



Baylor University

COLLABORATIVE ON HUNGER AND POVERTY

LEARNING LAB BEST PRACTICES

2018-2021

AUSTIN LEARNING LAB CENTRAL TEXAS REGION

STRONG STATE PARTNERSHIPS

- Build and maintain relationships with TDA, USDA representatives, network of education service centers, TEA, etc.
- Strengthen relationships through frequent, scheduled communication, exchanging data and questions - especially important for partnerships that began as formal, legal relationship, e.g., TDA & BCHP.
- Select office space strategically - e.g., BCHP office is in close proximity to TDA and the capitol building.



ENGAGING HESITANT DISTRICTS

- Bring the “trifecta” - BCHP, DairyMax, and No Kid Hungry - to a meeting to show how much money is being left on the table.
- Share success of comparable district, escalate as needed to superintendent.
- Bring in staff from a district doing alternative service models to discuss with staff of hesitant district.
- Bring in funding, technical support, and put peer pressure on by telling the school board and superintendent: "all other districts your size and in your area are doing this successfully."

SUMMER MEAL PARTICIPATION

- Utilize coalitions to provide support to an off-campus summer meal site, activities, supplies, etc. - theme the weeks with activities for participants, e.g., art week, science week, etc.
- Bring the food to the kids and not the kids to the food. Allow school district to pay for the food and everything else is volunteer-based, schools can drop off food and leave.



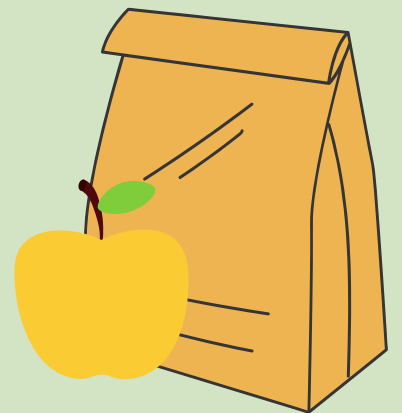
AFTERSCHOOL MEALS IN RURAL AREAS

- Utilize non-federally funded programs, like a church hosting a Vacation Bible School, when possible.
- Host at public, non-school sites – public libraries, parks, community centers, apartment complexes, etc.
- Allow the community to host meals with their own resources and minimal paperwork.



HIGH SCHOOL BREAKFAST PARTICIPATION

- Encourage Breakfast in the Classroom (BIC) at the high school level.
- Implement grab-n-go option for students who miss BIC.
- Add variety to the grab-n-go menu options: smoothies, yogurt parfaits, and build-your-own breakfast sandwiches.
- Encourage student athletes to participate in school breakfast – other students will follow.



ENCOURAGE ALTERNATIVE SERVICE MODELS

- Build strong relationships with school board and administrators.
- Invite them to observe Breakfast in the Classroom at a school who is doing it successfully - match similarly sized schools together.
- Answer questions they might have about implementing it on their campus.



DALLAS LEARNING LAB NORTH TEXAS REGION

EXCELLENCE IN SUMMER MEALS

- Collaborate with sponsors to fill gaps in site locations.
- Provide guidelines for new sponsors on ideal site standards –rebuild trust with families surrounding meal programs.
- Provide personalized plans for identifying gaps and setting goals.
- Utilize FRAC best practices.
Serve as an evaluator and consultant.
- Provide technical assistance to participating sponsors.



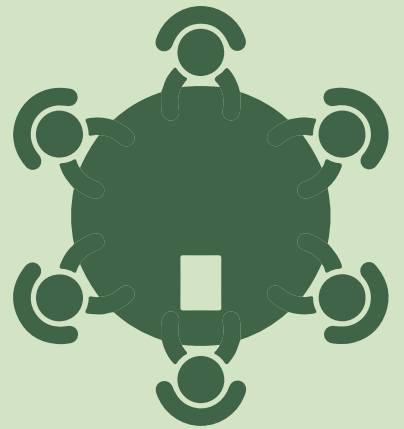
SENIOR SNAP PARTICIPATION

- Utilize needs assessment from HFCC – low senior participation in SNAP due to stigma, misinformation, transportation, access, etc.
- Provide presentations on SNAP – nutrition education, present in locations where seniors are present, encourage seniors to bring necessary documents to presentation.
- Bring SNAP navigators to meet with interested applicants and help them apply right there.



