



**STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**MOLLY M. SPEARMAN**  
*STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION*

**Preparing a South Carolina Public School Student Data File for Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) – Summer 2023 – Questions and Answers:**

In response to questions received regarding how the file for the P-EBT file is generated, the Office of Research and Data Analysis (ORDA) has compiled the following list of questions and answers.

1. Question: **What is P-EBT?**

Answer: P-EBT is a benefit to help supplement family food costs resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and prolonged school schedule changes.

2. Question: **What students qualify for Summer 2023 P-EBT?**

Answer: PK-12 students who are actively enrolled in a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and are approved for free or reduced lunch or are enrolled in a school that participates in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) are potentially eligible for P-EBT. The student must be actively enrolled at some point between the 161<sup>st</sup> day and last day of school for the 2022-2023 school year.

SCDE/ORDA will submit two student-level data files to the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) for P-EBT Summer disbursement: Both submission #1 and #2 include students enrolled in NSLP schools at some point between the 161<sup>st</sup> day of school and the last day of school. Students graduating mid-year will also be included.

Both submissions will contain a “potentially eligible” indicator. See question 4 details as to how the “potentially eligible” indicator is derived.

3. Question: **What agencies are responsible for administering the P-EBT?**

Answer: South Carolina Department of Education, The Office of Research and Data Analysis (ORDA) provides the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) with a student-level data file of “potentially eligible” students. The DSS is responsible for the final eligibility determination and the administration of the program.

4. Question: **How are the students identified as “potentially eligible” for inclusion in the Summer 2023 P-EBT data ORDA shares with DSS?**

Answer: For Summer 2022-2023, The ORDA is using a number of indicators to identify potential eligibility for the student. The majority of these indicators come from PowerSchool, though some do come from external sources:

- a. The data file to DSS contains student-level data for all students enrolled in an NSLP South Carolina Public School in PowerSchool at some point during the appropriate enrollment period. These data include only the most current enrollment record for each student.
- b. Flags are set in the file for each student identifying the following participation-related indicators:

<b>Flag/Indicator</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Source</b>
National School Lunch Program Participant (NSLP)	Extended to all students enrolled in a participating school	Office of Health and Nutrition
Community Eligibility Program Participant (CEP)	Extended to all students enrolled in a participating school/alternative program. (CEP equates to Free status for all affected students.)	Office of Health and Nutrition
Free or Reduced Status for Schools with a nutrition software application connecting to PowerSchool	Set for the individual student based on the appropriate values extracted from the Pupils in Poverty table/data in PowerSchool.	PowerSchool
Head Start (PK only)	Set for the individual student based on the appropriate values extracted from the Early Childhood data and grade level in PowerSchool.	PowerSchool
Free or Reduced Status for Charter Schools with <u>no</u> nutrition software application connecting to PowerSchool	Set for the individual student based on the appropriate values (F, R or FDC) extracted from the Lunch Status field in PowerSchool and with confirmation from affected school nutrition staff.	PowerSchool
SNAP/TANF Recipient	Set for the individual student based on a match process to monthly SNAP/TANF data.	Department of Social Services

Submission #1 will contain the “potentially eligible” indicator based on the flags found in the preceding chart as of the last PowerSchool Data submission collected by the SCDE on June 28, 2023. Submission #2 will include for the same students flagging those found to be newly “potentially eligible” between June 1 and August 15, 2023.

**5. Question: How were each of the values in the table of elements under question #4 used to identify a student as potentially eligible?**

Answer: Both student-level and school-level indicators provided information needed to identify a student’s potential eligibility. For a student to be considered potentially eligible, he/she would have to be enrolled at some point during the enrollment period:

- a. In an NSLP participating school; and
- b. The student met one or more of the following criteria for Free/Reduced status at the end of the school year 2022-2023:
  - i. The school/alternative program of enrollment participates in CEP;
  - ii. The student identified as
    - 1. Free/Reduced in the Pupils in Poverty (PIP) table for schools/districts with nutrition software (current year PowerSchool or as of June 28, 2023); or
    - 2. Free/Reduced per Lunch Status as of June 28, 2023 for Charter Schools with no nutrition software or limited connectivity to the PIP table (current year PowerSchool);
  - iii. The student identified as Head Start in current year PowerSchool and enrolled in a public school PK program;
  - iv. The student identified as SNAP/TANF through a matching process with DSS data (received monthly – starting with September 2022).

