





## Dear Friends,



*Founded in 2015, Hunger Impact Partners works to change the trajectory of child hunger by improving access to and participation in five existing but under-utilized federal child nutrition programs for the 479,805 at-risk Minnesota kids. Armed with in-depth knowledge of the issue, strong cross-sector partners, advanced data analysis and child nutrition program expertise, we are improving on our track record of customizing collaborative community solutions designed to close the meal gap for hungry kids from birth to age 18.*

**Vision:** Nutritious food for every food insecure Minnesota child

**Mission:** Change the trajectory of hunger-relief for Minnesota's children living in urban, suburban and rural economic hardship so they can realize their full potential

**Guiding Principle:** Kids should only be hungry to learn!

For three years, we have focused on building the foundation of our child hunger-relief efforts. Working to level the playing field, our investments have reshaped communities and school districts. At the same time, we have deepened our longstanding commitment to the responsible stewardship of closing the meal gap for our food insecure kids. Our strategies continue to evolve, and our portfolio of projects is seeing positive social returns.

**We know exactly where the hungry kids are, and we go to them** — From the beginning, our proprietary Child Nutrition Index has allowed us to isolate populations according to meal program, location, poverty level and Medicaid enrollment. Based on this data, we calculate participation rates, numbers of missing meals and potential reimbursement. We convert them to opportunities, collaborating with communities to execute plans for filling site-specific meal gaps on a sustainable basis.

**We have systems expertise** — We leverage and sustain select existing federally funded programs, administered by the state, as a practical foundation for our efforts. This past year, HIP was instrumental in the enactment of a federal Farm Bill Amendment to fund pilot projects that will encourage the use of public-private partnerships committed to addressing food insecurity. Our efforts resulted in the authorization of \$5 million over two years to support up to ten projects.

**We use technology to improve food access** — As just one example, our “Summer Eats Minnesota” mobile app, which we created in 2017, continues to gain traction in helping kids, families and communities source free summer meals. We presented “Summer Eats Minnesota” at the American Public Health Association Annual Meeting in San Diego, which showcases state-of-the-art ideas and cutting edge research.

**We stay close to our partners** — We rally and work with 62 Independent School Districts and 19 charter schools, non-public schools, government officials, foundations, nonprofit leaders in health and hunger-relief, large corporations, small businesses and media at the national, state and community level. We provide the data, convene, support research and develop game plans.

**We bring dollars and experience** — Data and local ingenuity drive our fund-raising and, in turn, our investments in dedicated people, great ideas and continuous research and improvement. With the University of Minnesota Medical School Program in Health Disparities Research, HIP provided funding for the HEAL Center’s mission to integrate research, clinical practice, community assets and policy to address health and nutrition disparities.

A personal point of pride was our invitation to co-sponsor the **2018 Hunger Free Communities Summit**, along with The Alliance to End Hunger, in Minneapolis. As the largest convener of Hunger Free Community efforts in the country, the Alliance annually hosts a two-day national event to engage multiple stakeholders in showcasing community initiatives that are solving local issues. With generous support from Cargill and General Mills, the Summit combined best practices, learning sessions and workshops for more than 170 attendees. Speakers included the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, Feeding America, the University of Minnesota, the Cargill Foundation, the General Mills Foundation, the Minneapolis Foundation, as well as representatives from hunger relief organizations in Texas, Virginia, New York, Colorado, Washington, D.C., and Ohio.

Despite our best efforts to pave the way toward closing Minnesota’s meal gaps, nearly one in three Minnesota children lives in a food-insecure home. The traditional social services network for kids helps, but it is stretched and may never be enough. Considering that nutrition is at the core of key issues of early childhood development, academic performance, workforce readiness and poverty alleviation, we must do more.

We have impact and can scale because we take advantage of preexisting resources and structures in schools and communities, making it possible for these at-risk kids to thrive. I am honored to lead this organization and filled with optimism about what we can achieve.

