

Husky Hub

Heiman Elementary School

Evans, CO



Greeley Evans Weld County School District 6 has a mission to establish a school community where all students and their families do not have to worry about having enough food, therefore eliminating hunger in the district. This goal is in part being accomplished by teaming up with the district's Nutrition Services Department. The goal was to utilize the left-over food from the school day, package it, and provide it to families in need, thus helping to eliminate food waste and hunger.



Anne Ramirez, the principal at Heiman Elementary School, dedicated a room in the campus portables to house the program. Heiman Elementary was proud to partner with Nutrition Services and established a pantry at the school for families in need. Nutrition Services provided a refrigerator, freezer, and all the necessary shelving. Nicole Cox, a first-grade teacher at Heiman Elementary, added to this concept and worked to provide a space where families could have free access to a washing machine and dryer. She partnered with United Way who graciously provided the school with a laundry facility. When there were a few challenges connecting the washer and dryer to the school's existing electrical and ventilation system, United Way stepped up again and provided the money to make this a reality. Stephanie Mora, a CDL teacher at Heiman, furthered this concept by working to offer diapers to families. She also partnered with United Way and Heiman Elementary became an approved distribution site for the Covering Weld Diaper Bank, providing free diapers, wipes, and ointment to families.



The families at Heiman Elementary were so grateful for the services they wanted to pay it forward. They began donating their gently used children's clothing, thus adding a clothing bank. Through these services the Husky Hub was born. This year Heiman Elementary also received a \$5000 grant from the Supplemental Colorado Food Pantry Assistance program to aid in providing families with fresh meat, vegetables, and fruit as well as keeping the pantry stocked with non-perishable food items. It is because of these partnerships that Heiman Elementary has been able to service families in an extraordinary way.

Heiman Elementary sees this program as a way for families to help other families. Families can take what they need and pay it forward with what they can donate. The program is evaluated by direct feedback from families as well as seeing where the needs of families continue to be. The biggest challenge getting the program started was finding the money for the washer and dryer hook-ups and finding a way to keep the pantry restocked. However, the generous partnerships formed with the community helped solve these problems.

The advice Heiman Elementary would give to other schools who wish to replicate this program would be to have patience; it will not happen all at once. The Husky Hub has been in the planning and implementation stages for almost a year. It took a village to make this dream a reality and has been a lot of hard work but with a passionate staff, helping all families is possible.

Standard 6 — Collaborating with the Community
Essential Element 4 — Dedicate Necessary Resources