**6. Question: What are the values in the Pupils in Poverty (PIP) table used to identify Free or Reduced Status?**

Answer: For Schools with a connector between their nutrition software application and the PIP Table in PowerSchool:

Free/Reduced was derived using the following criteria:

**Note:** Free and reduced as defined by NSLP and is derived only for students enrolled in NSLP sites (per SCDE Office of Health and Nutrition):

<b>Data Element/Indicator in PIP Table</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Field Value Equating to Free/Reduced</b>
Directly_Certified_Ind <sup>1</sup>	Student has been identified through the Direct Certification process as being served through SC Department of Social Services in SNAP/TANF.	Y
DC_Extended_Ind <sup>1</sup>	Student has been identified through the Direct Certification process as living in the same household as another student being	Y

	served through SC Department of Social Services in SNAP/TANF.	
DC_SNAP_TANF_Ind <sup>1</sup>	Student has been identified through the Direct Certification Process or through evidence outside Direct Certification process as being served through SC Department of Social Services in SNAP/TANF.	S or T
DC_Homeless_Ind	Student has been identified as Homeless in the district nutrition software/application.	Y
DC_Migrant_Ind	Student has been identified as Migrant in the district nutrition software/application.	Y
DC_Runaway_Ind	Student has been identified as a Runaway in the district nutrition software/application.	Y
DC_Reduced_Free_Ind	Student identified for free or reduced meals by household/income application.	F or R
DC_Foster_Ind	Student has been identified as being served in Foster Care in the district nutrition software/application.	Y

<sup>1</sup> Students with a “Y” value in the DC\_Denied\_Declined\_Ind field and with a value of “Y” in these fields will be set to “not Free/Reduced.” DC\_Denied\_Declined is described as “Direct Certification or other claim denied or declined (not recognized for receiving free meals).”

Additional identifiers were handled through other data elements in PowerSchool or from external sources:

- a. Head Start – PK only – PowerSchool student and early childhood data; or
- b. For Schools with NO or limited connection between their nutrition application and the PIP Table in PowerSchool, free or reduced is identified using the PowerSchool field – *Lunch\_Status* = Free (F), Reduced (R), or FDC.
- c. SNAP/TANF participation – The ORDA performed a match process to data the SCDE receives monthly from DSS, identifying SNAP/TANF participations.
- d. CEP Alternative students enrolled at some point between 161<sup>st</sup> day and the last day of the base school of enrollment.

7. Question: **Will Virtual Presence be used to calculate student PEBT disbursement?**

Answer: No, virtual presence/attendance will not be used to determine the amount of disbursement for qualifying students for summer 2023.

8. Question: **What are the 2022-2023 reporting periods and what is the schedule for collecting PowerSchool Data for P-EBT reporting?**

Answer: The following is a chart showing the reporting periods and when the ORDA will collect student and attendance data. Due to the tight turn-around time, the ORDA plans to

collect student demographic/PIP table data one week prior to the attendance/address collection. This will afford us the time to review/confirm any eligibility issues/questions prior to incorporating virtual attendance data and updating addresses.

Benefit Months	Date SCDE Collects Student Demographic/PIP Table Data from Districts (PowerSchool)	Date SCDE will Submit Benefit File to DSS
July 1 – August 16 Submission #1	June 28, 2023	August 14.2023
July 1 – August 16 Submission #2	September 7, 2023	September 22. 2023

**9. Questions: Why is P-EBT not using the SEI or PIP as a source for identifying students potentially eligible for P-EBT? Why not just use Lunch Status?**

Answer: While Free/Reduced and SEI/PIP share many of the same data sources, there are some major differences between them. For one, Free/Reduced includes the income application and PIP does not. While Free/Reduced applies eligibility for Direct Certification to include SNAP/TANF and/or Medicaid in the current school year, SEI/PIP include students served within the last 3 years through SNAP/TANF and/or Medicaid. The P-EBT was written specifically to include only the Free/Reduced status of a student and that information can only come from the nutrition system.

Over the years, Lunch Status as meant different things to different districts. In essence Lunch Status should be a reflection of the same elements as defined in the fields we are using from the PIP table. Based on guidance from USDA and the SCDE, Office of Health and Nutrition, we are going straight to the source, the nutrition software connection to the PIP table in PowerSchool. With the exception of Head Start PK students, all the values for defining the Free/Reduced status of a student should be available in the data fields we are pulling from the PIP table.

**10. Question: What if my connector to the PIP table is not functioning?**

Answer: If you find your connector is not functioning (and you are using Level Data solutions), please submit a helpdesk ([helpdesk@leveldata.com](mailto:helpdesk@leveldata.com)) ticket with Level Data. Level Data is continuously monitoring the connector and may find an issue before you realize you have an issue. If you hear from Level Data that your connector is not functioning, we encourage you to work with them to resolve issues as soon as possible. Data from your PIP table is not only used for reporting, but also impacts funding.

