Every Meal Matters
FAQ for Nutrition Service Staff and other School Administrators

What is Every Meal Matters?

Every Meal Matters is a pilot project supported by Hunger-Free Oregon to engage students and families in decisions made about their school's meal service program, and to support school nutrition staff in understanding their unique community needs.

Every Meal Matters will connect the Nutrition Service Director and other school nutrition staff with families in one school to support changes to school meal programs that reflect the needs of the school and its distinct populations.

As part of the project, the participating school would receive a small grant of $5,000 to support community-driven changes to their school meal program.

If you have already thought about wanting community input to change aspects of your meal program (i.e. culturally appropriate menus, alternative breakfast service models, etc), but lack the time or resources needed to pursue this work - Every Meal Matters could be a great program for you. This project provides a special opportunity to connect family members to nutrition services in order to build relationships and create pathways for increased family voice related to school meals, with support provided by Hunger-Free Oregon and a contracted community organization that already has connections with your school.

Why is this work important?

This work is important with the passing of the [new school meal provisions in the Student Success Act](#), which will require all schools to make new changes providing expanded access to all school meals, with a particular focus on breakfast in some schools.

But even more importantly, school meal participation in Multnomah County is lower than the state's average, despite having higher rates of food insecurity and hunger. What's more, participation in the program seems to be on a downward trend, often due to a lack of resources and support for school nutrition services. Yet, the data is clear that students do better in school [when they have the nutrition they need to focus and learn.](#) Through this project, we hope to learn how engaging families and students in changes made to their local school meal program can increase participation.

Partners for a
HUNGER-FREE
OREGON

Who can participate in Every Meal Matters?
Hunger-Free Oregon is seeking to work with one school site community in the <u>Reynolds</u>, <u>David Douglas</u>, or <u>Portland Public</u> school districts.

When is Every Meal Matters taking place?
Work will begin in March 2020, with the goal of having one community-driven school meal change implemented by December 2020.

What will Every Meal Matters entail?
Every Meal Matters will require a significant commitment of time, resources, and expertise from the people and organizations who choose to participate in the project. It is a requirement of this project that there be an active community organization and/or parent group committed to participation. A small grant of $7,000 will be provided to support the partnering community organization, in addition to the $5,000 grant being provided to the school's meal service program.

We anticipate holding three to five community gatherings with families to identify their desired changes to their local school meal program, as well as facilitating connections between community members and school nutrition staff. For the selected school we work with in 2020, our goals are to:

1. Support the implementation of a minimum of one community-driven change to its meal service program, and
2. Create communication channels and foster relationships between community members and school nutrition staff.

As part of the project, the participating school would receive a small grant of $5,000 to support changes to their school meal service, alongside technical assistance and help with program implementation

How do I learn more about getting involved in Every Meal Matters?
If you are interested in how your school can get involved with Every Meal Matters, contact Alison Killeen at Hunger-Free Oregon: alison@oregonhunger.org or (503) 595-5501 x305.