



Backpack Meals for Kids

Because kids shouldn't go hungry on the weekends.

A Year of Adaptation, Innovation

In its 10th year of operation, Backpack Meals for Kids sought new levels of innovation to cope with the unprecedented situation of pandemic, remote schooling, and economic hardship for many local families.

There was no “business as usual.” But there was a renewed sense of purpose and a determination to identify and reach Bellevue kids still struggling to learn while going without the normal supports of an on-site learning environment.



Stepping up to the challenge -- Masked volunteers continued to sort and pack food at the school district warehouse. With schools closed, there was no direct distribution of weekend food to elementary and secondary students. Instead, Backpack Meals provided weekly food support through the district's Family Connections Centers, including food packs, food vouchers and – in a new outreach effort – fresh food such as eggs, fruit and other perishables. The organization also supported a pop-up food truck at several locations. And meanwhile, Backpack Meals continued providing weekly food packs to children in the district's tuition-free preschool program. In spring, as in-person classes resumed, Backpack Meals re-started its weekly K-12 feeding schedule.



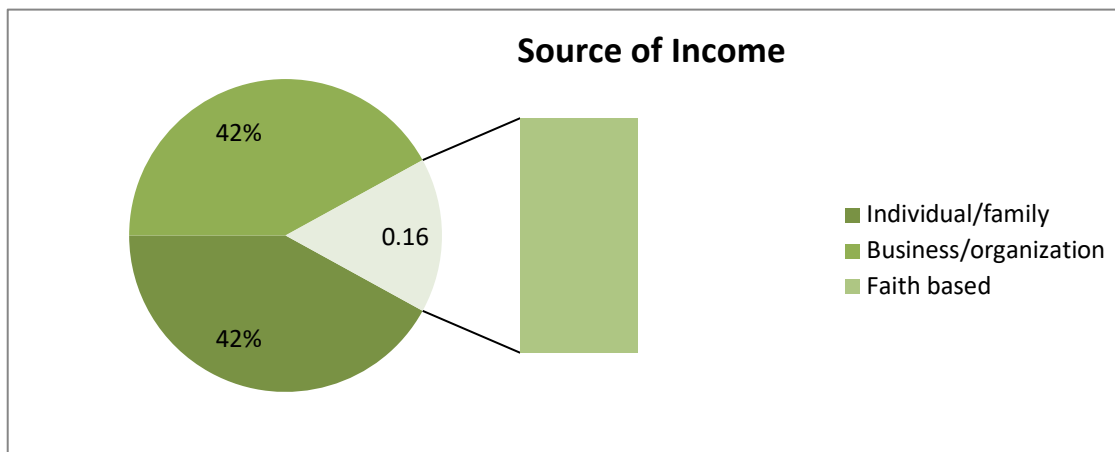
Food reaches families – in spite of pandemic obstacles! Above, Backpack Meals Board members Lara Brown and Kenny Ho pack food, and Vanessa Sanchez receives food at the Stevenson Elementary Family Connections Center.

Thanks to a generous community – Supporters not only continued but in many cases increased their donations during the challenging pandemic year. Individuals and families, recognizing the increased community need, accounted for nearly half (42%) of the year's donations. Major contributions came from long-time corporate and organizational supporters including \$12,000 from Windermere Foundation, \$16,000 from Bellevue Rotary and \$4,700 from Bellevue Sunrise Rotary. Other significant gifts included: a matching fund of \$10,000 from the Dunkle family; food for 300 families, valued at \$10,000, from the Bell family; and \$22,000 in cash enhanced by large in-kind gifts of food and volunteer labor from local faith organizations.



The Year at a Glance - Highlights

- Backpack Meals for Kids, launched with a pilot program in 2011, marked its 10-year anniversary.
- Backpack Meals upgraded its web presence, refreshing its home page with up-to-date photos, text and graphics, and adding a blog.
 - Backpack Meals provided food to kids and families without interruption during the closure of Bellevue schools.
- The Backpack Meals Preschool Program served 130 children, providing 3,943 food packages over 36 weeks.
- Faith organizations continued to provide a significant share of support for the preschool program.



20-21 School Year Financials

| | |
|------------|---------------|
| Income | \$134,271 |
| Expense | <u>83,831</u> |
| Carry-over | \$ 50,440 |

Who we are -- Backpack Meals for Kids is a community-based, all-volunteer organization dedicated to addressing the problem of childhood hunger in the Bellevue School District. Backpack Meals is a non-profit association registered with the State of Washington and is a tax-exempt 501(c) 3 organization, ID# 82-4296441. Reach us at www.backpackmeals.org.