SUMMER & SUPPER COUNCIL

- Hold monthly meetings with leadership – leadership serves two-year terms.
- Host full council meetings quarterly.
- Bring balance by having diverse organizations in leadership.
- Connect districts with sponsors – spread out clustered sites.
- Decrease sponsor competition – increase camaraderie and partnership.



BUILD A HUNGER FREE COMMUNITY COALITION

- Have a facilitator who is consistent and credible.
- Start with a catalyzing event – like a summit – gather contact information from this event and network out from there.
- Five action teams – child hunger, senior hunger, faith community, public policy/advocacy, and urban agriculture.
- Host internal assessments/strategizing events to define future of HFCC.
- Create website to feature action teams, toolkits, documents, projects, etc.



INCREASE ALTERNATIVE SERVICE MODELS

- Present to teachers and principals explaining importance of meal participation.
- Partner with several organizations to bring new ideas and resources, expand programs, and increase participation.
- Utilize Hunger Data Lab Breakfast Report Card to convince districts to expand programs – share impact of breakfast on performance and attendance, highlight reimbursement.
- Utilize No Kid Hungry participation data.
- Connect sites to sponsor.



AFTERSCHOOL ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

- Bring partners in to provide enrichment component of afterschool program.
- Connect with a church who can pay for the teacher at the program – expands program to more children.
- Connect churches with schools to fund teachers and expand afterschool programs.



HOUSTON LEARNING LAB SOUTHEAST TEXAS REGION

COMMUNICATION FOR DIVERSE POPULATIONS

- Create written communication pieces in a variety of languages.
- Incorporate various dialects when possible.
- Partner with translators when available.
- Use Google translate when necessary to communicate if translator is not present/available.



RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

- Ask how to show support and view them as the experts.
- Listen -people need to understand that you're working with their best interests in mind
- Build network of people who believe in the work being done.
- Be patient and work to keep the relationships strong.
- Position self as the student and school district/ community partners as the teachers.



COALITION WORK

- Adopt consensus-based decision making - include specific steps for what to do when there are one or two people who refuse to allow something to pass.
- Encourage coalitions to do assessments to inform their action – needs assessment to start a coalition that includes the community voice.
- Overlay assessments with talking/interviewing/surveying folks to make sure the gaps match.
- Encourage community members to be leaders in coalitions.
- Spend time in communities - go to coalition and community meetings.



HOSTING STRATEGY MEETINGS

- Invite all relevant entities – school districts, summer meal site sponsors, stakeholders: Dairy Max, USDA, FNS, TDA, No Kid Hungry, City, County, etc.
- Cultivate partnerships between sponsors and school districts.
- Communicate and translate changes in policies, waivers, and other relevant updates for participants.



HIGH SCHOOL BREAKFAST PARTICIPATION

- Encourage a Breakfast After the Bell or Second Chance Breakfast model - breakfast is served to students between 1st and 2nd periods.
- Implement a grab-n-go option - utilize a cart system when students can pick up breakfast items.
- Extend the passing period bell by two minutes to optimize student participation in breakfast.