Ellie Lucas  
Chief Executive Office

# Awareness and Understanding are Vital

**Watch for HBO’s Problem Areas 2019 Season, which will include a segment on Minneapolis showcasing several of our community partners.**

Building public will by making sure communities are aware of child hunger issues is one method of measuring the success of HIP as a “backbone” nonprofit organization. To this end, media exposure, both traditional and new, are fundamental to our efforts. In 2018, HIP garnered one million total impressions with 21.2 million unique monthly online views.

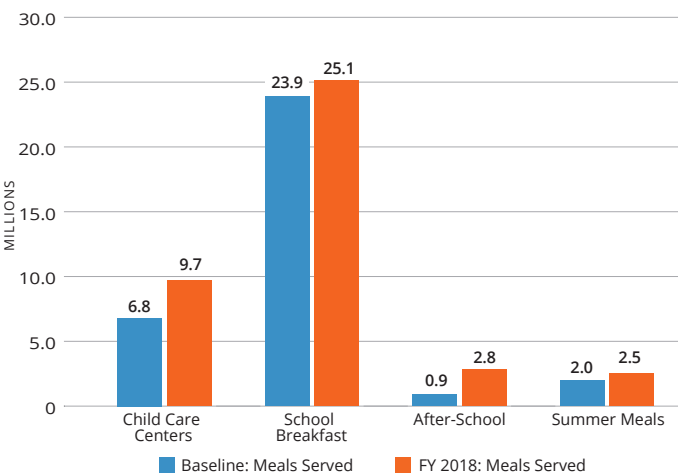
Additionally, we convened or participated in 20 workshops, two national conferences and 31 community or school meetings. We regularly conduct parent, student and school surveys to maintain open communication and feedback channels. Through brainstorm meetings with school administrators, listening sessions with parents and students and community outreach, we continuously clarify

our understanding of how to motivate behaviors and shift thinking to prioritize proper nutrition in child development and student success.

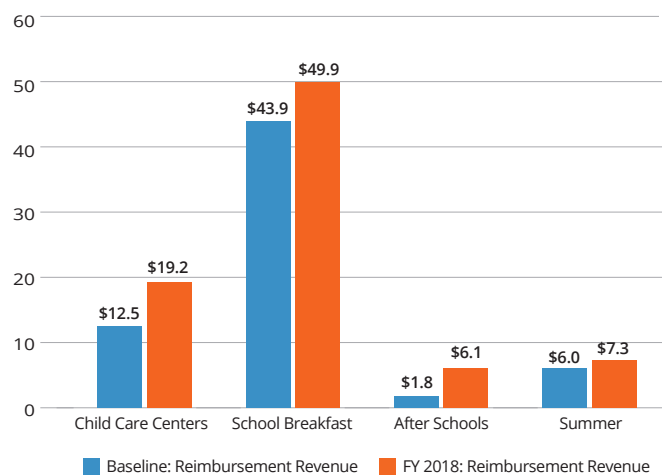
The narrative surrounding nutrition messaging is evolving. Kids and families in poverty are embracing the benefits of regular access to nutritious meals in their daily lives. School leadership teams are recognizing that proper nutrition is an important component for closing the achievement gap and reducing racial disparities. Low-income community influencers are seeing the impact that access to food has on improving community health and vitality. Over the last 12 months, it has become increasingly easier to engage with school sites, setup and expand new meal programming and work with child care centers to offer meals. The heightened community momentum and understanding related to all aspects of child nutrition — procurement, quality, delivery and value — is palpable.

