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City of Oakland Continues Summer Food Program

Public/Private Partnership Enables Program to Continue Despite Budget Cuts

OAKLAND, Calif. – The City of Oakland is pleased to announce it has reached a collaboration agreement with East Bay Community Foundation (EBCF), Eat. Learn. Play., and Alameda County Community Food Bank to support the Summer Food Service Program this summer. During the school year, approximately 33,000 children rely on free or reduced-cost meals provided at school. The Summer Food Service Program bridges the meal gap throughout the summer months when schools are closed and children are enrolled in summer programs. This year, the program will operate from May 27 to August 8.

At least 47 sites that serve youth, including City owned facilities, faith-based and community organizations, will provide free lunches. While most sites will be open to all, a few will offer meals only to children who are enrolled in a summer program. The program is available to all children aged 18 and under, as well as adults with disabilities enrolled in a school program.

The City will provide approximately 950 meals per day at 26 city-run sites (Oakland Parks, Recreation and Youth Department and Public Library facilities), with a total cost of \$426,870. The City will execute contracts with selected food vendors to facilitate meal distribution and will hire temporary staff to monitor program implementation and compliance. Funding will come from committed institutions and individuals who care deeply about Oakland's children.

Together, East Bay Community Foundation and Eat. Learn. Play. are leading a philanthropic response to cover the expense of providing approximately 1,200 meals per day at up to 21 community-based sites, with an estimated cost of up to \$375,000 paid to the approved food vendors.

“This is what real partnership looks like—public and private organizations coming together to make sure our kids are supported,” said **Interim Mayor Kevin Jenkins**. “The City of Oakland is proud to be part of this effort, and I’m deeply grateful to our City staff and our community partners at Alameda County Community Food Bank, Eat. Learn. Play., and the East Bay Community Foundation for stepping up to meet this challenge and ensuring that no child in Oakland goes hungry during the summer.”

“Our team worked hard to find a creative solution to continue providing nutritious meals to our community's children throughout the summer, despite severe fiscal challenges. I am grateful for the leadership of City Administrator Jestin Johnson, who initiated discussions with East Bay Community Foundation and staff to find a way to ensure that this vital program continued,” said **LaTonda Simmons, Assistant City Administrator for the City of Oakland**.

“EBCF is building an East Bay where everyone has the freedom to dream, heal, and belong – and that starts with the fundamentals. The simple truth is that children can’t learn if they aren’t fed. We’re proud to partner with other East Bay leaders to protect this critical program on behalf of Oakland’s children,” said **East Bay Community Foundation President and CEO Brandi Howard**.



“At Eat. Learn. Play., we believe that every child deserves access to nutritious meals, especially during the summer months when school is out and food insecurity can increase,” said **Chris Helfrich, CEO of Eat. Learn. Play.** “We’re proud to be a part of ensuring this essential program continues despite financial challenges. This support reflects our unwavering commitment to the kids of Oakland—because when children are well-nourished, they’re better prepared to learn, play and thrive.”

“Food insecurity is a profound issue here in Alameda County, particularly when it comes to households with children—a group who makes up the largest demographic we serve,” says **Allison Pratt, chief of strategy and partnerships for Alameda County Community Food Bank.** “For more than 20 years our Emergency Food Helpline has proudly referred families to summer meal program sites as a cornerstone of our efforts to ensure children are nourished while school is out. We’re grateful to this partnership to ensure this program is able to continue and the families we serve will have a resource for healthy nutrition during this critical time.”

The Summer Food Service Program has provided critical meal support to Oakland’s children for more than 40 years. In 2024, the program served 1,750 lunches and snacks per day.

Finding a nearby meal site is easy with the CA Meals for Kids app, available for smartphones. This user-friendly app allows families to locate free food distribution sites effortlessly. A complete list of Summer Food Service Program meal sites is also available on the City’s website:

<https://www.oaklandca.gov/topics/summer-food-service-program>.

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About Alameda County Community Food Bank

Alameda County Community Food Bank has been at the forefront of hunger relief efforts in the Bay Area since 1985. The Food Bank serves a community in which 1 in 4 residents experiences some level of food insecurity. The Food Bank’s core work includes distributing food through a network of approximately 400 food pantries, meal programs, and other community organizations, as well as direct distribution programs including school-based and home delivery distributions. This year, the Food Bank will distribute the equivalent of 48.8 million meals worth of food. In addition to its extensive emergency food programming, ACCFB’s hunger-relief efforts include California’s largest CalFresh (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) outreach department, anti-hunger advocacy, food as medicine, and food recovery and sustainability efforts. Alameda County Community Food Bank was named Feeding America’s Food Bank of the Year in 2016, and for 16 consecutive years has received Charity Navigator’s top rating — Four Stars — ranking the organization among the top 1 percent of charities nationwide.

About East Bay Community Foundation

East Bay Community Foundation (EBCF) envisions an East Bay where everyone has the economic freedom to dream, heal, and belong. EBCF partners with donors, community organizations, foundations, government, and corporations to eliminate barriers, advance equity, and transform our community for all who call the East Bay home. In 2024, EBCF’s Campaign for a Just East Bay strategically invested \$4.2 million in East Bay community organizations, and their community of fund advisors awarded grants totaling \$108 million – 62% of which supported work happening in the Bay Area. Learn more about EBCF’s impact in the community at www.ebcf.org.

About Eat. Learn. Play.

Eat. Learn. Play. Foundation is an organization dedicated to unleashing the potential of every child, paving the way for amazing kids and opening doors to bright futures. Founded by Stephen and Ayesha Curry in 2019, Eat. Learn. Play. launched with a focus on improving the lives of kids and families in Oakland, the Bay Area and across the country. Rooted in three of the most vital pillars for a healthy childhood—nutrition, education and physical activity—Eat. Learn. Play. is working to ensure that every child in Oakland has access to the nutritious food they need to be healthy and thrive; resources to learn and love to read; and safe places and equitable opportunities to play. Follow Eat. Learn. Play. on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn.