



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Mayor McGee and First Lady Lauren Baker Urge Lynn Residents to Use Extra Food Benefit Card During COVID-19 Pandemic

Federal Funding Secured to Help Families Buy Food for Lynn Students

LYNN – Mayor Thomas McGee and Lynn Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Patrick Tutwiler today urged Lynn families with children enrolled in public schools to use funds available to them through the Pandemic EBT program to help feed their children during the COVID-19 crisis. While all funds have now been distributed, Lynn has more than 1,700 cards that have not been activated.

To help raise awareness, Mayor McGee, Superintendent Tutwiler, and Massachusetts First Lady Lauren Baker participated in a virtual conversation, released today, with Jill Shah President of the Shah Family Foundation to discuss the importance of food security during this unprecedented time. The conversation can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/Oyo7rJACU-0>

The Baker-Polito administration received federal approval to promote increased food security for families who participate in the USDA's National School Lunch Program (NSLP) through P-EBT. Families receiving P-EBT are receiving a payment of nearly \$30 per week for each of their students, a benefit that will bring more than \$200 million in federal dollars to the Commonwealth's economy.

A statewide campaign, supported by The Shah Family Foundation and Project Bread in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), has been launched to ensure families know about extra food benefits available to them through Pandemic EBT, or P-EBT. Families who have not received the P-EBT card or who have lost the card are encouraged to visit www.MAP-EBT.org for more information.

Families already receiving DTA benefits (SNAP, TAFDC) will see the funds have already been automatically loaded onto their EBT cards. Families who don't currently receive DTA benefits, but whose children qualify for free or reduced-price school meals, should have received a special P-EBT card in the mail.

Since the beginning of this public health crisis, the weekly average number of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) applications received has increased by nearly 400%. DTA and DESE, along with Project Bread and the Shah Family Foundation, continue to work collaboratively to ensure all efforts to promote food security for families and children are made available to every community across the Commonwealth.

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About the Shah Family Foundation:

The Shah Family Foundation supports innovative and transformative work in education, healthcare and the community. We believe that interesting and lasting solutions sit where these intersect. Our primary work and support is centered in Boston, with the goal of sharing broadly the programs and innovations that prove successful in our home town. Learn more at: <http://www.shahfoundation.org>.

About the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA)

DTA assists and empowers low-income individuals and families to meet their basic needs, improve their quality of life, and achieve long term economic self-sufficiency. DTA serves one in nine residents of the Commonwealth with direct economic assistance and food assistance, as well as workforce training opportunities. Learn more: <https://www.mass.gov/DTA/COVID-19>.

About MA DEPT of Elementary and Secondary Education: (DESE)

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is committed to preparing all students for success after high school. The Department's work includes licensing educators, distributing state and federal education money, helping districts implement learning standards, overseeing statewide standardized tests, monitoring schools and districts, and convening districts and individuals to share best practices. In addition, we collect data to inform state and local decisions. Learn more: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19>.

About Project Bread:

Project Bread is committed to preventing and ending hunger in Massachusetts. We provide access to food for people who are hungry today while working to break the cycle of hunger through advocacy, education, and community action. Learn more at: www.projectbread.org.