

# Hunger Impact Partners – 2019 Annual Report



## Dear Friends,



In 2019, we expanded our community action efforts to change the trajectory of child hunger due to economic and racial disparities in Minnesota. Our sole mission is to enable children to better grow, develop and focus on learning rather than hunger, and ultimately reach their full potential and long-term self-sufficiency.

We continue to bring a laser focus to leading initiatives that support high impact child nutrition

programs available to food insecure children from early childhood to age 18. Armed with in-depth knowledge in hunger-relief, we are improving upon our track record of customizing community solutions designed to close the meal gap for low-income kids. Our strategies earmark high-impact opportunities in urban, urban rural and remote rural communities with heavy concentrations of low-income kids. We focus on markets that pose the most significant challenges. Currently, there are 514,510 Minnesota infants and children at risk for hunger, and according to our analysis, only one in three of them are enrolled in free/reduced meal programs. Kids of color and Native Americans now make up over one-third of the state's 331,279 kids from grades K-12, and they suffer many disparities in educational, health and social well-being indicators.

To combat these striking figures, we leverage four initiatives within the USDA child nutrition program framework that do the greatest good for the greatest number: school breakfast, after-school meals, summer meals, and meals in licensed child care centers and Pre-K programs. Beyond alleviating hunger, these programs help reduce poverty, prevent obesity, strengthen schools, and boost children's health, development and school achievement. Our approach is nimble and creates organic scalability. To date, we have supported a network of non-profits, child care centers and schools to add 8.8 million new meals with \$24.6 million in corresponding reimbursement revenue returning to Minnesota communities. We are poised to do more with your help by continuing to lead program development and implementation at the local level. Our goal is to build a strong network of schools and community non-profits so they can do a better job of feeding our kids. For four 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. 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. We have more to do.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ellie Lucas".

Ellie Lucas  
Chief Executive Office

## The FACTS

- **Only 57 percent of WIC meals are provided to eligible children**
- **Only 45 percent of school breakfast meals available to low-income kids are served in Minnesota schools**
- **Only 9 percent of At-Risk After-School Meals are served to eligible youth**
- **Minnesota ranks 16th out of 50 states in ensuring kids have adequate summer nutrition**

Because each community and school has its own complex set of economic factors comprising hardship, we work to understand these distinct needs to better cater our strategies and tactics and identify key partners.

## The WORK

Our data-driven approach is based on our Child Nutrition Index (CNI), an analytics tool that serves as the foundation for identifying and serving severe need populations and informing our target schools, child care centers and non-profit organizations about meal program participation and meal gaps. It allows us to clearly present the data to our community partners, so together we can improve meal delivery systems. We focus on closing the 103.2 million meal gap by customizing strategies to individual markets where schools have 50 percent or more students eligible for free/reduced meals.

We develop and execute a portfolio of work designed to cause real systemic, transformational solutions to the fundamental problem of providing meals to food insecure kids on an ongoing basis. We award grants to support:

- Staffing, logistics and equipment
- Infrastructure for meal program start-up and expansion
- Initiatives to boost meal program enrollment
- Incentives for school sites
- Technology solutions
- Student scholarships for nutrition education
- Student marketing campaigns
- Financial training for sponsors

We prioritize our efforts to reach those most at-risk using data and leveraging community resources. We are proving that, by removing barriers to meal program participation and increasing enrollment, we can feed children's nutrition needs year-round. At the same time, increasing meal participation generates additional federal reimbursement revenue that, in turn, can sustain the cost of operating meal services. The economic stimulus associated with these new dollars is valuable to our economy too. Once these sites have increased participation rates and reimbursement revenue, they become self-sufficient and maintain long-term program stability for our struggling kids.

**Healthy Food from Birth:** We advocate to reinstate WIC state funding designated for purchases of fruits and vegetables and to secure a USDA pilot project for Minnesota to support online purchasing for WIC families.

**"Our mission is to drive systemic and sustainable change in hunger-relief for children living with food insecurity so they can realize their full potential and long-term self-sufficiency."**

**Meals at Licensed Child Care Centers:** We work with centers in low-income areas to support start-up and expansion of meal services. Targeting licensed child care centers eligible to serve meals, we provide financial training, staffing resources and serving equipment so they can provide meals. We support regular focus group sessions to better understand administrative obstacles and enrollment barriers. As a result, we can then facilitate informed improvements and support from the state agency administering the program.

**School Breakfast:** We strive to increase outreach efforts to school sites, in order to make nutrition an academic learning priority. We conduct stakeholder outreach, provide parent program enrollment support, and fund infrastructure investments and new delivery model implementation. We underwrite federal program enrollment marketing efforts to maintain or increase State school district funding.