COMMUNICATION FOR FREE MEALS

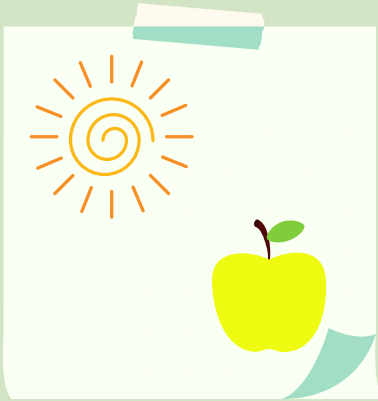
- Meet needs for school districts – do the things that they do not have time/capacity for – translate waivers and communicate what they mean, spread the word about curbside meals, etc.
- Create website for folks to find meals: where, when, what the process is, etc.
- Utilize an email tool (Spanish & English) and free Facebook ads to reach more families.
- Partner with a company that does information technology to create the email system - keep website up-to-date.



LUBBOCK LEARNING LAB WEST TEXAS, SOUTH PLAINS REGION

REVITALIZE HIBERNATING COALITIONS

- Bring individuals back together. Take the initiative to call meetings and encourage members to participate and become active again.
- Encourage members of the coalition to join leadership roles on action teams to become more involved with coalition projects.
- Utilize research of successful projects in other communities for future local projects. Show attainable goals from other like-minded organizations.
- Revive previous teams with members who have a desire to serve community needs.



SUMMER MEAL PROMOTION

- Create an all-in-one information hub for summer meals - both school-led, and community-based.
- Hold community events to promote free summer meals with other community partners. Include fun activities to keep children engaged and willing to return.
- Work with school districts to add promotional materials to summer meal bags. e.g., Lubbock ISD added Healthy Fluid Milk Incentive program SNAP fliers to weekend bags to promote other food resource programs occurring in the region.

DOUBLE-UP FOOD BUCKS AT LOCAL MARKETS

- Find local food solutions to increase willingness of individuals to participate and use government benefits.
- Increase awareness of where the food is produced – connect local growers to local consumers.
- Promote farmers markets and participating stores to increase program visibility.
- Work with producers directly to meet their needs and maintain their participation.
- Make food available in equitable spaces – bring food to people, provide opportunity to use SNAP on locally grown food.



RELATIONSHIP BUILDING IN RURAL AREAS

- Meet other community leaders on their turf and be sincere in asking how you can partner with them to help increase program success.
- Attend meetings humbly and let the organizer feel comfortable and in charge. They are the experts in the program, and you are there to soak up knowledge.
- Unite like-minded groups and invite them to build fellowship -create a location to share ideas and future collaborations.



RURAL COMMUNITY GARDENS

- Begin with a needs assessment to find high community interest and gain community buy-in/support.
- Select locations that maximize participation and equity.
- Secure a local grant through HFCC for rainwater retention system - reduce input costs.
- Make produce freely accessible to the community through the local food bank/pantry.



NUTRITION INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

- Develop strong, collaborative relationships with local partners working in anti-hunger and regional health.
- Select a retail partner who is enthusiastic about investing in the health of the local community and who understands the retail benefits of nutrition incentive programs
- Train regional partners about the nutrition incentive program and its benefits.
- Evaluate the data on qualifying sales, incentive redemption, marketing, and training to make iterative changes throughout the program that benefit all stakeholders.
- Network and learn through partnerships with other non-profit.

MCALLEN LEARNING LAB SOUTH TEXAS, RIO GRANDE VALLEY REGION

COMMUNITY GARDENS

- Survey community members and ask about interest in a community garden, classes, etc.
- Identify local stakeholders to champion the program.
- Partner with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension to provide classes on how to garden, preserve, can, etc.
- Partner with local church for land.
- Small grants for things like a fence, a hand-washing station, a toolbox, etc.
- Adjust garden beds to accommodate diverse people interested in participating – e.g., raised beds for older adults who cannot bend down to work.

