FOODBANK FOR THE HEARTLAND

FY 2026 SCHOOL-BASED MOBILE PANTRY PROGRAM REPORT

JULY 1, 2025–JUNE 30, 2026



Providing Nourishment & Hope

The School-Based Mobile Pantry Program helps alleviate childhood hunger in the Heartland through the provision of food to children and their families at school. These one-day, recurring distributions—located in parking lots of school buildings—are intended to provide a more readily accessible source of food assistance to low-income families.

Families may receive fresh produce, protein, dry and canned goods, and bakery items, allowing them to further stretch their budget and pay for other critical needs such as rent, utilities, childcare, and medicine.

> **It hurts when there are times in your life when you're struggling. As a dad, this is my job. And it's hard when you have a hard time providing. I don't want to feel like a failure.**
>
> **— School–Based Mobile Pantry Recipient, Council Bluffs, IA**







This is one of the many programs the Food Bank supports to fight childhood hunger, and is designed to make staple grocery items available to students and their families at no cost.

The School-Based Mobile Pantry Program builds upon the success of the Food Bank's Mobile Pantry Program, which serves communities that have a high need but limited food resources—and our BackPack program, which provides weekend meals to children. Thanks to the generous support of our donors and partners, school-based mobile pantries provide free, healthy food to children and their families.

Making a Direct Impact in the Heartland

1 IN 5 CHILDREN
IN OUR SERVICE AREA IS FACING HUNGER—THAT'S MORE THAN 97,400 CHILDREN.

296,663 MEALS
DISTRIBUTED THROUGH SCHOOL-BASED MOBILE PANTRIES.

355,994 POUNDS OF FOOD
PROVIDED TO FAMILIES IN NEED THROUGH SCHOOL-BASED MOBILE PANTRIES.

12,382 HEARTLAND HOUSEHOLD FOOD KITS
—INCLUDING NON-PERISHABLE ITEMS, FRESH PRODUCE, & BREAD—DISTRIBUTED TO HEARTLAND NEIGHBORS.

93 DISTRIBUTIONS
DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR TO 8 SCHOOL DISTRICTS ACROSS OUR SERVICE AREA.

Community Partners Providing Hope

In FY 2026, the Food Bank partnered with eight participating schools/districts to serve 8,247 households through 93 distributions. These partnerships also strengthen engagement between parents and school staff, who typically volunteer at distributions. Schools serve as a critical hub, providing a familiar environment located close to families in need.

Our partners include:

- **Council Bluffs Community School District** (Franklin Elementary)
- **DC West Community Schools** (Elementary School)

Distribution locations in ( )

- **Lewis Central Community Schools** (Kreft Primary School)
- **Millard Public Schools** (Administration Building)
- **North Platte Public Schools** (High School)
- **Ralston Public Schools** (High School)
- **Omaha Public Schools** (Wakonda, Miller Park, and Gifford Park Elementary Schools)
- **Wakefield Community Schools** (Elementary School)



The Impact of Food Insecurity on Children

Providing consistent access to nutritious food is vital for children's well-being. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, hunger's effect on the body directly impacts school performance. Research shows children from families who are not sure where their next meal is coming from are more likely to have lower math scores and repeat a grade, among other challenges.

According to the USDA, there is also a strong connection between hunger and chronic diseases like high blood pressure, heart disease, and diabetes. The more meals children miss, the more hunger affects their minds and bodies.

Fighting Childhood Hunger in the Heartland

Thousands of children across Nebraska and western Iowa are forced to deal with the constant anxiety that can accompany not knowing where their next meal is coming from. To help mitigate the debilitating physical, mental, and emotional health risks caused by food insecurity, the Food Bank's School-Based Mobile Pantry Program reinforces the importance of nutritious options with a special emphasis on fresh produce. This program gives students the healthy resources they need to learn and grow at home, allowing them to devote time and energy to succeeding in school.

> **It means everything for me and my family. All the prices are so high. There are seven people in our house. I appreciate anything right now. Everything has gone up, and it's difficult.**
>
> **—School-Based Mobile Pantry Recipient, Ralston, NE**

Conclusion

Through your support, the Food Bank remains committed to providing healthy meals to Heartland children so they can focus on what matters most—learning, growing, and having fun. Thanks to you, the School-Based Mobile Pantry Program meets a critical need across the Food Bank's 93-county service area. As Heartland families continue to navigate economic hardships, they need our support now more than ever. Through your continued generosity, we are making an impact in the overall well-being of children and their families—creating a healthier Heartland, one mobile pantry at a time.

FOODBANK FOR THE HEARTLAND | PARTNER FOOD BANK OF FEEDING AMERICA

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