



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

To: Superintendents, Technology Leads, and School Data Personnel

From: Dr. John Keller, Chief Information Officer

Date: September 1, 2021

Subject: Submitting P-EBT Eligible Days through Data Exchange for the 2021-2022 SY

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) will be retrieving the Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) eligibility data and rosters from Data Exchange for the 2021-2022 school year. P-EBT will utilize attendance day types and Free/Reduced Lunch (FRL) eligibility to determine eligible students and benefits. Schools should code these students just as they normally would, and the data will flow directly from IDOE to the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), the state agency administering the P-EBT program.

For students engaged in academic programming “virtually” (one-to-one device, packet pickup, course work emailed, etc.) due to any COVID-related reason, the *Virtual Due to COVID* attendance type is most appropriate. Both the *Virtual Due to COVID* and *Virtual* attendance types count as eligible days for determining P-EBT eligibility if the student is enrolled at a school participating in the NSLP (National School Lunch Program).

IMPORTANT:

Students who may not be engaged in academic programming temporarily due to excused/unexcused absence due to any COVID-related reason are also eligible for P-EBT benefits. Most schools have the ability to denote absence reasons via their Student Information System (SIS), however some do not.

For schools with an “absence reason” field within their SIS:

For absences due to COVID (days when students are not engaged in academic programming “virtually” due to any COVID-related reason), schools should report the student as excused or unexcused according to local attendance policy. To ensure these days are counted as P-EBT eligible days, schools should enter “COVID” or “Coronavirus” in the SIS absence reason field. Additional text may also be added in the absence reason field so long as at least one of these words appears. IDOE and FSSA will be utilizing this field to identify eligible absent days due to COVID. Any absences that do not have this designation will not count toward a student’s total P-EBT eligible days.

For schools using templates or otherwise unable to use the “absence reason” field:

The previous FSSA P-EBT Portal tile located in the LINK portal will be open to allow such schools to validate “Only Excused” or “Unexcused Absences due to COVID” eligible days. All



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other virtual eligible days will be retrieved from Data Exchange. Schools should also make sure the students are correctly marked as Free or Reduced Lunch (FRL) as FRL status is required for eligibility.

Technical guidance for all school reporting data through Data Exchange either automatically or through templates:

Eligibility is established if the following records have been reported for a student:

- Student School Association record – primary school = TRUE
- Ed Org Associations record = Primary responsibility = Funding or Attendance
 - Attendance data is required for all students with an Ed Org Association record. (Exception are those students with ADM 2)
 - PEBT will utilize attendance day types and FRL eligibility to determine eligible students and benefits.
 - Student attendance should be reported per guidance provided in the Data Exchange Attendance reporting document.
 - If student is absent due to any COVID reason, ‘COVID’ or “Coronavirus’ text should be entered in the local SIS ‘Attendance Reason’ field along with any other text school wishes to include.
- Student Program Association record for School Food Services of either:
 - Program Name = School Food Services Free Lunch
 - Program Name = School Food Services Reduced Price Meals

To summarize, if your school is providing accurate information about student addresses, FRL status, and daily attendance as well as reasons for any absences related to COVID, IDOE will ensure these data are transmitted to FSSA. Students should receive their P-EBT distributions on the schedule to be determined by FSSA.

Questions about Data Exchange may be directed to dataexchange@doe.in.gov.