



BULLDOG BAGS, INC. UPDATE

a 501(c)(3) non profit organization addressing food insecurity in the Stow-Munroe Falls (OH) City School District

WHAT'S A BULLDOG BAG?

Bulldog Bags are weekend bags of food, distributed two times a month to eligible children in grades K - 10 during the school year. Weekend food programs, such as Bulldog Bags, are designed to supplement the students' educational process. The link between hunger and education is undeniable. Children who go hungry are more likely to exhibit higher levels of anxiety, irritability, hyperactivity, and aggression, which affect all-around school performance. Research has shown that children participating in weekend food programs achieve better test scores, improved reading skills, positive behavior, improved health, and increased attendance.

A Bulldog Bag has 10 - 12 child-friendly, easily prepared items to take the place of the breakfasts and lunches that the child would receive at school as part of the Free and Reduced Meal Program. The last Bulldog Bag of the month has a personal care item, such as toothbrush and toothpaste or bar of soap.

We want students to show up Monday mornings hungry for LEARNING, not hungry for food!

BULLDOG BOXES WRAP-UP



Summer can be a time of great risk for many children in terms of hunger. It has been reported by school personal that, when school starts in the fall, they can tell which children have had a summer of reliable eating versus a summer of uncertainty. Families with limited monetary resources are further stretched during the summer months, when their children who have been receiving free or reduced meals at school, are home for all meals.

To address this, Bulldog Boxes were again offered to families of children who are eligible for Bulldog Bags. Pre-registered families were provided with a Box of 10 meals/snacks in family-sized portions 1 time a month, June - Aug. to help them stretch their summer food budgets.

An average of 55 families, comprised of 110 children and 101 adults were served through Bulldog Boxes. The average retail cost of a regular Bulldog Box, which was provided to families of 5 and under, was \$86.18; the average retail cost of a large box, which was provided to families of 6 and over, was \$102.15. A total of 5,235.4 # of food was distributed through the Bulldog Boxes program.

Thank you to all of the organizations and businesses that collected items, as they helped to keep the cost manageable, as well as the volunteers who made it happen!!

School year 2018-2019, an average of 564 Bulldog Bags were provided 2 times a month, 33,500# of items; our cost/bag was about \$3.00!

APPRECIATIVE RECIPIENTS

At the end of the school year the children, parents/guardians, and school staff are surveyed about their experience with the Bulldog Bag program. We especially like to receive the comments from the children, as they are the focus of the program.

10. Draw a picture or write a story **BELOW** showing how you feel about Bulldog Bags.

I fell great about bulldog bags because sometimes my family on weeks only have enough money to buy food for that night. So it is really helpfull abt around the house.



PACKING VOLUNTEERS SIGN-UP

This school year **Bulldog Bags, Inc.** is using **SignUp Genius** on our webpage, **www.bulldogbags.org/volunteers**, for both groups and individuals to sign-up to pack. Reminder emails will be sent to people who have signed up.

RAMPING UP with the SMFCSD for 2019-2020

Sally Dean, a Bulldog Bags, Inc. Board Member and a counselor at the SMF High School, and Michelle Surrena, SMF High School Art Teacher, did a presentation to the all-district staff meeting on Monday, August 19th, to share information about Bulldog Bags, Inc. from the past school year and to strengthen the SMF staff's important role in distributing Bulldog Bags to all eligible children in a discreet manner.

Representatives from Bulldog Bags, Inc. are having information tables at all of the school open houses. Individuals can sign-up to volunteer with the organization and children can be signed-up to receive Bulldog Bags.

WANT TO GET INVOLVED or JUST GET INFO?

As an all-volunteer organization, **Bulldog Bags, Inc.** is dependent on people from the greater community to stay apprised of what’s going on with the organization, as well as to serve on committees. If you’d like to receive our e-newsletter and let us know of your interest in becoming involved, please provide your **CONTACT INFORMATION** at www.bulldogbags.org/get-involved.

FOOD and PERSONAL CARE ITEM DRIVES

The collection of food and personal care items helps to keep the cost of a Bulldog Bag manageable. If your organization or business would like to host a Drive, please choose item(s) from the Drive Schedule at www.bulldogbags.org/food-drives and email bulldogbags44224@gmail.com to let us know of your selection.



STOW COMMUNITY FARMERS’ MARKET

Thank you to the Stow Community Farmers’ Market for providing space for Bulldog Bags, Inc. to have an Information Booth on several of the market dates: a couple more to go: August 31 and September 14! A really BIG **THANK YOU**, also, to Harold Hight and the Ukulele group that held such a fun Fundraiser for Bulldog Bags, Inc. — the 1st annual!



UPCOMING EVENTS



August 30 : First Bulldog Bag packing and distribution; other dates: www.bulldogbags.org/events/

August 31 and September 21: Info table at the Stow Community Farmers’ Market

September 15: **PAW FEST** 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. at Bow Wow Beach Dog Park; it is sponsored by the SMF Lions Club with the support from the City of Stow. There will be dog vendors, rescue groups, raffles, dog contests, presentations, celebrity judges, and the Rubber Ducks mascot!

The following will be collected for Bulldog Bags: fruit cups, mac n cheese, and bars of soap (unscented)

DID YOU KNOW?

Not all families that are eligible for the *Free and Reduced Meal Program* opt into it. At the request of the counselors, **Bulldog Bags, Inc.** has established **Bulldog Cupboards** at Kimpton Middle School and the High School, stocking them with lunch and snack items for students referred by staff. We are grateful for our partnership with the schools, so that we can continue to meet the needs of the children in our community.



vol-un-teen: A person who freely offers to take part in a task; they are not paid, because they are so precious that one cannot assign a value to it!

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- **You** can make a monetary donation; Bulldog Bags, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization and all donations are tax deductible (through the website or through the mail);
- **You** can sponsor 1 child’s Bulldog Bags for a year for \$60.00;
- **You** can host a fundraising event, as well as attend Bulldog Bags, Inc. fundraising events;
- **You** can host/support community food drives to help keep the cost Bulldog Bags manageable;
- **You** can volunteer on one of the committees.

YOU can play a pivotal role in improving the lives of children in our community!

SUPPORT FROM THE ENTIRE GREATER COMMUNITY IS INTEGRAL TO BULLDOG BAGS, INC.