**After-School Meals:** We concentrate on adding after-school meals at middle schools and high schools for students participating in extra-curricular academics, athletics and arts activities by addressing barriers including administrative requirements, lack of access and stigma among students.

**Summer Meals:** We created the first-of-its-kind in the nation mobile app to locate free summer meal sites for kids and their families. We focus on meal site expansion, outreach, media relations and mobile app technical support. We host a dedicated website and created marketing collateral—in Spanish, Somali, Hmong, Russian, and Oromo languages. We maintain functionality and navigation for the mobile app. The app quickly scaled statewide.

## The SUSTAINED SOCIAL IMPACT

All our efforts are grounded in our proprietary Child Nutrition Index, a data tool that helps us isolate populations according to meal program, percentage of free/reduced-price eligibility and meal participation levels. We calculate missing meals and work in communities to customize programs to close site specific meal gaps so more kids have access to healthy food. We measure new meals added, numbers of children served and markets reached through improved federal meal program access. We also calculate meal reimbursement value returning to Minnesota. We leverage state funding and advocate for public investment in child nutrition ensuring more dollars are directed to helping at-risk.

**Child Nutrition Index** MINNESOTA OVERVIEW FY 2019  
**514,510 Kids should only be hungry to learn!**

Children: Ages	Population	Enrolled in Federal Programs*	Percentage	Meal Participation Percentage			
Infant	68,603	32,679	48%	<b>85.6%</b>			
1 – 4	278,680	150,552	54%	<b>50.7%</b>			
5 – 18	954,942	331,279	35%	Breakfast 45%	Lunch 82%	Snack 4% Supper 9%	Summer Open Sites 10%

**Missing Meals: 103.2 Million**  
**Missing Revenue: \$119.4 Million**  
\*NOTE: Medicaid Financed per CMS-416 report and MDE free- or reduced-price meals.

**Summer Eats Minnesota** is free at the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store. Powered by GPS, it shows locations of summer food sites with days and hours of operation. Kids 18 and under can show up without prior signup or registration for free meals at locations including parks, recreation and community centers, libraries and schools. The app shows the distance and directions to the nearest sites.

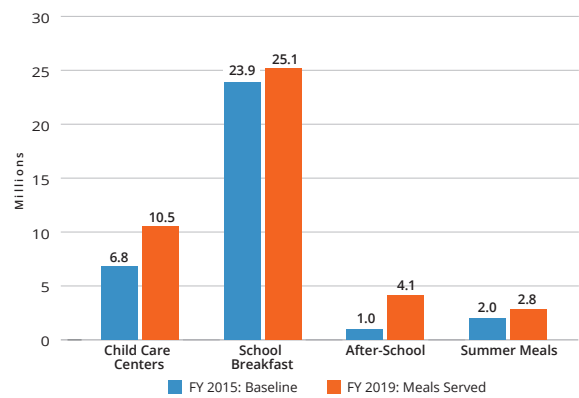


**Total downloads: 5,931**  
**Total visits: 8,614**  
**Total page-views: 10,915**

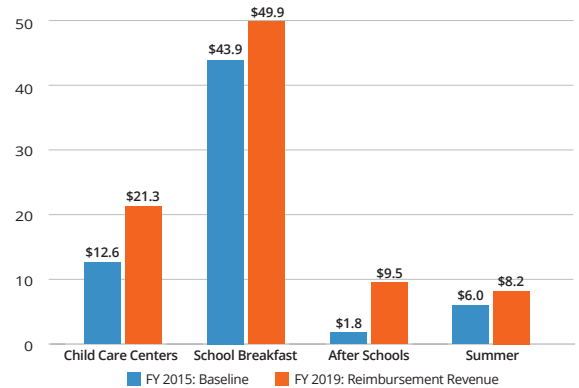
## The RESULTS

Hunger Impact Partners continued to target under-utilized federal child nutrition programs for at-risk Minnesota children in low income households.

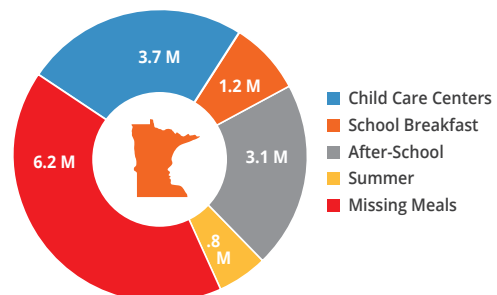
### 8.8 Million New Meals for Children



### \$24.6 Million Reimbursement Revenue to Minnesota Communities



### Results: 58% of 15 Million Meal Goal



# The TEAM

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Data & Research Analyst

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**HUNGER IMPACT PARTNERS**

Food for Every Child