

“(Without this) that kid who just came in for oranges, he might be going to football practice hungry.”

- Willie
Fairfield High staff



Fairfield High staff who help distribute food to students in need.

YOU'VE HELPED THIS SCHOOL FIGHT HUNGER ON A WHOLE NEW LEVEL

For years, Willie Bible and other staff at Fairfield High have worked together to help fill the hunger gap for their students. Teachers kept their drawers stocked with snacks purchased on their own grocery runs, or instant noodles bought in bulk. But Bible, who grew up watching his father distribute food to neighbors in need in San Francisco, knew that **even more could be possible with a little community support.**

That's where you came in. Thanks to generous supporters like you, the Food Bank was able to partner with Fairfield High — and the school snack drawer has undergone a transformation.

The school's food pantry now takes up an entire storeroom, accessible to students, families and community members on a weekly basis, or as the need arises.

Through the Food Bank's Kids Nutrition on Weekends (K-NOW) program, students facing hunger take home packs of easy-to-prepare food to ensure they have nourishing options on weekends, when school lunch and breakfast aren't available. And there is plenty of fresh produce available through our Farm 2 Kids



KEEPING A PROMISE TO OUR COMMUNITY

CEO MESSAGE

I'm sure you don't need me to tell you that these next few months will be busy ones! As we look towards the holiday season, I want to share another "event" that may not be on your calendar – but is worthy of celebration.

I'm proud to report that in December, the Food Bank will wrap up our three-year strategic plan. Since 2021, this plan has been our north star in the fight against hunger. With your support, we've made technological and data improvements, helped our agency partners scale up to serve more food, and improved health outcomes for our neighbors facing hunger.

These past three years, the hunger landscape in Contra Costa and Solano Counties has shifted in new and challenging ways. But **because of supportive hunger fighters like you, we continue to adapt to meet the need today** – while making foundational changes that will benefit our community for years to come.

This coming year, we also have another

milestone to look forward to: our 50-year anniversary. It's incredible to think that nearly 50 years ago, we made a commitment to our community: to make sure no one goes hungry. In this edition, you'll read about some of the ways you're helping us keep that promise, like our partnerships with local schools, and the milestones you've allowed us to reach through our strategic plan.

There is so much going on in the world right now, but one place we can continue to have a direct impact is in our local community. As we enter the season where food and community matter most, I hope you'll remember the impact that you make by coming together with your neighbors. With you by our side, we can achieve so much.



Caitlin Sly

Caitlin Sly
President and CEO

P.S. We're hard at work on the Food Bank's next strategic plan, and I'd love to have your input. What hunger-related issues matter to you? hello@foodbankccs.org



Three Years Later

You've helped us accomplish so much during our three-year strategic plan. Here's a sample of what we achieved together since 2021. **Full progress report coming in the new year!**

TOGETHER WE ARE CLOSING THE MEAL GAP

Feeding America estimates a person facing hunger needs help with **169 meals a year**. In 2021, we provided a neighbor with about 150 meals each year – **now it's 168**.

884,000

MORE MEALS PROVIDED

by agency partners each year
through capacity-building

34

NEW AGENCY PARTNERS

to reach underserved communities

65%

OF FOOD DISTRIBUTED IS RATED

"choose often" using Feeding America's
nutrition guidelines

UPGRADED

EQUIPMENT AND SOFTWARE

are helping us work faster and
improve our programs

Continued from the front cover.

program, so students can drop by and grab a healthy snack when hunger hits – or take fresh fruits and veggies home.

“(Without this) that kid who just came in for oranges, he might be going to football practice hungry,” says Bible. “And if a kid comes in late and missed breakfast I can say, ‘Yeah, come in, grab some food.’ It makes a big difference.”

Erin Snipps, the school’s library media tech and another food pantry helper, says **with increased support has come increased trust**. As students feel more comfortable asking for fruit and other healthy snacks, they’re also more likely to open up about other struggles they might be facing at school or home. “When we send out emails about the pantry, we always say ‘don’t be embarrassed to come...’” she says. “I think the kids finally realize we don’t judge them.”

Your support has also helped **get students excited about healthy foods** that aren’t always accessible due to limited shopping options or tight family budgets. When the school got a shipment of kiwis from Farm 2 Kids, Bible recalls being surprised when they initially sat on shelves.

But, after talking to students, he learned many of them simply weren’t familiar with the fruit.

“To me, that was incredible,” he said. “So what I did was set a table up, cut the kiwi up and they could come in and get a sample. Then the kiwi started moving.”



