



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SLIGO MIDDLE SCHOOL AWARDED GRANT TO ADOPT "GRAB N GO" BREAKFAST

Silver Spring, Md. (May 25, 2011) – Sligo Middle School today received a grant from the [First Class Breakfast Initiative](#), which is helping Maryland schools increase student participation in school breakfast programs. Sligo's award was presented by the Maryland Governor's Office for Children, the [Partnership to End Childhood Hunger in Maryland](#), [Share Our Strength](#) and [Maryland Hunger Solutions](#).

"Thanks to the generous support of the Partnership's corporate partners, Kaiser Permanente of the Mid-Atlantic States and the Walmart Foundation, the *First Class Breakfast Initiative* is able to provide these grants to eligible schools so they have the resources to implement the delivery model that works best for them," said Anne Sheridan, Maryland Director for Share Our Strength.

A [recent poll](#) of 400 Maryland students grades 6 -12 revealed that students know they perform better when they eat breakfast, and that they would eat breakfast more often if it could be incorporated into their school day. Obstacles that students face in getting a nutritious breakfast include transportation challenges, packed morning schedules and stigma linked to receiving free or reduced-price school meals. The *First Class Breakfast Initiative* encourages schools to address these barriers by adopting alternative ways of delivering breakfast such as Breakfast in the Classroom and "Grab and Go" meal options.

Working with the *First Class Breakfast Initiative*, Sligo Middle will begin an alternative breakfast program, meaning that students are now allowed to eat breakfast among their friends and peers in areas outside of the cafeteria. Grant funds will be used to purchase a kiosk and other related equipment. "Sligo Middle is becoming a model for how schools across Maryland should be serving breakfast to increase participation in the program," explained Rosemary King Johnston, Executive Director of the Governor's Office for Children. "No child should ever have to start their school day hungry. This grant will help the school improve how they serve breakfast so that children can achieve to their fullest potential."

Sligo is one of 21 schools in Anne Arundel, Montgomery, Frederick, Howard, Prince George's, and Baltimore Counties, as well as the City of Baltimore targeted to receive technical assistance, grants and other support from the *First Class Breakfast Initiative*. Event attendees had the opportunity to eat breakfast with students, and hear from Johnston, who presented Sligo Middle with a commemorative check for \$7,500.

According to a [new analysis](#) of 2009-2010 school year data by Maryland Hunger Solutions, only 45.6 students in Maryland ate school breakfast for every 100 students who received free or reduced-price lunch. Maryland Hunger Solutions Executive Director Cathy Demeroto explained, “Erasing the barriers that keep children from participating in the school breakfast program will get us closer to our goal of ending childhood hunger in the state of Maryland. The First Class Breakfast Initiative gives schools the tools, support and resources they need to make breakfast more accessible.”

Studies have found that strategies such as incorporating breakfast into the daily activities for students by serving Breakfast in the Classroom and offering “Grab and Go” meal options make breakfast more accessible and help eliminate barriers. “Sligo Middle School is fully supportive of finding ways to boost breakfast participation and we look forward to implementing the kiosk, satellite location in September,” Principal Richard Rhodes said. “Our breakfast participation numbers continue to rise each month as we continue to make accessible nutrition a priority at our school.”

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About the Partnership to End Childhood Hunger in Maryland

Led by the Governor’s Office for Children and Share Our Strength, the Partnership to End Childhood Hunger in Maryland is a strong and growing coalition of state and federal agencies, non-profit organizations, advocacy groups and the private sector. The Partnership is working together to implement a five year plan for ending childhood hunger by increasing participation in federal nutrition programs. More about the Partnership’s plan and the statewide summer meals campaign is available at www.NoKidHungryMD.org.

About Share Our Strength

Share Our Strength[®], a national nonprofit, is ending childhood hunger in America by connecting children with the nutritious food they need to lead healthy, active lives. Through its No Kid Hungry[®] Campaign—a national effort to end childhood hunger in America by 2015— Share Our Strength ensures children in need are enrolled in federal nutrition programs, invests in community organizations fighting hunger, teaches families how to cook healthy, affordable meals, and builds public-private partnerships to end hunger, nationally and at the state and city levels. Visit www.Strength.org to get involved.

About Maryland Hunger Solutions

Maryland Hunger Solutions (MDHS) aims to end hunger and improve nutrition in the state of Maryland. MDHS focuses on using federal nutrition supports (school meals, summer and afterschool nutrition programs, food stamps, and other nutrition programs) to reduce hunger and its adverse effects on health, learning, productivity and well-being; to improve nutrition; and to strengthen community institutions. Its goal is to increase access to these programs and other nutritious food sources in low-income areas across Maryland through public education, training and technical assistance and advocacy to improve program participation and implementation. Established in 2007, MDHS is a separately staffed and funded initiative of the Food Research and Action Center. Maryland Hunger Solutions is a core member of the Partnership to End Childhood Hunger, a public-private coalition led by the Governor’s office to raise awareness about childhood hunger in the state and increase participation in nutrition programs that combat hunger. For more information on MDHS’ projects and statewide advocacy efforts, visit www.mdhungersolutions.org