

HOW TO OFFER BULK MEALS DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS

The Osage Prairie YMCA Partners with Woods Grocery Store in a Grocery Grab for Kids in the Summer

KEY FEATURES OF THIS MODEL

Sponsor

The Osage Prairie YMCA partners with the local grocery store, community volunteers, and staff to deliver a bulk rural summer non-congregate program.

Program

Called the Grocery Grab, each child receives groceries for 7 days comprising the equivalent of 7 breakfasts and 7 lunches.

Distribution

Distribution happens at the grocery store and through a refrigerated truck that goes to selected parking lots throughout the region.



1

PARTNER

Find community partners like a local grocery store and locations where groceries can be sorted and packed



2

SPREAD THE WORD

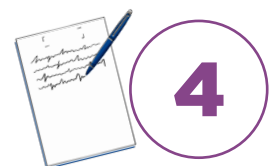
Employ social media, church groups, and school listservs to share the time, place, and process for the bulk program



3

CREATE MENUS

Develop menus and procurement orders for groceries equal to 5-7 breakfasts and lunches



4

REGISTER PARTICIPANTS

Give each child a unique QR code to identify them at distributions



5

PACK BAGS

Enlist staff and volunteers to pack groceries on day of distribution



6

GROCERY GRAB!

Cars line up and each child is signed in with QR codes. Then staff and volunteers put the bags directly into the popped trunk of each car

HOW BULK MEALS MEET THE NEEDS OF FAMILIES

Osage Prairie YMCA, Missouri

“EVERYBODY SHOULD DO THIS,” urges Samie McCollough, Senior Associate Director of the Osage Prairie YMCA, when asked about the summer bulk meal program she runs in Butler, Missouri and surrounding towns.

There are many reasons why she and her community are enthusiastic about the program, which she calls a “grocery grab” in part to avoid the stigma associated with free food distribution locally. First among them is serving 1,500 kids each week, most of whom would not have access to breakfast and lunch options during the summer months otherwise. One mother of five interviewed about her experience participating in the program added,



I was just so thankful for the grocery market. With groceries [prices] going up as much as they have. This will help us survive the summer. You know, because I look at what I do, basically pays the groceries, driving a bus. But I am laid off in the summer. So for them to have the grocery grab, I was just like, oh, praise the Lord. We’ll make it.”

The key distinction between a bulk meal program and other forms of meal service is that in bulk programs, families receive fresh and shelf-stable groceries equivalent to 7 breakfasts and 7 lunches instead of prepared meals. Reimbursements and grants from organizations like No Kid Hungry make it possible for McCollough to cover the costs of operating the summer grocery grab.



HOW A SCHOOL DISTRICT CAN OFFER HOME DELIVERY OF MEALS DURING THE SUMMER

Arizona's Humboldt Unified School District lets families choose delivery to their doorstep

KEY FEATURES OF THE MODEL

Model

Transportation

Benefits

Weekly home delivery of 5 breakfasts and 5 lunches per child, including gallons of milk, that are put in a cooler at the family's home

Food and nutrition uses their own fleet and partners with transportation to use buses and bus drivers

Ideal for families without transportation or other barriers to participation; employs the school bus drivers and kitchen teams for additional hours over the summer; an investment in the school food program



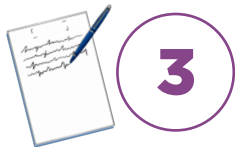
FIND DELIVERY VEHICLES

Consider partnering with the school transportation team



GET THE WORD OUT

Use district email service, radio announcements, and post on social media



HELP FAMILIES APPLY

Online map shows applicants eligibility and those who qualify are assigned a number and entered into a master spreadsheet



CREATE MENUS AND ROUTES

Use commodities to build menus and plot out ways to deliver efficiently



BAG BREAKFASTS AND LUNCHES

Kitchen teams prep bag contents on Friday and store in dairy crates in the fridge for Monday morning distribution



LOAD BAGS FOR DISTRIBUTION

Bags loaded into vehicles along with a food and nutrition team member and a driver from the transportation team



HOME DELIVERY

Bags delivered to caregivers or dropped in a cooler if they aren't at home

REACHING KIDS WITH HOME DELIVERY DURING THE SUMMER

Humboldt Unified School District, Prescott Valley, Arizona

It is 90 degrees and sunny at 7:30 AM in arid Prescott Valley, Arizona as school buses and vans pull into the middle school's kitchen parking lot to pick up crates of meals for home delivery. It will reach 100 today and many other days over the summer.



