

No Kid Hungry Maryland awards \$15,000 to St. Mary's County Public Schools

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Leonardtwn, MD - August 9, 2019 – “Hungry students aren’t ready to learn,” says Principal Consalvo at Esperanza Middle School, “I see it on a daily basis - that is why we are making the change to Grab and Go breakfast.” Starting this fall, St. Mary’s County Public Schools is making sure that all middle school students can start their day with a healthy breakfast.

Over the summer, three St. Mary’s County Public Schools (SMCPS) received a total of \$15,000 from No Kid Hungry Maryland. Esperanza Middle, Margaret Brent Middle, and Leonardtown Middle all used the grants to purchase “Grab and Go” mobile carts so that students can easily pick up a breakfast meal on their way to class. “We are proud to work in partnership with the SMCPS staff to make breakfast part of the school day – it’s a successful strategy that both reduces hunger and improves school attendance,” said Kevin Large, Director of No Kid Hungry Maryland.

The new “Grab and Go” breakfast program will be available as students arrive to school each morning, making it convenient for students to pick up breakfast on their way to the class. “Students will now be able to choose a healthy breakfast without having to miss out on that critical morning time to organize themselves for the day, check in with teachers for additional academic support, and catch up and socialize with their peers,” said Principal Edwards at Margaret Brent Middle School.

Principal Dennie at Leonardtown Middle School adds, “students will be able to eat their breakfast while their teacher is taking attendance and morning announcements are being made.” She also wants to make sure that all parents know that “breakfast is available and encouraged for ALL students -- if a student qualifies for free lunch, they also qualify for free breakfast which includes fruit, dairy, and whole grains.”

SMCPS’s fourth middle school, Spring Ridge Middle, participates in the Maryland Meals for Achievement Program. This state funding supplements federal school meal funding to allow SMCPS to provide breakfast in the classroom for all students. Megan Doran, Director of Food and Nutrition Services at SMCPS, is excited to begin the “Grab and Go” breakfast program this coming fall at the other three middle schools. “Starting this fall, students will be able to grab breakfast as they arrive at school in the morning. In the past, they had to come go to the cafeteria to get breakfast. This will make it easier for them to get their breakfast and get to class on time,” Doran explained.

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