DONATE TODAY

foodbankccs.org/table





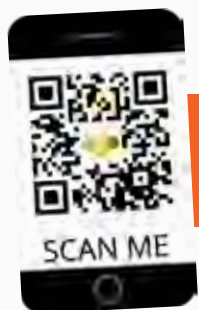
Student carries a couple of K-NOW packs

Did You Know?

Supporters like you have allowed us to partner with **122 schools** across Contra Costa and Solano Counties! Here is a closer look at some of the ways you make an impact for kids and students:

Kids Nutrition On Weekends (K-NOW) packs provide kids with nourishing meals and snacks to bridge the gap between school meals. This year, you've helped us improve menus to provide kids with even more nutritious, fresh options. Check out our unboxing video to see what's inside a pack!

Refrigerated Food Lockers are coming to several of our college and nonprofit partners in Contra Costa County. You may have used similar lockers to pick up packages – these will help neighbors access food without missing work or classes.



WHAT'S IN A PACK?

foodbankccs.org/KNOW





Supporter Spotlight: Travis Credit Union

Visitors to Travis Credit Union can't miss their partnership with the Food Bank! At every one of their 19 branches in Contra Costa and Solano Counties, they make a food donation barrel available to the public.

"Food insecurity is on the rise, which is why we believe every donation counts, said David Zavala, Community Engagement Officer at Travis Credit Union. Since this partnership began almost a decade ago, Travis Credit Union has collected more than 193,000 pounds of food for neighbors in need!

Collecting food at each branch is just one way that Travis Credit Union has contributed to the Food Bank over the years. **Travis Credit Union also matches employee donations dollar-for-dollar, to double their giving power.** Since 2020 we have seen an increase in employee giving, which has helped provide over 60,000 meals.

"Supporting our local food bank is about people helping people, a core value shared by credit unions," said Sarita Sudduth, AVP and Regional Manager of Retail Branches at Travis Credit Union. "It ensures that those in need have access to food while building a stronger community where we all look out for one another."

Thank you to Travis Credit Union for your partnership and providing another easy, convenient place for our broader community to give back too!

FIND A TRAVIS CREDIT UNION NEAR YOU



DROP OFF FOOD

foodbankccs.org/food-donations



Super Siblings Volunteer

Super siblings Gabby and Megan started volunteering for the Food Bank two years ago and show no signs of slowing down.

“The most important thing is seeing the impact you have almost immediately,” said Megan, a rising sophomore at Heritage High School in Brentwood. Gabby, a student at UC Irvine, agrees: “After I volunteer I feel way better about myself...even though it’s just a little, I at least make a difference in people’s lives.”

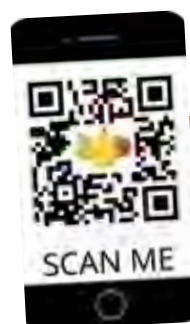
After seeing our community’s great need for food firsthand, they decided to lend even more support with a Virtual Food Drive. With help from their mom and volunteer-matching funds from her employer, they have raised more than \$2,000 – that’s 4,000+ meals!

Thank you Gabby and Megan for setting a wonderful example for others. Your future is bright!

Keep up with Megan and Gabby as they volunteer by following their Instagram @GabMeg_WeCare!

YOU CAN DO IT TOO

A Virtual Food Drive is an easy, meaningful addition to your holiday party, office bake-off or community event. Getting started only takes a few minutes – and you’ll have access to our NEW toolkit filled with signs, flyers and social media posts to help you take your fundraising to the next level. Set up your drive today!



START YOUR DRIVE

foodbankccs.org/VirtualFoodDrive



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Bean Soup Fills Empty Bowls

This bean soup from our agency partners at Loaves and Fishes is always a big hit at our annual Empty Bowls event – and now you can make it at home!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 20 oz. bag of bean soup
- 2 cups each ham, chicken and mild sausage links, diced (optional)
- 2 cups each onions and bell peppers, diced
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 2 teaspoons basil
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder

DIRECTIONS

1. Cook beans until tender according to directions. Save the cooking liquid.
2. In a separate pan combine all other ingredients. Saute until meats are cooked through and veggies are tender.
3. Combine meat and veggies with beans. Warm together and enjoy!



SAVE YOUR SPOT

foodbankccs.org/EmptyBowls



PREFER SOMEONE ELSE DOES THE COOKING?

Empty Bowls 2024 is on Oct. 12 in Fairfield and Oct. 13 in Concord. Enjoy a cozy bowl of soup while you learn all the ways you are changing lives in your community. **Tickets are going fast!**

AT-THE-TABLE

What's Inside

- Wrapping up: Three-Year Strategic Plan
- CEO's Message: Keeping a Promise to Our Community
- Young Siblings Provide 4,000+ Meals