**11. Question: If my district make changes to our nutrition software over the summer, will this make difference to our PEBT results?**

Answer: The answer to this question is definitely, YES. If your district has made any changes to your nutrition software, your data will not be loaded in the PIP table and not

available for PEBT identification. If you are contemplating any changes to your nutrition software, it is imperative that you share this information with Level Data ([helpdesk@leveldata.com](mailto:helpdesk@leveldata.com)) and with Lisa Woodard in the SCDE/Office of Research and Data Analysis, using the SCDE e-Support Request system on the Member Center/Application Web Portal ([Incidents - SolarWinds Service Desk \(sc.gov\)](#)).

**12. Question: What other data elements in PowerSchool are important to the P-EBT process?**

Answer: The most obvious data elements would be, but may not be limited to the following:

Data Element(s)	How Is This Data Element Used in Creating a File for DSS?
Student Name (Last, First, Middle, Generation)	Used when confirming match processes – using state_studentnumber. Also, used to identify issues with student’s state_studentnumber (shared, missing, or multiple)
Student mailing and residential addresses and Mother/Father/Contacts 1/2	Used when confirming match processes – using state_studentnumber. Also, used to identify issues with student’s state_studentnumber
State_Studentnumber	Used when matching student records across data collections and for assigning all virtual presence counts to the most current record for the student.
Studentnumber (PowerSchool ID)	Used when confirming match processes. Also, used to identify issues with student’s state_studentnumber
Student Grade Level	Used to confirm potential P-EBT eligibility start dates, as some schools have staggered eligibility dates based on grade levels.
Entrydate, Exitdate, SC_includeinreporting and Entrycode	Used to identify the student’s current enrollment status.

**13. Question: How can I get a list of my district’s students with their potential eligibility?**

Answer: Once the data file are submitted to DSS in August and again in September, the ORDA will place copies on the Report Portal accessed through the Member Center. IF there is enough time to do so, preliminary files will also be posted.

To access the student-level data files for your district,

- log-in to the Member Center/Application Web Portal,
- find and click on the Report Portal button,

- click on the Reports,
- from the drop-down menu select PEBT Report.

If you do not see the Report Portal button, when logging-in to the Member Center, please contact your district's Web Access Coordinator (WAC). The WAC in your district is the only person who can assign access to the Member Center.

**Important Note:** All nutrition/P-EBT related data, fields, tables and files contain Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and must be stored and shared using only secure means. Access to these data is limited to those employees who have a need for the data in the performance of their official duties.

**14. Question: Is there a description of the data elements in the data file found on the Report Portal/Member Center?**

Answer: Yes, Appendix A, attached to this document contains the list and description of all the data elements found in the P-EBT student-level data files. If you have any specific questions concerning [this data file](#), please contact Lisa Woodard at [lwoodard@ed.sc.gov](mailto:lwoodard@ed.sc.gov).

Please use the [PEBT@ed.sc.gov](mailto:PEBT@ed.sc.gov) e-mail to report questions regarding specific students or groups of students. See Questions 15 and 16 for instructions relating to submitting questions about specific students.

**15. Question: What do I do if a parent contacts my staffer to say his/her student is not found in the DSS Portal?**

Answer The DSS Portal can be found at the following Website:  
<https://benefitsportal.dss.sc.gov/#/pebt/benefitinquiry>

The SCDE/ORDA provided DSS with all possible student identification numbers: State\_studentnumber (SUNS ID), Studentnumber; StudentID, and DCID. One of more of these should be available in the DSS portal.

**Note: The Summer 2023 data provided to DSS reflects the student's enrollment at the end of 2022-2023 school year. Parents/guardians will need to look for the student in their last school or district of enrollment for 2022-2023.**

If the parent still cannot find the student using any one of these identification numbers or school district of enrollment for 2022-2023, tell them to contact DSS using the following E-mail address: [PEBTbenefits@dss.sc.gov](mailto:PEBTbenefits@dss.sc.gov)

16. Question: **Where do I go if I have questions about P-EBT?**

Answer: The SCDE has a dedicated e-mail [PEBT@ed.sc.gov](mailto:PEBT@ed.sc.gov).

For the protection of your students, the SCDE asks that Personally Identifiable Information (PII) not be shared over e-mail. To accommodate the sharing of information, there are two options:

- 1) In the PEBT Report, there is a field labeled SCDE\_Uniqueid. This is a record identifier for the file. This number is safe to send via e-mail, or
- 2) If you don't find the student in your PEBT Report, load a file containing the following information to the Member Center/Advanced Data Transfer System (ADT): Student name, dob, district, school, studentnumber and state\_studentnumber and the specific issue. E-mail the P-EBT e-mail to let us know where the file is located on the ADT.

