

May 06, 2020

Superintendents,

As you know, we are extremely pleased and excited about the hard work that our colleagues at the Department of Human Resources (DHR) have undertaken in order to secure additional food/nutrition benefits for our students through the Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) program. However, some of us may have gotten a little *too* excited; and Commissioner Buckner and I now request your help to clarify some things to our parents.

Funds began to be transferred to EBT cards this week for those families who already qualify for SNAP. **However, for those families whose children qualify for free lunch, but do not otherwise qualify for SNAP, they will receive new cards. This process has begun but it will take 3-5 weeks to complete.**

Yesterday, DHR fielded 11,000 calls – many of whom said that they had received robocalls from their school systems stating that if they had not received their cards to call DHR. If you are among this group, please send out another call and notify parents that they will receive information from DHR within 3-5 weeks. They should not call DHR during that timeframe to request a card.

Answering these calls is just slowing down the process by gumming up the system and tying up DHR's employees. Believe me when I say on behalf of the Commissioner myself that your diligence to look out for the welfare of your students is very much appreciated, but we really need your assistance to clear up this miscommunication, as well.

Best Regards,

Eric S. Mackey

State Superintendent of Education