

Units and District Presidents,

Here is the info I presented at Winter Conference for those of you that were asking about it. I am sending it in the Narrative I received it. If you have any questions and or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Back Pack Program

In the fall of 2016, Pastor Ivy (pastor at the Lutheran Church in Gwinner) asked North Sargent School if there were any concerns that G.A. Lutheran Church could help with. Our high school principal told her there were some families that could use some help with meals for their children. It was decided to start the Back-Pack Program. This is a program that is being used across the country, so we used the internet to get ideas for food, prices, and quantities, and distribution. Our superintendent chose to send a letter to every family explaining the program, the discretion involved, and the number to contact if they were interested in joining the program.

We started off with about 10 backpacks to some families who could use help over Christmas vacation. Once school was back in session, we used the standard food amounts and packed bags on Wednesday and distributed on Fridays. After some trial and error, we decided students in grades K-3 would have their food packed in their own backpack when no one was in the room. Students grades 4-6 stop in the computer room at end of the day on Fridays to pick up their backpacks due to homework and books. Currently, we are filling 17 backpacks which is down from 26. Since our start, a few families have asked to be removed.

We are currently working on a rotating food schedule so that children don't get the same food items week in and week out. The weekend food includes: 1 vegetable, 2 fruits, 2 breakfast items, 2 main meals, and 2 snacks. We also put a milk voucher in their Backpacks 1/month. We put a peanut butter and a jelly container in once a month, also. Per the data given by other groups who sponsor this program =, the average cost a week is about \$5 per child.

Finally, we are working out a system for where and when we purchase the food, so we can get the lowest prices, and do the least amount of shopping. Once we have this system in place, we will be opening this program to other churches and organizations to help monetarily. This is a community program, so we want to include any community group who is interested in contributing.

Now keep in mind this is the way it worked for our community. Which is a small community depending on where you live you may have to present it differently. In our school, we only have 250 kids in k-12 so sending a letter to all the lower elementary was not that many letters. The way we distribute may also be different. Remember this is a Nation-Wide project so go on the internet and look and see how the bigger schools handled each step. If you are unable to go on the internet, please contact me and I will get info for you.

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