## 2018: By the Numbers

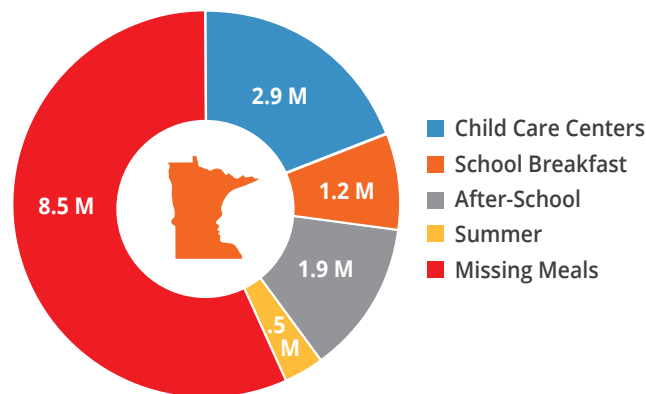
### 6.5 Million New Meals for Children



### \$18.3 Million Reimbursement Revenue to Minnesota Communities



### Results: 43% of 15 Million Target Meal Goal



### Child Nutrition Index

How well are we feeding our kids?

Children: Ages	Population	Enrolled in Federal Programs*	Percentage	Meal Participation Percentage			
Infant	68,603	30,709	45%	82%			
1 – 4	278,680	121,601	44%	50%			
5 – 18	927,945	327,495	35%	Breakfast 48%	Lunch 87%	Snack 5% Supper 6%	Summer 10%

\*Medicaid and free- or reduced-price meals.

# Boosting Child Hunger Relief to New Levels

## INITIATIVES

In 2018, Hunger Impact Partners continued to target under-utilized federal child nutrition programs for at-risk Minnesota children in low income households. Participation in the school lunch program has always been near capacity. But lunch is not the only time of day or time of year when kids need to eat. Yet, the participation rates for other meal programs were much lower than lunch. Our approach remains to look for creative ways to close these meal gaps. Our initiatives and strategies have evolved to focus on five platforms where we know we can be most relevant and effective at this time. Our collective results are compelling.

### TWO-PRONGED HEALTHY FOOD FROM BIRTH TO 5 INITIATIVE



Hungry infants and young children experience delayed development, poorer attachment and learning difficulties in the first years of life. They are more likely to require hospitalization and are at higher risk for chronic health conditions, such as anemia and asthma. Our work on behalf of this youngest age group addresses two programs: Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and Child and Adult Care Program

(CACFP) in child care centers catering to children as young as 6 weeks old.

#### Families with Infants and Young Children

**Market:** Pregnant women and families of infant and pre-school children reached through WIC clinics and programming

**Pool of Children:** 152,310, targeting 66,228 kids up to age 5

**Focus:** WIC program retention strategies, advocacy/data support for state funding and “WIC to 6” legislation, parent incentives, direct certification strategies

**2018 Results:** Pilot incentive programs in three counties resulted in increases in meals and revenue. Participant surveys identified food as the most valuable part of the program and provided insights on parent enrollment for children in school nutrition programs.

Less than two-thirds of available meals are provided to Minnesota’s eligible children through WIC. While WIC enrollment in Minnesota is consistently near the top in the

nation, this has been mainly true for infants. Participation starts dropping off at 9 months. This decline means that thousands of eligible babies and toddlers likely aren’t eating a healthy diet, and the economic stimulus to communities at the retail level created by redemption of federally funded vouchers goes missing. Our aim is to strengthen the program by directing dollars to retention and redemption strategies.

In 2018, HIP designed three pilot incentive programs to increase WIC retention for eligible children ages 9 months to 3 years living in Ramsey, Wright, Scott and Carver counties. As a result, we learned that incentives, such as gas cards and diapers, can have positive impact on participation, but they do not necessarily spike voucher redemption, begging questions of return on investment.

For HIP, the most important aspect of the pilots was the participant surveys administered by WIC clinics. Through these surveys we learned that only 31 percent of families queried with 4- and 5-year-olds planned to enroll their children in school nutrition programs. Hearing directly from actual program participants was invaluable. Promoting WIC parent awareness and education around meal programs available in schools and other community settings as their children grow will continue to be critical, so these kids maintain proper nutrition in-take throughout the course of their K-12 school years. Strategies for creating such awareness of the programs and their benefits will be a key future focus for HIP, a vital link to our work in other initiatives.

