SUMMER EBT:  
PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE 

Economic Mobility & Well-Being Conference 
August 27–30, 2023 

Hyatt Regency Long Beach | Long Beach, CA
Summer EBT: Past, Present, and Future

Economic Mobility and Well-Being Conference
Long Beach, CA

Rogelio Carrasco and Whitney Peters
USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)
August 29, 2023 at 2:15pm – 3:30pm
Today’s Agenda

• Background

• Past: Summer EBT Demonstrations & Pandemic-EBT

• Present: Implementation and Operations in the Early Years

• Future: Summer EBT in 2030 & Beyond

• Q&As/Conversation
Background
FNS Programs Over the Years

National School Lunch Program (NSLP) (1946)

School Breakfast Program (SBP) Pilots (1966)

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) (1968)

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Pilots (1972)

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (1964)

Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) (2020)

Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (Summer EBT) Demos (2010)

Summer EBT (2022)
THE SUMMER FEEDING GAP

• The National School Lunch Program serves about 31 million low-income children each school day.
• There is a meaningful gap during the summer, with an increase in food insecurity.
• The existing Summer Meals programs reach only about 16 percent of low-income children who get school meals during the school year.
Past: Summer EBT Demonstrations & Pandemic EBT
Summer EBT Works!

• Summer EBT benefits reduced the most severe category of food insecurity among children during the summer by one-third compared to those receiving no benefits.

• Children who participated ate more fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and dairy than those who didn't get Summer EBT.

• Participants generally were satisfied with how the projects operated and found the benefits easy to use.

• Retailers noted that their summer business increased significantly due to Summer EBT benefit use.
### States and Tribes Participating in the Summer EBT Demonstration Projects

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*Virginia offered EBT benefits in the summer through the Grants to End Childhood Hunger
Lessons Learned

Grantees emphasized the importance of:

- Building relationships between the EBT agency and state or local school nutrition agencies
- Clear and consistent support for families that is delivered through multiple media
- Dedicated and trained staff available to work on Summer EBT year-round
P-EBT Context: The Players

- Child Nutrition HQ
- SNAP HQ
- Regional Offices
- Over 15,000 school districts
- EBT Processors
- 56 States & Territories
- Advocates
P-EBT Context: Circumstances

• P-EBT did not exist on March 17, 2020

• Stood up new program in +/- six weeks

• Supposed to be temporary program...
  • Extended & modified, because it met a need

• In that time, we saw numerous changes
  • Real-life
  • Legislative/policy
P-EBT Context: Difficulties

• P-EBT was difficult to implement.

• States made it happen.

• P-EBT was a lifeline for children.
P-EBT Effects

• Served over **36 MILLION** children

• Issued over **$67 BILLION** in benefits

• Reduced food insecurity for low-income kids by 30%, in week following issuance (Brookings Institution)
Looking To The Future

• Lessons learned

• Future Impact
  • 30 MILLION kids
  • $120/Summer (indexed for inflation)
  • For decades
Present: Implementation and Operations in the Early Years
Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023

The law permanently authorized:

- An option through the Summer Food Service Program for take-home meals in eligible rural areas

- A nationwide Summer EBT program
Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (Summer EBT)

- Permanent Summer EBT begins **Summer 2024**
  - Households with children eligible for free/reduced price school meals may receive $40/child/summer month for groceries

- **50% of administrative expenses paid for with federal dollars**

- Interim final regulations are expected to be issued in **December 2023**

USDA Guidance

- **June 7, 2023:** USDA Issued Initial Guidance for State Implementation of Summer EBT in 2024
- **June 13, 2023:** USDA Issued Initial Guidance for Implementation of Summer EBT in 2024 by Indian Tribal Organizations
- **July 31, 2023:** USDA guidance on Summer EBT Eligibility, Certification, and Verification

QR Code for USDA Summer EBT Webpage
Guiding Principles for Summer EBT

• Effectively deliver benefits to eligible families

• Streamline program administration

• Minimize burden on schools

• Provide states temporary flexibilities where needed/possible, as they work to stand up Summer EBT
Summer EBT Eligibility & Enrollment

- Covers children who are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals

- States must automatically enroll certain eligible children

- States must make applications available to enroll children who are not automatically enrolled
Summer EBT Eligibility & Enrollment

Streamlined Certification
• Direct certification with SNAP, FDPIR, TANF
  • Includes Medicaid in DC-M demo states
• Categorically eligible (e.g. homeless children)
• Certified for F/RP meals by application

Summer EBT Eligibility

Summer EBT Application
Key Dates

• **December 29, 2022:** Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 signed into law

• **Summer 2023:** States may issue summer P-EBT benefits to eligible children, may authorize non-congregate meal service in certain rural areas

• **End of 2023:** USDA expects to issue *Interim Final Regulations* on Non-Congregate Meal Service in Rural Areas and Summer EBT

• **Summer 2024:** States may issue Summer EBT benefits
Future: Summer EBT in 2030 & Beyond
Our vision is that all States, tribes, and territories will work together to create a unified strategy to ensure all children have the nutrition they need in the summer months using all of the resources available, including Summer EBT, summer meal programs, WIC, and SNAP.
Collaboration

Clear delineation of roles and responsibilities

Keys to success

Working Across Entities

SNAP Agencies

State or Tribal Government

CN Agencies

Schools

Financial Management
Thank you!
Questions and Answers/Conversation
Economic Mobility & Well-Being Annual Conference

Thank You for Attending

See you next year!