The Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) program provides critical assistance for families with children who are missing out on free and reduced-price school meals due to virtual learning or hybrid schedules that reduce the number of days or hours that students are in the school building. While many families with school-age children have been participating in P-EBT, many more are not.

Last year, FRAC provided a P-EBT Communications Toolkit to help states, cities, school districts, and community organizations with templates to help with their outreach to the families who were receiving emergency meals. Based on lessons learned this past spring and summer, FRAC has recently updated this toolkit to include the most current information and resources available to ensure that every family that can benefit from P-EBT is able to do so in order to help families receive these benefits.
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I. State Agency: Communications and Outreach Plan

As part of each states’ P-EBT plan, states must develop a public information campaign to ensure that students and families know about P-EBT and how to access the program. As states develop their plan, states should work in collaboration with partners to think about how to provide information to the general public and directly to participants.

1. Components of a Robust State Agency Communications and Outreach Plan

- Engage community partners to help with communications and outreach to ensure eligible families utilize P-EBT.
- Create a state-specific P-EBT communications toolkit to share state-specific information about the program with state and community partners.

Promising practice: Make it a Google Drive/Doc that you can continuously update with the latest information.
  - Texas’s P-EBT Overview and Communications Toolkit
  - Colorado P-EBT Communications Toolkit
- Host a statewide webinar to share information about P-EBT with community partners, and outline steps they can take to ensure eligible families use P-EBT. Make sure to leave time for Q&A!
  - Colorado DHS, DOE, and Hunger Free Colorado webinar
- Ask school districts to share information about P-EBT with families. Create sample communications with necessary and consistent information for districts to send out.
- Ensure school districts know how families enroll in P-EBT, the state’s troubleshooting process, and who families should contact if they need help.
- Make sure school districts are collecting and processing free or reduced-price school meal applications in a timely manner if that is how the state is identifying newly eligible students. See Section II for school district-level ideas and resources.

- Provide outreach materials (including, if applicable, the free and reduced-price school meal application) in multiple languages to school districts and community partners. Guidance about how P-EBT does not impact public charge should be included in all materials.
  - P-EBT information in other languages
  - MA P-EBT Outreach Resources
- Provide a clear, adequately staffed troubleshooting process for families who have questions or believe there is an issue with their benefits. This may be in the form of an online inquiry form or a staffed call center with the ability to troubleshoot P-EBT issues in real time.
  - Example:
    - Maryland has an online P-EBT inquiry form.
    - For more examples, see the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) and FRAC’s Pandemic EBT Resource Library.
- Notify families who are participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) when P-EBT benefits will be added to their EBT card, e.g., via letter, text, or call (any of these options could be automated). Explain what the benefit is, how much the family will receive for each child, and the total benefit amount.
- Work closely with the EBT vendor to ensure that information to families explains clearly when and how P-EBT cards will be sent and how to activate them.
- Design identifiable envelopes for mailing cards (which also protects privacy), and show families what to look out for so they do not dispose the cards. It is important for families to understand the cards’ purpose and to not suspect that they are a scam.
Share P-EBT data with community partners. Identify areas with a high incidence of unactivated P-EBT cards for additional outreach. This can help increase access to much-needed benefits and ensure that the positive economic impact from P-EBT funding will be realized in your community.

**Examples:**
- Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance shared data with community partners and municipal governments on cities and areas within those cities with high rates of unactivated P-EBT cards so that partners and city officials could target those areas for additional outreach.
- Texas Health and Human Services Commission regularly provided application data at the county and zip-code level to education and advocacy partners, which used the information to target paid radio, television, and social media ads.

II. School District: Communications and Outreach Resources

1. **Opportunities for School Districts to Spread the Word About P-EBT**
   - Use all of your communications media — website, letters to parents/guardians, social media, virtual learning platforms, “grab and go” meal bags, and robocalls and texts — to share information with families about how P-EBT will work this school year.
     - Brockton Public Schools PSA video
     - Philadelphia School District P-EBT webpage
     - Worcester Public Schools social media infographic
   - Share information about P-EBT with school district liaisons for homeless children and families, migrant education coordinators, foster care caseworkers, social workers, and educators.
   - Collect and process school meal applications continuously, even if you are offering meals through the summer nutrition programs. See FRAC’s [Strategies to Increase School Meal Application Returns](#) for more information, including sample resources that make the connection between the school meal application and P-EBT.
     - San Francisco Unified School District Multi-Purpose Family Income Form webpage with P-EBT messaging

Encourage families to update any changes in their address in the school district system to ensure that the P-EBT card will be received and to avoid delays in families receiving benefits.

- In the spring of 2020, Philadelphia School District used its robocall system to contact families, inform them about P-EBT, confirm the address on file at the school district, and to provide information on how to update their address if needed.

2. **Template: School District Communications Materials**
III. City and Community Partners: Communications and Outreach Tips

1. City and Community Partners’ Roles in P-EBT Communications

City Partners
- **Share information about P-EBT** with partner organizations, service providers, and families (via website, flyers, social media, webinars, and community meetings).
- **Work with community groups to translate P-EBT materials** into languages that are particularly helpful to your population, and communicate clearly with immigrant families that this program does not affect public charge status.
- **Ask the state to share P-EBT data with you.** Identify areas with a high incidence of unactivated P-EBT cards for additional outreach. This can help increase access to much-needed benefits and ensure that the positive economic impact from the P-EBT funding will be realized in your community.
  - *Example:* The Shah Family Foundation and its community partners received data on cities and areas within those cities with high rates of unactivated P-EBT cards from the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance, and they partnered with the appropriate city government to target those areas for extra outreach.
- **For more examples of what cities can do,** watch Pandemic EBT: An Important Opportunity for Cities, a webinar co-hosted by FRAC and the National League of Cities.

Community Partners
- **Share information about P-EBT** with partner organizations, service providers, retailers, and families (via website, flyers, social media, webinars, and community meetings).
  - GeorgiaCAN hosted a town hall with DFCS.
  - Project Bread in Massachusetts produced a flyer (in English and Spanish).
  - Massachusetts P-EBT partners created various videos in multiple languages to share information about the program, how it works, and to confirm that participation does not impact public charge.
- **As a trusted partner within your community,** reinforce in your communications that P-EBT does not impact the public charge test.
  - AMOR and Immigrant Coalition of Rhode Island’s flyer provides public charge guidance.
- **Provide application assistance to families encountering barriers,** e.g., language, literacy, and access to an online application.
  - Within your community, partner with other organizations that work with immigrant communities to spread the word about P-EBT to those populations.

IV. Additional P-EBT Resources

- Customizable P-EBT outreach materials
- FRAC’s P-EBT Communications Resources Shared Drive (includes sample outreach materials)
- FRAC’s P-EBT webpage
- CBPP and FRAC’s Resource Library

If you have any questions about P-EBT, please reach out to Etienne Melcher Philbin, emelcher@frac.org, or Kelsey Boone, kboone@frac.org.