

NEWS RELEASE

Oakland County Board recognizes National School Breakfast Week

Resolution introduced by Chairman Woodward underscores importance of access to school breakfast

March 16, 2021, OAKLAND COUNTY, MI. – The Oakland County Board of Commissioners recognized March 8-12 as School Breakfast Week in Oakland County at its meeting on March 11. Introduced by Chairman **David T. Woodward** (D-Royal Oak), the resolution recognizes the importance of the national School Breakfast Program. The commemoration is part of the Board's larger focus on bringing awareness and expanding access to school breakfast for students in Oakland County.

"Kids can't excel in school on an empty stomach, and study after study has proven full bellies result in students being ready to learn," Woodward said. "The pandemic has not changed this, and the Board has not forgotten this. If anything, the importance of breakfast access for all students needs to remain a local and state priority. Recognizing National School Breakfast Week is one way we keep the conversation front and center."

In response to the global pandemic, the federal government authorized universal breakfast for all schools through the end of the 2020-21 school year. This expanded the accomplishments Oakland County and the Board of Commissioners achieved during the three-year pilot Oakland County Better with Breakfast universal breakfast initiative.

Studies show that serving children breakfast at school significantly improves their cognitive or mental abilities, enabling them to be more alert, maintain a healthy weight and achieve proficiency on standardized test scores. Breakfast consumption is also associated with other healthy lifestyle factors, and a University of Michigan study found children who do not consume breakfast are more likely to be less physically active and have a lower cardiorespiratory fitness level than those students who regularly eat breakfast.

"We are proud to partner with Oakland County and Oakland Schools to make sure all students have access to a nutritious breakfast to start their day," said Sara Gold, senior director of health and basic needs for United Way for Southeastern Michigan. "Food insecurity is a complex issue. Making sure students have access to the School Breakfast Program is a simple commitment and a tangible part of the

solution. Our work together helps schools make good on that commitment for thousands of students each day.”

Launched in 2019, Oakland County Better with Breakfast is a groundbreaking public/non-profit collaboration between the [Oakland County Board of Commissioners](#), [Oakland Schools](#) and [United Way for Southeastern Michigan](#) that has expanded access to breakfast for more than 3,500 additional students across Oakland County every day. The program has provided breakfast to all students in Oakland County public schools where more than 40 percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price meals since its start. Through the program, qualifying school buildings have been supplied with equipment, technical support and food to provide breakfast to every student in participating school buildings.

The National Association of Counties recognized Oakland County Better with Breakfast with a NACo Achievement Award in 2020.

For more information about Better with Breakfast visit <http://bit.ly/OCBWB>. For more information about the Board of Commissioners, visit www.oakgov.com/boc or call 248-858-0100.

#