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Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
Chris Reykdal, Superintendent

February 11, 2026

(X) Action Required
(X) Informational

BULLETIN NO. 002-26 Child Nutrition Services

TO: Educational Service District Superintendents
School District Superintendents
School District Business Managers
School District Food Service Directors

FROM: Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction

RE: Summer EBT 2026

CONTACT: Wendy Barkley, RD, SNS—Director of Operations and Administration, Child Nutrition Services 360-725-0433, wendy.barkley@k12.wa.us

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 ([P.L. 117-328](#)) authorized a permanent, nationwide Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (Summer EBT) program—also known as SUN Bucks—to support children who lose access to free and reduced-price school meals during the summer months.

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), in partnership with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), is administering the Summer EBT (S-EBT) program in Washington state. Collaboration between these state agencies, local schools, and districts will ensure that Washington students receive this important benefit.

We appreciate Local Education Agency (LEA) efforts to provide meals to students during the school year and during the summer months. Students are eligible for S-EBT benefits regardless of whether they participate in summer meal programs.

S-EBT Eligibility

Students eligible for S-EBT include:

- Students enrolled at any time during the 2025–26 school year at a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or School Breakfast Program (SBP) **and**
 - Students determined to be eligible for free or reduced-price school meals through direct certification or a Child Nutrition Eligibility and Education Benefits (CNEEB) application
- School aged (defined as 8 years to 18 years) and residing in a household receiving SNAP, TANF, or other federally means tested assistance programs approved by USDA.

Students that do not qualify by the above methods have the option to submit a Sun Bucks application through DSHS. Requirements for approval through a Sun Bucks application include:

- Confirmed to be enrolled at any time during the 2025–26 school year at a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or School Breakfast Program (SBP) **and**
- Meet the USDA school meals Income Eligibility Guidelines.

Approved Plans and Benefit Levels

S-EBT benefits will be issued to all eligible students as outlined above. The benefit amount is \$120 per student and will be made available on a 'SUN Bucks' card. Benefits are planned to be issued June–August.

Local Education Agency (LEA) Role

Upload Data

Information provided by LEAs will be used to identify eligible students. LEAs must upload student and school information into the S-EBT portal for students to receive S-EBT benefits. The portal will be open for upload February 17-27, 2026. It is important to upload eligible students during this time to ensure benefits are issued in accordance with federal requirements. Two additional upload windows will be made available for students that become newly eligible after the initial upload, April 13-24, 2026, and May 26-June 5, 2026. Instructions on how to upload the required information will be provided to School Nutrition Departments.

Verification Process

Summer EBT regulations require verification of household income for selected CNEEBs submitted at Community Eligibility Provision and Provision 2 schools. DSHS will complete

the verification process. Schools will be expected to support the process by providing the CNEEB for households selected for verification. DSHS will conduct the verification process between April and June 2026.

The compilation of data, upload of data, and the verification process must be completed by school staff that have the authority to access student eligibility information.

Share Information with Families

For full details and additional questions about S-EBT benefits, families can visit the [DSHS SUN Bucks webpage](#) or call the S-EBT Contact Center at (833) 543-3230 between 8 am and 5 pm Monday–Friday (except observed holidays). We encourage LEAs to share this information with families through communication channels such as social media, emails, and other outreach methods.

Promotion of the CNEEB

LEAs should continue to diligently distribute the CNEEB application to qualify households for S-EBT and other child nutrition program benefits. OSPI recently updated multiple tools to assist sponsors with CNEEB promotion and collection efforts including:

- [CNEEB Promotional Video](#)
- [Completing the CNEEB Application Instructions for Households](#)
- Additional promotional materials are available on the [Meal Application and Verification webpage](#)

INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

For questions regarding this bulletin, please contact Wendy Barkley, RD, SNS—Director of Operations and Administration, at 360-725-0433 or email wendy.barkley@k12.wa.us. The OSPI Telecommunication Relay Services number is 711 or 1-800-833-6384.

This bulletin is also available on the [Bulletins](#) page of the OSPI website.

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Chief of Staff

Leanne Eko, RD, SNS
Chief Nutrition Officer
Child Nutrition Services

CR:In

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1. Mail:

*U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. Fax: 833-256-1665 or 202-690-7442; or*

Email: program.intake@usda.gov