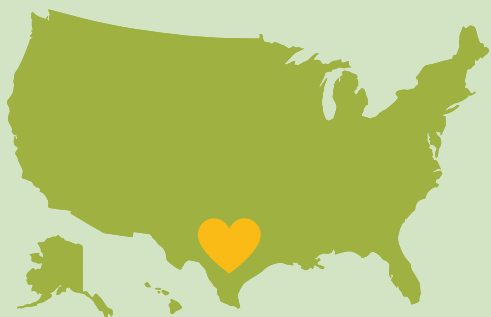


CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE SCHOOL MENUS

- Identify diverse student populations and unique cultures represented on the school campus.
- Partner with the food and nutrition directors at the school districts.
- Modify menus to meet the needs of various religious and ethnic groups - e.g., offering hummus and pita as snacks.

COMMUNICATION IN RURAL/BILINGUAL AREAS

- Utilize these most effective forms of communication: door-to-door, yard signs, take-home sheets, bookmarks, hard-copies of marketing/advertising materials.
- Create communication in both languages, e.g., English AND Spanish.
- Keep Spanish simple, recognize that most families do not have more than a 6th grade education level.
- Note: due to lack of cell phones, service, and data, social media campaigns for marketing are ineffective.



PARTNERSHIPS DURING PANDEMIC

- Identify areas of high need to find gaps in service.
- Partner with local churches and other organizations to provide meals and other items (stickers, toys, books, masks, water bottles, etc.) to children.
- Develop strong relationships prior to the emergency -this is crucial to being able to respond appropriately and effectively during the pandemic.

ENCOURAGE HEALTHY HABITS IN SCHOOLS

- Partner with physical education coaches to help incentivize kids to do take-home challenges.
- Apply for and award small grants for prizes.
- Create posters with photos of high school students from the school district to encourage younger children to eat more fruits and vegetables.
- Represent diversity and inclusion on the posters – various races/ethnicities/abilities/etc.



MODIFY EXCELLENCE IN SUMMER MEALS

- Establish trust and strong relationships with school districts to understand their needs.
- Provide support for districts during summer meal service.
- Give each district a certificate at the end of the summer to boost morale and offer encouragement.
- Note: in areas where the traditional "grades" of ESMC would be damaging to relationships, modifying is a great option.



SAN ANGELO LEARNING LAB WEST TEXAS REGION

PRIVATELY FUNDED CONGREGATE MEALS

- Follow the Toolkit for Privately-Funded Summer Meal Programs.
- Respond to community concerns about hungry kids – fill gap between May and August when school meals end.
- Partner with churches who can “adopt” schools to host summer sites. Give responsibility and ownership to the volunteers.
- Partner with community agencies for programming – Fire Department, Police Department, State Parks, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council, Girl Scouts, etc.



CREATE COMMUNITY RESOURCE GUIDE

- Conduct a needs assessment – find gaps for awareness of resources.
- Create a pocket guide listing local resources.
- Ensure a functional design - foldable and fits in wallet - folds out into a map with food resource locations.
- Provide guide to community agencies and organizations for dissemination to clients.



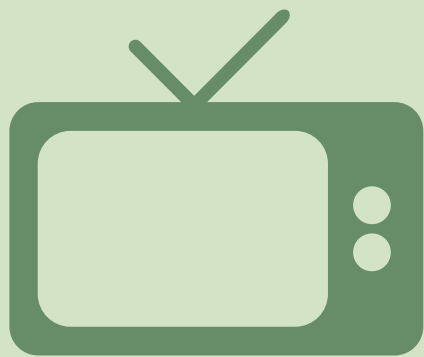
COMMUNITY GARDENS

- Partner with city to provide land and water.
- Choose location near local elementary school so students can work in the garden.
- Partner with families in the community to “adopt” a bed.
- Provide fresh produce to community members and food banks.



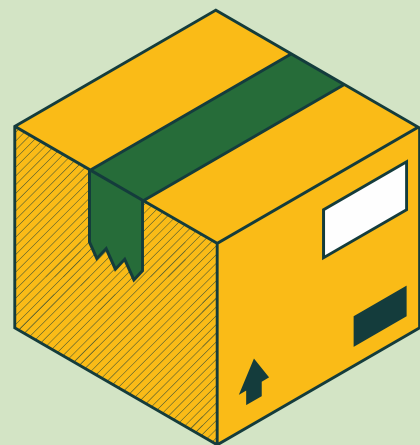
ADVERTISING IN RURAL AREAS

- Maintain strong relationships with local television and radio stations.
- Partner with local media outlets to have hunger-related programs featured on nightly news segments.
- Build trust and gain respect with consistent presence.
- Reduce stigma for food programs with TV advertising.



