

# School Food Drive Guidelines

## Four to Six Weeks Before the Food Drive

1. Get started. Establish a small committee to plan and coordinate the food drive. This should include organizing, promotion and publicity, collection and delivery. Be sure to communicate your ideas to the school administrators in advance to avoid conflicts and get any needed permissions.
2. Contact Loaves & Fishes. Let us know when you plan to run the drive and set a delivery date. This is especially important during our busy holiday delivery seasons. You can deliver food during any open hours or by appointment. Please call 978-772-4627 or email us at [drives@loavesfishespantry.org](mailto:drives@loavesfishespantry.org)
3. Decide the scope of your drive. Are you targeting the whole school, one grade level or several classrooms? When will the drive happen and how long will the collection time be? It works well to collect food for at most a week. Set a goal for your drive such as a total number of bags or items of food. A competition among classrooms or other school groups can stimulate participation. Be creative!
4. Plan to educate students on the need for the food drive. Loaves & Fishes has a presentation that provides information about hunger in America and in our local area. A representative from Loaves & Fishes will be happy to make a short presentation for your school. We also can provide information for teachers to use in classrooms at age-appropriate levels. Be sure to coordinate this effort with teachers and administrators.
5. Create a letter to go to parents. In the letter, introduce the food drive and Loaves & Fishes, and provide a “most popular” or “suggested items” food list with guidelines (no glass, in-date and unopened). Send the letter home with children, post the letter on the homework page, in the school newsletter, and in school announcements. Loaves & Fishes has a sample letter we can provide for you.

## Two Weeks Before

1. Design fliers and posters to advertise the food drive. Include a list of foods suitable for donation, collection period and place. This could be a contest, with the winning designs selected by the planning committee.
2. Designate an area at the school for drop off and storage of food during the drive. A highly visible area is often a good reminder and motivator for student participation.

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3. Determine if you plan to presort food for the Pantry. Loaves & Fishes will be able to guide you on sorting food by type or category should you choose to do this before you deliver it.
4. Organize people to deliver to the Pantry. Make sure your deliverers are able to lift bags or boxes of food safely. If you need additional delivery help, please [contact](#) Loaves & Fishes.

## One Week Before Delivery: Action Plan

1. Have student and adult volunteers sign up for the following jobs:
  - o Set up major collection site
  - o Count, weigh and/or sort food items
  - o Load food bags/boxes into delivery vehicles
  - o Deliver food to the Pantry (see this [page](#) for open hours)
2. Put up posters or banners along school halls and in classrooms to advertise the food drive.
3. Educate students about the need for Loaves & Fishes and why you are running the food drive. A representative from Loaves & Fishes can come and present. This is also an opportunity to tell students that Loaves & Fishes is here for them too, if needed.
4. Announce the start of the drive to the school. You might have a kickoff assembly or in-class speaker to rally energy for the drive. Tell the students about any competitions for amounts collected, any group-specific guidelines (e.g., Grade 5 is collecting breakfast cereal, etc.), and tell students where to bring the donated food.

## Sorting and Delivery Day: Action Plan

1. Place empty food bags/boxes on assembly table. Designate areas for sorted food to be placed.
2. Fill food bags/boxes, sorting according to suggestions from Loaves & Fishes. Count either the items or the number of bags/boxes of food collected. Take pictures of the food and the volunteers!
3. Load the food bags and any extra food items into the vehicles for transporting to Loaves & Fishes. Call Loaves & Fishes at 978-772-4627 and let us know your estimated arrival time. We'll make sure we have able arms to help unload the food. If you need someone to pick up the food for you, just contact our office and we will arrange a pickup.
4. Fill out a **Donation Record** at the Pantry with the names of your key volunteers and an address where we can send a thank-you card.

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## After the Drive

1. Announce the results of any competitions, thank the students for participating and tell the school community how much food you collected — be proud of your efforts!
2. Share Loaves & Fishes' appreciation with the students in newsletters, announcements, etc.
3. Make some notes about what went well, what needed tweaking for the future, and brainstorm any additional creative ideas for making the drive fun and educational.

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