We are also currently supporting the Minnesota Dept. of Health’s state roll-out of eWIC to be completed in 2020 and examining national efforts in six states that augment WIC funding at the state level. Additionally, we are talking with the National WIC Association about the legislative initiative “WIC to 6,” a national program aimed at participation and voucher redemption.

#### Child Care Center Meals

**Market:** Licensed child care centers with high enrollment of income eligible children that are not serving meals or not serving to capacity (of 991 total centers, 321 licensed centers don’t serve meals, 670 serve meals but could serve more)

**Pool of Children:** 141,993

**Focus:** Focus groups, marketing materials, direct outreach, meal sponsor expansion support, data mapping tool

**2018 Results:** 2,938,280 new meals and \$6,678,848 in revenue reimbursements

In 2018, we continued to see a decline in in-home daycare providers and an increase in the capacity for meals at child care centers — both existing and new centers. This shift is due, in part, to changing child care preferences; fewer parents are placing children in family child care settings. Early on, we saw this trend and determined that our strategy should be to work predominately with centers to drive enrollment in CACFP. We focus on centers with large concentrations of low-income kids, and help them start and expand meal service. In cooperation with our partners, 670 centers are now offering meals in low-income communities with 430 centers increasing meal service and 77 new centers starting meal programs.

We supported four focus group sessions with Somali, Latino and African-American families and providers to better understand administration obstacles and regulatory compliance issues. Partnering with the Minnesota Dept. of Education, we are creating targeted marketing materials that address on-boarding of new centers and language barriers.

## SCHOOL BREAKFAST INITIATIVE

**Market:** K through 12 schools statewide in 200 severe-need areas

**Pool of Children:** 170,297, targeting 77,112 kids

**Focus:** “Breakfast after the Bell” alternative service models, stigma-reducing initiatives, training, POS equipment, student marketing campaigns, CEP enrollment

**2018 Results:** 1,170,039 new meals and \$6,020,852 in revenue reimbursements



Research indicates that students are more successful in school when they eat a nutritious breakfast. Yet, many are forgoing this meal. Only 48 percent of school breakfasts available in Minnesota are served, leaving \$44 million of

federal reimbursements unclaimed. HIP works with school administrators to ensure more kids eat, so they have energy to get their days off to a good start. Our focus is on alternative serving models and times.

We invested in 42 school sites in the West Metro providing infrastructure and other support. We saw increases in participation in the West Metro, but the state overall lost ground in 2018. Nevertheless, we are still ahead by more than one million breakfast meals since we began. We are seeing behavioral changes among students, parents, staff and organizations who now recognize that regular access

to breakfast makes an important difference. And although student enrollment numbers are down, the average number of breakfasts per child has increased, which tells us more kids are eating breakfast more regularly — exactly the depth of accomplishment our strategies intend to incent for the long-run. In the future, we see the most potential for increases in meals and reimbursements at the elementary school level.

## AFTER-SCHOOL MEALS (CACFP AT-RISK) INITIATIVE

**Market:** School-based programs with education component and those utilizing the Community Eligible Provision (CEP) for universal meals, youth programs and after-school networks in 200 severe-need areas

**Pool of Children:** 145,273, targeting 95,978 kids

**Focus:** Scholarships for student advocates

**2018 Results:** 1,870,776 new meals and \$4,326,482 in revenue reimbursements



Research affirms how important high quality after school programs are for Minnesota kids: they help close the achievement gap, keep kids safe and develop skills for success in work and life. Adding a meal component ensures kids receive necessary nutrition, improves health outcomes

and builds stronger connections to school and community programs. Yet, only six percent of meals available through the CACFP At-Risk Program are served to eligible youth. We developed a marketing platform to reach the high-need school sites, presented participation data and designed implementation plans. Our grants funded start-up costs, training seminars, serving and point-of-sale equipment purchases.

