

NEWS RELEASE/MEDIA INVITE

Winnipeg School Division Food Security Program Summer Hamper Distribution Event

August 22, 2023 (Winnipeg, MB) – Winnipeg School Division (WSD) is holding its second pickup of the WSD Summer Hamper Program at R.B. Russell High School on August 24, 2023. The program serves as a crucial response to escalating food insecurity and ensure children and their families have access to essential nutrition, both during the school year and throughout the summer months.

“The Summer Hamper program aims to support up to 800 families in the July and August months,” says Katherine Armstrong, Community Food Coordinator, Winnipeg School Division. “Most of the families who receive hampers are from school communities that disproportionately experience marginalization and food insecurity.”

The WSD weekly Food Security Program supports over 50 schools and programs with bulk produce and bread from September to June. Each month an average of 155 x 20 lb. boxes of potatoes, 73 x 5 lb. boxes of onions, and 1,500 loaves of bread and other bakery items are shared with families in need across the division. Other items are also distributed when available such as non-perishables, clothing, hygiene items, etc.

During summer months, this need becomes more pronounced as breakfast and other nutritional programming that serves many children through the division only runs through the school year. Volunteers from across Winnipeg School Division attend the distribution event to collect hampers which are then distributed within their school communities.

Media are invited to attend the distribution event on August 24 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Please indicate your intention to attend with WSD Public Relations Services (rcarter@wsd1.org). The distribution event is being held in the RB Russell Vocational High School parking lot at 364 Dufferin Avenue. This is not a public event.

A family receiving a food hamper consisting of two large boxes. One box holds non-perishable items such as canned vegetables, soup, cereal, pasta, peanut butter, tinned fish, among other items. The other holds fresh and frozen items such as two 4 litres of milk, cheese, margarine, yogurt, frozen ham, carrots, potatoes, fruit, and more.

The hampers have been packed by a small team of WSD staff and students who applied to volunteer for the program before the end of the year. The Summer Hamper Program for 2023 runs twice with pickups in late July and late August.

These food distribution efforts would not be possible without the support of generous donors such as Schroeder Foundation, Maple Leaf Foods, Peak of the Market, Second Harvest and others who enable us to provide perishable and non-perishable items to families in need.

WSD was established in 1871 and currently has 79 schools, almost 30,000 students and over 4,000 full time employees. Its purpose is to provide a learning environment that fosters the growth of each student’s potential and provide equitable opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and values necessary for meaningful participation in a global and diverse society.

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