As summer goes on, parents don't want to come to town and kids do not want to walk to congregate sites because of the heat,"

says Jody Buckle, the Director of School Nutrition at Humboldt Unified School District, who manages an array of summer meals models across this vast district.

From the perspectives of caregivers, the convenience of home delivery is unmatched. "It's amazing, especially with our busy schedule," one mother shared. Another appreciate the ease of use.



The program is useful because it provides something that's already ready to go."



Those who live far from the center of town or with limited transportation benefit. "It's been great because we live kind of far out, so it doesn't lend itself for us to come in, so this really helped us out," reported a couple with two children who are homeschooled. Another family cited car trouble as a barrier that home delivery overcomes.

Meal deliveries arrive once a week and are handed to the caregiver or placed in a cooler participants know to have ready if they will not be home during the delivery window.

HOW TO BRING BULK MEALS TO KIDS AROUND TOWN

Monticello School Food Service in Arkansas brings a mix of bulk and prepared meals to rural apartment blocks and high-traffic parking lots

KEY FEATURES OF THE MODEL

Model

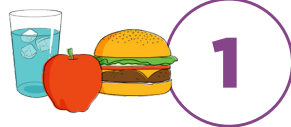
Value to District

Benefits for Families

Children receive an equivalent of 7 breakfasts and 7 lunches in three bags - fresh produce, frozen items, and shelf stable snacks and cereals

Employing staff over the summer months, local food purchasing, and costs fully covered through reimbursement rate

Covers grocery costs for the week; a mix of prepared meals and bulk items gives families flexibility; bringing food directly to apartment complexes increases access to most in need



1

CREATE MENUS AND GUIDANCE FOR COOKING AND STORAGE

Outline daily menus, storage and cooking instructions for families to submit to state agencies for approval and include in the bags given to families



2

START SUMMER MEAL PREP BEFORE END OF SCHOOL YEAR

Use excess capacity from kitchen teams and commodity products to create and freeze meals for summer



3

GET THE WORD OUT

Use Facebook, district email, and word of mouth to share details of distribution and featured products. Seek approval from managers of apartment complexes to distribute food



4

PREP AND PACK BAGS

Monday through Wednesday, four staff members (7:00 - 11:00, 4 hours a day) cook and bag food



5

LOAD BAGS INTO VEHICLES

Pack bags into school bus and other school vehicles



6

DISTRIBUTE BAGS AND SHARE SUMMER EBT INFORMATION

Pickup at elementary school followed by distribution at two apartment complexes and Walmart parking lot

BRINGING A VARIETY OF FOOD TO KIDS AROUND THE DISTRICT

Monticello School District, Arkansas

The gate to a low-set housing complex creaked open as a Monticello School District bus edged into the parking lot. Kids and caregivers started streaming out to collect a weekly supply of food equivalent to 7 breakfasts and 7 lunches. Amanda West, Child Nutrition Director, and her trusted staff distribute bags of fresh produce, frozen meals and ingredients, shelf-stable items, and milk, greeting students and caregivers they knew from school, church, and other community organizations. Frozen, high-quality local beef, local tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and lettuce featured during this week's delivery, alongside shelf-stable cereals, juices, and staples. The team serves upwards of 350 children each week during the summer. As one caregiver stated,



These meals have changed everything for our summer."

The variety of food meets the needs of different types of program participants. A young boy receiving the bags tells Amanda that he likes the frozen meal (prepared fresh by district staff and sealed) because it is easy to make for himself while he is home on his own during the day. A mother of three reported that she liked having the local frozen beef because it could be used in many ways throughout the week. "You can do different things with ground beef. You can fix

tacos, spaghettis, you can fix hamburger. It's just so much that you can do with the ground beef that's in there. So you have meals out through the week that you can do. Hey, we'll have this today. We have this tomorrow." Another mother of six, two with special needs, also appreciated the mix of options. "To me, both [prepared meals and bulk ingredients] would be great. The fully cooked meals or the meals where

