students for whom more than 50% but less than 100% of their membership days in the month were remote days; and
- Hybrid Monthly Benefit: \$34.10
 - Students for whom up to 50% of their membership days in the month were remote days.

Correcting Student Data

The Monthly Membership and Attendance upload in PSIS Registration is currently open and districts that submitted student attendance data that contained errors for some students have the opportunity to **submit corrected data from the beginning of the school year forward until the upload closes on May 18, 2021.**

Districts will have another opportunity to correct student attendance data when the Monthly Membership and Attendance upload is opened again in June for the monthly student attendance collection. Districts should assemble the corrected data as soon as possible so they are prepared to update their district data during the two-week window when the Monthly Membership and Attendance upload is open.

The Mailing Address upload in PSIS Registration will also be open during the June period, to allow districts to update student addresses, eligibility for free or reduced-price school meals, and designations for students identified as homeless. The Mailing Address upload will allow reporting of not only actively enrolled students, but exited students who were enrolled on or after September 1, 2020.

Unallowable Data and Information

The only data that will be used to determine the P-EBT benefit amount that a household is eligible for is the student attendance data submitted by the district to the CSDE through the Monthly Membership and Attendance upload in PSIS Registration. **No other forms, letters, attestations, certifications, or other documentation will be accepted** to reconcile any discrepancies in student attendance data as reported by the district and should not be provided to households or submitted to the CSDE or the DSS.

Reaching All Eligible Students

The CSDE urges non-CEP districts and schools to continue efforts to collect free and reduced-price meal application forms throughout the remainder of the school year, as many districts saw a

decline in the number of applications submitted for the 2020-21 school year because of implementing the USDA nationwide waiver flexibilities due to the public health emergency. Free and reduced-price meal applications play a critical role in identifying students who are eligible for P-EBT benefits. Additionally, P-EBT benefits issued in summer 2021 will also be based on the individual student information that districts submit to the CSDE through PSIS.

Please visit the [DSS P-EBT website](#) for the most current information about P-EBT and resources to help your district and student households navigate P-EBT benefits.

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