



# SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida

## Launching Your Own School Market

### WELCOME

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#### **Food Secure Students**

- Are more likely to experience positive physical and mental health outcomes
- Are more likely to perform well academically,
- Are less likely to experience behavioral issues

#### **Food Secure Families**

In a 2019 feedback survey, students and their families noted increased economic capacity and social capital as a result of our program.

This School Partnerships Toolkit offers a comprehensive guide to launching your own School Market.

The Second Harvest School Partnerships Program promotes a community-centered, stigma-free approach to increasing food access among students experiencing hunger. In collaboration with community organizations and school leadership, our model emphasizes student engagement in school-based market operations.

Since its inception in 2017, the Second Harvest School Partnerships Program has served over one million meals to students and their families across 65 partner sites in six counties throughout Central Florida.

A student's hunger for food impedes their hunger for knowledge. Investing in the wellbeing of our youth means a brighter future for us all.

Read on to see how your school or organization can continue to invest in students in your community.

# About the Program

In 2016, Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida partnered with Feeding America to assess their youth hunger programs. The partnership culminated in a community needs assessment that identified a critical lack of food resources available to students in middle and high school. Thus, the Second Harvest School Partnerships Program emerged to increase food access to this underserved demographic in our service area while reducing the stigma often attached to the utilization of such resources.

In Central Florida, **1 in 5** children may experience hunger.

That's **153,220** children without adequate access to nutritious food to live a healthy life.

With a twist on traditional pantries the Second Harvest School Partnerships Program brings students, schools and communities together in alleviating hunger.



Our model is unique in its promotion of client choice and student engagement in the markets. Each school is strongly encouraged to identify a Student Market Manager and/or Management Team. Some schools have even implemented a service-learning course to support this element of the program. When students are empowered to take ownership of the market, they build transferable skills in program coordination, marketing and communications, food safety and inventory/budget management.

# Partner Roles



The responsibilities of the School Partnerships Program are divided between School Leadership and Community Partners. Collaboration and communication are key in fostering a successful and sustainable program.

## Schools

Engage students; store and distribute food.

## Sponsors

Provide food, fundraising and/or logistical support.

# Partner Roles



## School Partners

- Approve program implementation with school administration and leadership
- Identify Site Coordinators to oversee the program and ensure compliance
- Identify food storage space, adhering to food safety protocols
- Establish consistent distribution schedule and advertise market hours
- Engage students in program operations, providing opportunities for leadership

## Community Partners and/or Sponsors

- Approve program implementation with organization board and/or leadership
- Identify Liaisons to oversee the program and ensure compliance
- Determine strategy to support operational and/or financial needs of site(s)
- **Depending on the partnership arrangement, Community Partners may be responsible for procuring and delivering food to their schools.**

# Getting Started

## School Partners

### Determining Readiness

To ensure success, schools must be prepared to operate the program and maintain partnership commitments. When determining readiness, please consider the following:

- Do we have the support of our District Superintendent and School Principal?
- Is there a dedicated, reliable staff member that can take on the responsibilities of the School Site Coordinator?
- Do we have space for safe food storage?
- Do we have any community partners that would be interested in supporting this program?
- Can we commit to this program for more than one year?
- Are there students or student organizations willing to support market operations?



### Identifying School Site Coordinator(s)

The School Site Coordinator is a dedicated representative from the school that works with Second Harvest and the Community Partner to operate the program. The time commitment varies based on distribution frequency and student participation. The Site Coordinator is responsible for the following:

- Receiving deliveries and coordinating distributions/market operating days
- Monitoring quality and safety of food distributed
- Empowering student ownership of program activities
- Engaging and supporting students as needed
- Communicating with Community Partner regularly

# Program Models

Program models vary by school level. These models have been thoughtfully and intentionally designed to align with student capacity for independence and responsibility. Regardless of program model, distribution should be organized, held in an accessible location and follow a consistent schedule.

## Elementary Schools

**Emergency Food Pantry (EFP)** - In the event that a parent or guardian approaches the school requesting food assistance, EFPs provide short-term support and address immediate needs.



## Middle Schools, High Schools and Post-Secondary Institutions

**Permanent Model** - The permanent model operates much like a traditional pantry. This is the recommended approach for schools with available classroom or closet space.

**Mobile Market Unit (MMU)** - The MMU model is intended for schools with limited space. Modeled after bookshelves, these wheeled units can be easily closed, locked and stored between uses. A build guide is available for anyone interested in creating these units.

# Food Safety

There are School Market guidelines that are in place to ensure the safety of your students and their families.