17. Question: **My staffer has made an adjustment to a student's information in PowerSchool. How soon will that information be submitted to DSS for P-EBT processing?**

Answer: This is not a real-time process, the SCDE provides DSS with data files only 2 times for the summer disbursements 2023 (August and September). Please see Question 8 for the specific schedule of anticipated data collection and submission. The data will be extracted on the dates provided. Changes made between now and June 28, 2023, will be reflected in the data submitted to DSS in August. If changes are made prior to the final data collection (September 8, 2023), you should expect the changes to be received by DSS in the final submission.

18. Question: **Do all the students in the PEBT Report qualify for P-EBT payment?**

Answer: No, DSS has the final say on what students are included in the P-EBT program. The SCDE provide DSS with potential eligibility information for all your students. The SCDE has included an indicator in the P-EBT Report labeled potential\_eligibility. A value of "1", would indicate a student having met the criteria for potential eligibility.

19. Question: **How will the September identification process differ from the August P-EBT submission to DSS?**

Answer: The actual P-EBT eligibility/identification process will not change between August (June data) and September.

For September and for students not already identified as potentially P-EBT in August:

- Only students actively enrolled between the 161<sup>st</sup> and the last day of school or mid-year graduates for school year 2022-2023 will be included in the process.



- Only students moving into your district from another NSLP at the start of the school year 2023-2024 will be reviewed for potential eligibility.
- Students moving into a CEP school, will only be identified as potentially “newly” eligible if he/she has been coded as Directly Certified (SNAP/TANF/Medicaid) in nutrition software by August 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Students with no eligibility dates or eligibility dates after August 15<sup>th</sup> cannot be found potentially eligible.
- Students are only paid once.

## Appendix A

### List of Data Elements in P-EBT File Provided to Districts with Descriptions Summer 2023

Appendix A		
List of Data Elements in P-EBT File Provided to Districts with Descriptions		
Element Name	Description	Source
active	student is active during collection window and funded	PowerSchool
Bedscode	Student school identification number (SIDN)	PowerSchool
CEP_Participant	CEP designation in June	derived/PowerSchool
city	student city of residence	PowerSchool
cnt1_fname	student cnt fname	PowerSchool
cnt1_lname	student cnt lname	PowerSchool
cnt2_fname	student cnt fname	PowerSchool
cnt2_lname	student cnt lname	PowerSchool
Date_Generated	date data extracted from PowerSchool	derived
dcid	dcid (district based)	PowerSchool
districtcode	district code	PowerSchool
districtname	district name	PowerSchool
dob	student date of bithier	PowerSchool
Eligibility_date_final_final	Indicator for identifying district override of eligibility - missing = not determined	derived/PowerSchool, DSS, other
entrydate	entry date	PowerSchool
exitdate	exit date	PowerSchool
Father	father	PowerSchool
first_name	student first name	PowerSchool
gradelevel	grade level	PowerSchool
last_name	student last name	PowerSchool
mailing_city	student mailing city	PowerSchool
mailing_state	student mailing state	PowerSchool
mailing_street	student mailing street	PowerSchool
mailing_zip	student mailing zip	PowerSchool
middle_name	student middle name	PowerSchool

<b>Element Name</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Source</b>
Mother	mother	PowerSchool
New_to_File	student new to the file	derived
newly_eligible	student found newly potentially eligible	derived
NSLP_Participant	school of enrollment is an NSLP participant	Office of Health and Nutrition
NSLP_SiteID	school of enrollment NSLP site number	Office of Health and Nutrition
Potentially_Eligible	indicator for identifying potentially eligible student	derived/PowerSchool, DSS, other (F/R, DC, CEP, Head Start PK, etc.)
recsrc	record source: s = student table; r = reenrollment table	PowerSchool
sc_homelang	student home language	PowerSchool
SCDE_Uniqueid	assigned uniqueid number base on record count and source - This will be unique for each record	derived
School_Learning_Model_Eligible	school of enrollment learning modality (hybrid, virtual, face to face, etc.)	Office of Health and Nutrition
schoolname	school name	PowerSchool
ssn	student social security nubur	PowerSchool
state	student state of residence	PowerSchool
state_studentnumber	student state studentnumber (state based)	PowerSchool
Stateid_Shared_Ind	student shares stateid with other student in public school	derived/PowerSchool
statid_num	state_studentnumber sequence - most current record = 1*; Active in March and same record inactive in June = 0	derived
street	student street of residence	PowerSchool
student_number	student student number	PowerSchool
studentid	studentid (district based)	PowerSchool
Total_YTD_VP_Final	Total cumulative virtual present days	derived/PowerSchool

