

PTA Council Fall Reception & Workshop

Statistics on Poverty, Homelessness and Information on Assistance Programs

Compiled by Dr. Laurie Taylor-Mitchell, President, Student Support Network

Students qualifying for Free and Reduced Price Meals — during the last school year, **nearly 50,000 students qualified for free and reduced price meals (FARMS) in school, i.e. lived in severe poverty:** new numbers will be out at the end of October.

All students qualifying for Reduced Price Meals are now getting free meals in the school system.

- **For a student to qualify for meal assistance now, income for a family of four cannot exceed \$46,435**
- According to an updated report from the United Way (ALICE Report), the income needed in Maryland for a family of four to be economically self-sufficient (no savings possible) is now \$69,672 a year; **an hourly wage of nearly \$35 an hour is required for this income level.**
- **In Maryland, 50 percent of jobs pay less than \$20 per hour**, with 60 percent of those jobs paying less than \$15 per hour.
- Working families making over about \$46,000 but less than \$69,000 are still thousands of dollars in the hole because they make too much to qualify for meal assistance but not enough to be economically self-sufficient.
- **These families struggling economically do NOT show up in the FARMS statistics from BCPS.**

Homeless: over 2,500 students were identified as homeless in BCPS - latest data is from the end of the last school year. These numbers are not made public and have to be requested through a Public Information Act request (easy to do online through BCPS):

[http://www.bcps.org/community/Public Information Act Requests.html](http://www.bcps.org/community/Public%20Information%20Act%20Requests.html)

- There are always more homeless students than the stats indicate because many students/families are too embarrassed or ashamed to discuss it.

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP): a federal program that funds meals at no charge to ALL students in high poverty schools, eliminating paperwork, stigma of meal shaming through students having no money and other issues. BCPS would have to contribute a modest amount to implement this program but would be well worth the expense.

- CEP works: nationally, over 8 million students in over 17,000 schools are benefitting from CEP, including systems such as Houston, where 191 schools have elected CEP, and Baltimore City.

Only four schools have this provision in BCPS (below, showing the increase in meal participation after CEP was implemented), but 51 are eligible.

Average Daily Participation School Lunch	Dundalk Middle	Dundalk High	Riverview Elementary	Hawthorne Elementary
2015-2016	424	743	432	374
2016-2017	575	956	490	402
Additional meals served per day	+152	+213	+58	+28
% Change	+36%	+29%	+13%	+7%

15 schools with the highest rates of students qualifying for FARMS by percentage:

SCHOOLS	% of all students
Sandalwood ES	85.1
Riverview ES	83.4
Hawthorne ES	81.6
Deep Creek ES	81.8
Halstead Academy	76.1
Shady Springs ES	76.6
Martin Blvd ES	76.4
Baltimore Highlands ES	76.2
Colgate ES	75.6
Dundalk ES	74.9
Sandy Plains ES	72.7
Sussex ES	72.6
Lansdowne MS	72.3
Deep Creek MS	71.6
Woodmoor ES	71.6

15 schools with highest rates of students qualifying for FARMS by numbers of students:

SCHOOL	# of students
Dundalk HS	928
Parkville HS	870
Kenwood HS	835
Woodlawn HS	798
Lansdowne HS	749
Patapsco HS	702
Deer Park MS	617
Chesapeake HS	606
Holabird MD	591
Milford Mill Academy	591
Deep Creek MS	585
Franklin MS	576
Lansdowne MS	562
Perry Hall HS	559
Dundalk ES	538

15 schools with highest numbers of students identified as homeless (2017-2018):

SCHOOL	# of homeless students
Parkville HS	136
Dundalk HS	87
Lansdowne HS	78
Chesapeake HS	54
Dundalk ES	51
Woodlawn	49
Dundalk MS	48
Patapsco HS	47
Owings Mills HS	39
Kenwood HS	38
Lansdowne MS	37
Bear Creek ES	37
Reisterstown ES	36
Sandalwood ES	36
Deep Creek ES	35

Some food assistance programs and others in Baltimore County serving BCPS:

Food for Thought: provides weekend backpacks of food for students at risk of hunger and food insecurity, now serving over 200 students in at least 15 schools. Town Hall Meeting on October 13. **Contact:** Monica Butta, President, monicabutta@gmail.com

Maryland Hunger Project: weekend food supplies for high-poverty elementary schools in Baltimore County and Baltimore City. **Contact:** office@baltimorehungerproject.org

Student Support Network: pantries/rooms in Loch Raven HS, Parkville HS, and Pine Grove MS; provides food, clothing, school supplies and other critical items; responds to requests from staff for assistance for students and their families. Sponsoring Big Fall Drive to help non-Network schools around the County with requests from schools for students (Nov. 9 and 10).

Contact for Network: Laurie Taylor-Mitchell, ltaylormitchell.ssn@gmail.com

Contact for Big Fall Drive: Jan Bahner, jbahner.ssn@gmail.com

Empower4life: serves students K-12 living in homeless shelters with clothing, school supplies and support programs

Contact: Jennifer Cox, jennifer@empower4lifemd.org