



Mayor Mark Mallory

City of Cincinnati

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Mayor Mallory Reports Huge Increase in Free Summer Youth Meals Cincinnati Public Schools begin universal breakfast for all students

Cincinnati, Corryville – Mayor Mark Mallory announced an incredible increase in the number of free summer meals served to Cincinnati area youth this summer. The Mayor was joined at the morning press conference by officials from Cincinnati Public Schools to formally announce the results of a new initiative by Superintendent Rosa Blackwell. Under the new Blackwell initiative, CPS expanded to a universal breakfast program that is available at no cost to all elementary school students district-wide.

"Improving nutrition for our kids is an absolute priority," Mayor Mallory said. "This is one of the easiest ways that we can have a direct impact on our children's development. It is simple; healthy, kids who regularly receive a balanced diet are going to succeed at much higher rates than hungry kids."

This summer, Cincinnati Public Schools served 163,000 free meals to youth in Cincinnati, a remarkable increase of over 19,500 more meals from last summer's total. In addition, the World Outreach Christian Church served an average of 262 kids everyday for a total of 24,129 meals, an increase from 11,300 meals last summer. This year, Victory Neighborhood Services Agency joined the Summer Food Program and operated 3 sites, serving 8,900 lunches and 8,000 snacks. Victory Neighborhood Services focused on serving teenagers, a group of youth who traditionally are underrepresented in this program.

Shortly after coming into office, Mayor Mallory began working with the Children's Hunger Alliance, Cincinnati Public Schools, the Cincinnati Recreation Commission and many other local partners to develop a strategy to expand the effectiveness of the Summer Food Program in Cincinnati. The plan focused on three areas: encouraging increased usage of existing sites by summer youth programs, increasing the usage of the sites by parents and increasing the number of sites that served meals.

"Cincinnati Public is excited to offer breakfast free to all our elementary school students," CPS Food Services Director Renie Kelly said. "The response from students has been fantastic. A healthy breakfast starts their day the right way. They are more alert, more attentive and more productive."

At the start of this school year, Superintendent Blackwell and Cincinnati Public Schools began the universal breakfast program, which allows all students at elementary schools to eat breakfast at no cost. The district has seen large increases in the number of students participating in the breakfast program through the first month of the year. Previously, breakfast, which is part of the National School Lunch Program, was available before the start of school. Students who were classified, based on family income, for paid or reduced-price meals had to pay for breakfast. This year, all elementary students are offered a breakfast at no cost each

school morning. Last year, an average of 7,866 students ate breakfast everyday. This year, with breakfast available free to every elementary school student, CPS is serving over 14,000 students everyday, a 65% increase. The daily increase could mean as many as an additional million breakfasts served over the course of the full school year.

“This is an incredible achievement that will have long-lasting consequences for this community,” says Charlie Kozlesky, Children’s Hunger Alliance’s Vice President of School & Summer Nutrition. “Because of the leadership demonstrated by Mayor Mallory, Superintendent Rosa Blackwell and so many others, more children are coming to the table and getting the nutritious meals they need to learn and grow.”

The Mayor and officials from Cincinnati Public Schools and the Children’s Hunger Alliance made the announcement at Schiel Primary School for Arts Enrichment. Schiel Principal Roger Lewis noted that Schiel has increased from 165 breakfasts per day last year to over 420 this year. The Mayor was also joined at the event by Liz Solomon from Ohio Department of Education & Nancy Zwick from the American Dairy Association.

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