In 2018, we launched the “Hungry for Wins (H4W)” scholarship program to promote participation in meal programs and the importance of nutrition for low-income high school athletes, artists, leaders and scholars. We addressed barriers, including lack of exposure to the program and its value, and its stigma among students.

The program supports student leaders at target high schools who serve as advocates for meal program enrollment, incorporating meal time in after-school activities and promoting proper nutrition. Student advocates are selected by their school principal and are awarded \$2,000 scholarships for their secondary education.



SUMMER MEALS INITIATIVE

**Market:** 200 severe-need areas with 50 percent or greater populations of eligible kids

**Pool of Children:** 206,196 Targeting 85,541 kids

**Focus:** Serving sites expansion, multi-site sponsor training, Summer Eats mobile app, community outreach, website, coolers/refrigeration equipment investments, marketing support

**2018 Results:** 499,323 new meals and \$1,285,788 in revenue reimbursements



While most kids look forward to summer break, those on school meal programs often dread it. Along with the end to their studies comes the end of regular meals they can count on. Kids who have relied on school and after-school nutrition programs can turn to the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) to fill the summer’s meal gap. SFSP reimburses providers who serve free, healthy summer

meals to kids in low-income areas. In addition to ensuring that our kids have year-round access to federally-funded meals, participation in SFSP means that they will also gain access to physical activity, education and enrichment activities.

The summer meal program serves breakfast and lunch, or lunch and supper, at schools, community centers, parks, faith-based programs, libraries and other sites where children may go in the summer. A July 2017 Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) report ranked Minnesota 16th among 50 states in feeding children who are eligible for summer meals.

In 2018, our efforts focused on meal site expansion, including affordable multi-family housing sites, community libraries, food trucks and parks, as well as the continuation of the Summer Eats Minnesota mobile app innovation where we expanded meal offerings to include toddler meals. We expanded outreach efforts to over 7,000 statewide contacts, created a website and marketing collateral for meal sponsors available in four languages—English, Spanish, Somali and Hmong.

Our collective efforts resulted in 499,323 new meals and \$1,285,788 in corresponding reimbursement revenue. Most significantly, 110 new serving sites were added over the previous summer. The Summer Eats Minnesota mobile app has been a game changer for the summer feeding program.

HIP’s Burgeoning Advocacy Platform

As we enter our fourth year of operation, HIP is widening its engagement in the public advocacy arena, a prescribed phase of a “Backbone Organization,” consistent with the “Collective Impact,” model of an effective nonprofit organization. Our state and federal public policy strategies include:

- An enrollment campaign in conjunction with advocating for state dollars in support of free and reduced-price meals application assistance for non-participating families.
- Joint application submission for federal funding to support a public-private partnership pilot program made possible through the federal Farm Bill Amendment authorizing \$5 million for up to 10 projects.
- Reinstatement of an annual allocation in state funding for WIC to support program retention/fresh fruit and vegetable purchases.
- Tax-exempt designation for foods purchased by non-profits to support the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).
- Legislation to align CACFP meal sponsor transfers of licensed Child Care Centers with Family Day Care Homes sponsor transfers.

CHILD HUNGER IN MINNESOTA:  
Annual Social and Economic Impact

Social Impact
479,805 or 38 percent of children birth to age 18 are eligible for select federal meal programs.
• 152,310 or 44 percent of infants and children to age five are eligible for WIC.
• 327,495 or 35 percent of infants and children up ages five to 18 are eligible for school nutrition programs.
Economic Impact*
• \$238 million in direct education costs associated with academic readiness, special education, behavior issues
• \$283 million in direct healthcare costs associated with medical issues related to diet, nutrition, activity

\*Brandeis University Study, 2011

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