- ✓ Store all products in a clean, temperature controlled and food safe location.
  - Non-perishables should be stored between 40 and 80 degrees Fahrenheit
  - Perishables should be stored in appropriate refrigeration units
  - Thermometers and temperature logs are required to monitor food storage
  - Floors should be swept and shelves should be wiped regularly
  - Storage should be well ventilated
- ✓ Keep products at least 6 inches above the floor and away from the ceiling.
  - Shelving should be non-porous or treated to protect against spills
  - Non-perishables should be kept away from direct sources of heating and cooling
  - Heat-producing pipes should be insulated
- ✓ Store products away from cleaning materials and/or toxic chemicals.
  - Non-food items such as paper products and personal hygiene products should be stored separately from food
- ✓ Store all products in a secure location and lock storage area when not in use.
- ✓ Rotate your stock and institute a FIFO ("first in, first out") system. Check dates regularly.
- ✓ Ensure regular, periodic pest control inspections by a licensed pest control company.

# Identifying the Community Partner

## Selecting Your Community Partner

Community Partners or Sponsors increase the success and sustainability of the program. A Community Partner can provide support to the School Site Coordinator by supplying volunteers for program events, contributing financial resources and procuring food product to stock your School Market.



Our current list of Community Partners includes churches, Rotary Clubs, and local food pantries.

Typically, Community Partners are non-profit organizations. However, with some restrictions, for-profit businesses are also welcome to serve in this role. Regardless of status, partners should have a vested interest in supporting students in our community.

## Building an Effective Partnership

Once a potential partner has been identified, schedule a planning meeting to discuss the program details and expectations. Establish clear communication guidelines early on to ensure a positive and effective working relationship.



# Identifying the Student Team

The School Partnerships Program is designed to be hands-on experience for students. Student ownership minimizes stigma associated with food assistance. Student engagement is highly recommended when working with middle school and older educational levels.

## Best Practices to Engage Students

- Develop a service-learning course to operate the program. Several partner schools have successfully incorporated the program into Culinary, Agriculture, Civics and Sociology electives.
- Select a student group to oversee program activities.
- Establish team roles to delegate responsibilities and support effective communication and teamwork.
- Empower students to design the program name and logo. The brand may be featured on signage and reusable bags to advertise the program.
- Offer volunteer hours to incentivize student participation.
- Incorporate nutrition education and meal preparation into program activities.
- Regularly collect and assess student feedback to ensure program reflects their interests and needs.



# Checklist

## School Partners

Please read the requirements carefully. Completion of these steps is necessary to participate in the program.

- ☐ Identify School Site Coordinator(s)
- ☐ Identify food storage or market space
- ☐ Select program models and activities
- ☐ Identify Community Partner and discuss expectations
- ☐ Identify and engage Student Market Management Team
- ☐ Complete food safety training
- ☐ Establish operating procedures for all program activities
- ☐ Have students design a logo and name for your market
- ☐ Advertise program activities to students and families
- ☐ Sign agreement with Community Partner
- ☐ Celebrate with a grand opening!

# Getting Started

## Community Partners

### Determining Readiness

To ensure success, Community Partners must be prepared to support the program and maintain partnership commitments. When determining readiness, please consider the following:

- Do we have the support of our leadership?
- Is there a dedicated, reliable staff member that can take on the responsibilities of the Sponsor Coordinator?
- Do we have the capacity to support this program?
  - If financial, how much are we able to contribute?
  - If logistical, can we assist with procuring, picking up and delivering food to the school partner?



### Identifying Community Partner Liaison(s)

The Community Partner Coordinator is a dedicated representative from the sponsoring organization that works with the School Partner to operate the program. The time commitment varies based on distribution frequency and student participation. The Liaison may be responsible for the following:

- Coordinating product orders with School Partner
- Supplying volunteer support for program events, as needed
- Responsibly fundraising
- Communicating with School Partner regularly

# Checklist

## Community Partners

Please read the requirements carefully. Completion of these steps is necessary to participate in the program.

- ☐ Identify Community Partner or Sponsor Liaison(s)
- ☐ Review program models and activities
- ☐ Assess capacity to provide financial and logistical support
- ☐ Discuss partnership expectations with School Partner
- ☐ Identify and engage volunteers team
- ☐ Complete food safety training and submit certification
- ☐ Establish operating procedures for all program activities
- ☐ Sign agreement with School Partner and maintain in your records for Agency Relations Compliance Monitoring.
- ☐ Celebrate the grand opening!

# Contact Us



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