



# Friday News Blast



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7-17-2020

Please see our website at [www.education.ne.gov/sped](http://www.education.ne.gov/sped) for all the updated guidance and information related to special education and early intervention during the COVID-19 pandemic. We will continuously be updating our page with the most recent guidance and adding resources.

## Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer

Nebraska has been approved to operate the Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT), a new program authorized by the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), which provides assistance to families of children who are eligible for free or reduced-priced meals and impacted by school closures. The program will be managed in partnership by DHHS and NDE and will begin processing applications on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. Although NDE is communicating this information to school districts, if you have an established relationship with a school district it is beneficial to reach out to share the program details which are outlined in the link below.

A brief overview: current SNAP eligible families will not need to do anything to receive the additional benefits, but those who qualify for free/reduced school meals who are not currently SNAP recipients will need to apply. Benefits will be distributed in two installments for those who qualify, one between [July 28-31](#) and another between [August 15-19](#).

Again, this program is available to ANYONE whose child(ren) were on free or reduced lunch this past school year. Those who are already receiving SNAP do not need to do anything additional to apply – but those who are NOT receiving SNAP have to complete a special application. The Food Bank SNAP Outreach Hotline is doing enrollment over the phone by simply calling [1-855-444-5556](tel:1-855-444-5556). Applications are completed in less than 5 minutes but they will need to have the student ID numbers of their eligible child(ren) available when they call. The enrollment period is limited to a few weeks so time is of the essence. <https://tinyurl.com/yyzxfurl>



## PBIS & SEL - Tier 1

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) is a terrific resource to gain knowledge in the area of SEL. Many districts in our state utilize resources from them, our department of education has built collaborative relationships with CASEL to improve various projects, and many specialists (i.e., school psychologists, SLPs, etc) use CASEL as a guide to help inform their SEL practice.

CASEL promotes five core competencies in SEL - self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These competencies, which are modeled by staff throughout the school year, create a rich opportunity for improved school culture and student achievement. Whether the student is in a Pre-K setting or in a district's 18-21-year-old program, SEL can cover every grade and age level to assist students in their well-being and learning.

PBIS, as many of you know, has an easy way to cover multiple positive behaviors using few words at the tier 1 level. The phrases "be respectful, be responsible, be safe" are common lines across Nebraska schools to cover essential behaviors asked of all students at the tier 1 level. When done properly, tier 2 and tier 3 supports are built off of the existing tier 1 foundation. So, for instance, a good tier 2 intervention will focus on additional instruction and support to help a student pick up on a tier 1 skill that hasn't been mastered.

When thinking of both SEL and PBIS, then, it becomes apparent that there are crossovers among concepts. For example, if a school were to teach skills related to relationship skills (SEL core competency), then the school is also reinforcing a PBIS tier 1 foundation of "be respectful," for respect is an essential component when maintaining relationships at any level. If a school desires to increase its overall TFI score in the area of teaching expectations (Indicator 1.4), a practical solution would be to teach good SEL competencies as all of them cover the tenets of that PBIS indicator. The combinations are many, and the more we can "connect the dots" for our students, staff, and communities, the greater chance we have in making real change in our schools.



### **NeMTSS Summit 2020**

As the State of Nebraska has experienced many disruptions in their "normal" way of doing business, The NeMTSS Team has made the difficult decision to cancel our in-person 2020 Summit. However, The Team is excited to announce our 6-week Summit Series that will be brought to you virtually. Similar to our 5-week summer series, the virtual series, "Moving Forward into the Unknown," will feature sessions to help schools promote success and wellness for students and staff.

Visit [nemtss.unl.edu](http://nemtss.unl.edu) for more information on the six weeks beginning August 13th that are FREE to all who register, and gain access to live and recorded sessions focusing on:

WEEK 1 (August 11th and 13th): Equitable Opportunities for All

WEEK 2 (August 18th and 20th): Engaging and Strengthening Partnerships

WEEK 3 (August 25th and 27th): Adults as Change Agents

WEEK 4 (September 1st and 3<sup>rd</sup>): Creating a Climate of Support

WEEK 5 (September 8th and 10th): Prioritizing the Core

WEEK 6 (September 15th and 17th): Putting the Pieces Together Moving Forward

The Virtual Summit will bring messages from National Experts around Social Emotional Learning and is intended for all educators with tracks focused on Administration/School Leaders, Instruction, and Early Childhood. Many of the days have concurrent sessions that will bring specific support information to sessions in the different tracks to those who may be looking for support in those specific areas.

We are excited to bring these amazing presenters and their messages to Nebraska Schools and Educators and hope that you will join us for 6 exciting weeks!

**IDEA Maintenance of Fiscal Effort (MOE) Eligibility Standard for Special Education – CLOSE: July 20**

School district eligibility for receipt of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA Part B) funds are contingent upon maintaining fiscal effort from year to year. Districts are to report within this application estimated special education expenditures, receipts, and resident child counts to establish eligibility for the receipt IDEA Part B funds through the Grant Management system (GMS) during the 2020-2021 year. For assistance with this application, please contact Greg Prochazka at 402-471-4314 or e-mail [greg.prochazka@nebraska.gov](mailto:greg.prochazka@nebraska.gov)

**Amy Rhone - Administrator**