SUMMER MEALS FOR RURAL CHILDREN

- Bring the food to the children, not the children to the food.
- Ship boxes of shelf-stable food items to children whose schools opted out of SFSP, e.g., Meals-to-You.
- Combat the stigma and pride of participation – normalize receiving the boxes.



PARTNER WITH CHILD NUTRITION TEAM

- Cater to the individual school district – recognize the distinctions in districts.
- Propose alternative feeding models like grab-n-go or Breakfast After the Bell.
- Contact Child Nutrition Specialists after school breakfast, but before lunch – ideal time is 8:30-10:30am.
- Share data with Food Service Directors – one pagers from Children At Risk, School Breakfast Report Cards, TDA data, etc.



WACO LEARNING LAB HEART OF TEXAS REGION

INCREASE SCHOOL MEAL PARTICIPATION

- Create presentations to give to school boards.
- Utilize partnerships to create one-pagers with financial benefits of increasing participation.
- Show clearly where and how much money is being left on the table.
- Use the Average Daily Participation of breakfast data for every school.
- Show that increase in participation to certain percent brings in this amount of money - which could then be used to meet other needs.

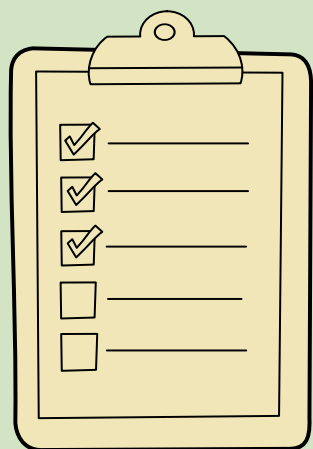


PARTNER WITH FAITH COMMUNITIES

- Identify churches located in neighborhoods with school campuses.
- Use church building to host afterschool enrichment program for students.
- Utilize church members as volunteers to serve the meals.
- Allow the church the option **not** to be the CACFP sponsor - provide support to school district through volunteers and hosting site.

WORKING WITH CHANGE-RESISTANT DISTRICTS

- Build relationships at the individual school level – encourage schools to use alternative service models.
- Meet with schools to have conversations about what strategies are important and how they work.
- Be persistent - Continue to have yearly meetings with school districts to put the ideas in front of administration.
- Escalate the situation – if the principal is hesitant, respectfully go to the superintendent.
- Provide promotional opportunities for schools who don't want to do alternative service models - shows administration that they can be supported where they are.



CREATING ACTION-BASED COALITIONS

- Utilize HFCC toolkit – bring this to every meeting and help follow the steps in the toolkit.
- Serve on the board and help create agendas for meetings - learn how members might want to restructure.
- Serve in a consulting role – have data ready: 1. coalitions need to know the situations on the ground with numbers, 2. there needs to be quantitative goals to move the needle.
- Note: data is key to understanding what's going on and for creating measurable goals.

CULTIVATING EQUITY IN SERVICE

- Host events intentionally at locations where equity is available, like in a neighborhood park located within the community.
- Put flyers up in a variety of locations such as a laundromat or local convenience store.
- Identify non-profits and clinics around the feeding sites and provide them flyers to give to clients.



HUNGER ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

- Create free food pantry on campus and host free farmers markets for students.
- Recruit volunteers, coordinate meetings, set agendas, etc.
- Partner with local food pantry for mobile distribution during the pandemic, utilize their trucks to get food from drop-off to the University.
- Center the voices of the people needing food.
- Utilize student organizations to help volunteer – student team to help stock items.

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