



EMERGENCY FOOD NETWORK

Sustenance

Newsletter • Fall 2023

Pierce County Students Return To School

What this means for food-insecure students

It's back to school season in Pierce County! When we think about back to school at EFN, we don't think about backpacks, homework, or buses – instead, we think about the importance of school meals. EFN believes that no person should go hungry, and school meals are an important component of reducing student hunger.

In Pierce County, 52% of all public school students qualify for free or reduced-cost lunch*. That is more than 70,000 youth whose families struggle to provide nourishing meals for their growing kids. School meals are a lifeline for many of these families, especially because school meals are standardized to ensure they provide balanced nutrition, including fruits, vegetables, proteins, grains, and milk. The standards for school meals also ensure that students receive different subgroups of vegetables daily, including dark leafy greens, legumes, and red and orange vegetables. Even grown-ups can work on getting these nutrients every day!

An exciting development is the adoption of HB 1238, new legislation that requires elementary schools to provide free meals for all if 40% or more of their students qualify for free and reduced lunch. This will help students in more than 20 Pierce County schools access nutritious food. Open access to school meals helps students learn better, relieves financial and administrative burden on families, reduces stigmas, and improves community health. While HB 1238 is an important step in increasing access to school meals, it leaves out middle and high school students who need nutritious meals just as much as students in elementary school.

EFN stocks food pantry shelves across Pierce County to fill in the gaps where students and their families go hungry. You can support by contributing food, funds, or your time at a volunteer opportunity! Consider donating food to support our Break Bags Food Drives (read more on page 2) or donate funds to help us buy bulk items and transport them to our partners. Thank you for partnering with us to feed students and their families this fall!

“In Pierce County, 52% of all public school students qualify for free or reduced-cost lunch. That’s more than 70,000 youth whose families struggle to provide nourishing meals for their growing kids.”



*Data Source: OSPI 2022

Fall Break Bags Is Coming Up!

Feed hungry kids during fall



Volunteers at Spring Break Bags prepared 2,000 bags for Pierce County students!

Students experiencing food insecurity don't just need food during break – they need food they can prepare and access themselves. We need your help to collect kid-friendly items for our Break Bags Program that students in the Tacoma and Clover Park School Districts, can safely eat and prepare while their parents are at work. EFN is proud to provide Break Bags to the community in partnership with St. Leo's Food Connection.

Please think about buying an extra one of these items at the store, telling friends and family to do the same, or hosting a food drive with your club or company! We are collecting **applesauce pouches, granola bars, cereal cups, and cracker sandwiches**, and our goal is 8,000 of each item! We suggest each group focus their efforts on one item (of any brand). You might set a goal for your food drive of 500, 1,000, or 2,000+ of an item. We need to collect all donations by **September 29**.

Donations can be dropped off Monday-Friday between 8AM - 4PM
EFN Warehouse: 3318 92nd St S, Lakewood WA 98499
Questions? Please contact CarolineC@efoodnet.org
or call (253)584-1040

Abundance 2023

Mark your calendars for EFN's Abundance Dinner and Auction



Abundance 2022!

Tickets are now available for EFN's Abundance Dinner & Auction! Join us on October 28th at the McGavick Conference Center for a delicious dinner, exciting live and silent auctions, and a meaningful opportunity to support our work. This year's Abundance is particularly important as our network is currently serving more monthly visits than any other time in our history. Your support at Abundance will help EFN continue to provide our partners with a consistent supply of diverse and nutritious food. Tickets for Abundance are available at: efoodnet.ejoinme.org/Register2023

Our live auction features fun trips and experiences, including many exclusive to Abundance. Some of this year's live items include a cruise around the Sound and a snowy getaway to Park City, Utah. Sponsorship opportunities for Abundance are still available. Please contact Clare@efoodnet.org to learn more.



Our Mission: To provide Pierce County with a consistent, diverse, and nutritious food supply so that no person goes hungry.

Addition Of New Partner Sites

Addressing gaps in food access

EFN is happy and proud to announce the expansion of our network, with the addition of four new Partner Programs joining us this summer! We are always striving to identify and address gaps in the emergency food system to increase equitable access to food. Our new partners are doing innovative work in historically underserved communities.

We are thrilled to welcome A Common Thread, Feeding Feasible Feasts, Multicultural Child and Family Hope Center, and The Prison Scholar Fund to our network. These new partners provide increased access to food by filling gaps within our distribution network, creating more support for our neighbors most in need.

Learn More:

EFOODNET.ORG/FIND-FOOD

-  **A Common Thread (ACT)**
www.actacommonthread.com
-  **Feeding Feasible Feasts (FFF)**
www.feedingfeasiblefeastsllc.org
-  **Multicultural Child and Family Hope Center (MCFHC)**
www.mcfhc.org
-  **The Prison Scholar Fund (PSF)**
www.prisonscholars.org



Empty Bowls

Local artists ladle up their support



It's autumn! Many things happen this time of the year – harvest, slowly creeping chilly weather, and classes beginning again. What immediately comes to mind at EFN is beautiful, handcrafted bowls and cups, bread, and hot soup.

We are inviting everyone to celebrate community and feeding our neighbors at Charles Wright Academy on November 18 from 1:00pm-3:00pm. Admission is free to all!

Support EFN by shopping and appreciating our local artists' work, including bowls of every size, color and material! Enjoy free soup from local businesses. Savor the experience of warmth, being nourished, and supporting our neighbors in need.

Every purchase and donation made at this event supports us in our mission to ensure no person goes hungry. In the spirit of celebration, this year we are introducing the Community Soup Choice Awards! Find out more about Empty Bowls by using the link below:





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Lakewood, WA 98499

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U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
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ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED



1 in 10

Ratio of People Who
Are Food Insecure in
Pierce County*



75+

Food Pantries,
Meal Sites,
and Shelters
Served by EFN



*2020 Source: Feeding America

Your support is changing lives.

Look inside to see how YOUR support of Emergency Food Network is making a difference in the lives of our neighbors in need!

Here's what we accomplished together in 2022:

**13
Million**

Pounds of Food
Distributed by EFN

**2
Million**

Visits Made to
Food Programs in
Pierce County

390,136

Pounds of Food
Delivered Through
EFN's Home
Delivery Program



\$0.50 = 1 meal

For every \$1
donated EFN
distributes 2 meals for
a family in need.



Stay up to date on
what's happening
at EFN!

efoodnet.org



Newsletter print date: 9.8.23