



**WICHITA STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

**CENTER FOR COMMUNITY SUPPORT  
AND RESEARCH**

*Strengthening Organizations, Strengthening Communities*

**OFFICE LOCATION** | 358 N. Main,  
Wichita KS 67202  
**PHONE** | 316.978.3843  
**TOLL FREE IN KS** | 800.445.0116  
**FAX** | 316.978.3593

# Kansas Summer Meals Summit

---

Report for the Kansas State Department of  
Education, the Kansas Health Foundation, and  
Kansas Appleseed  
January 2015

Prepared by Sarah Jolley, MA

## Table of Contents

---

Overview .....	2
Informational Sessions .....	2
Regional Breakout Group Strategies.....	3
Summary of the Day.....	6
Appendix.....	7

## Overview

On Monday, January 26<sup>th</sup> the Kansas State Department of Education, the Kansas Health Foundation, and Kansas Appleseed hosted the Kansas Summer Meals Summit at the Kansas Leadership Center and Kansas Health Foundation Conference Center in Wichita, Kansas. The purpose of the day was to convene national and state level experts to explore opportunities to provide more meals to Kansas children through the Summer Food Service Program. This day also provided the opportunity for the more than 175 participants to learn about available resources and contribute to the development of strategies to help achieve the ultimate goal of providing more meals to Kansas kids in the summer. This report highlights the work done that day.

## Informational Sessions

The morning was full of information provided by a variety of featured speakers and panelists. Steve Coen, President and CEO of the Kansas Health Foundation, opened the day talking about the importance of “growing Kansas kids.” According to data from the Food Research and Action Center, Kansas ranked 50<sup>th</sup> in 2012 and 48<sup>th</sup> in 2013 in participation in the Summer Food Service Program, which certainly leaves room for improvement. On a positive note, charitable giving and volunteering rates are high in Kansas, suggesting there are many individuals in Kansas who care about making a difference. Cheryl Johnson from the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) and Audrey Rowe from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) presented Steve Coen and the Kansas Health Foundation with two awards recognizing their efforts to impact the health and nutrition of Kansas kids.

Cheryl then introduced the first panel, which provided a national perspective on hunger for kids during the summer months. The panel included Jillien Meier (No Kid Hungry Senior Program Manager from Share Our Strength), Crystal FitzSimons (Director of School and Out-of-School Time Programs from the Food Research and Action Center), and Audrey Rowe (Administrator for the Food and Nutrition Service, USDA). The panelists talked about how food insecurity increases in the summer months. Students have access to food during the school year, but hunger is an issue for these children year round.

After hearing the national perspective, a series of speakers provided information from the state’s perspective. Peggy McAdoo and Kelly Chanay (both of whom are Assistant Directors for Child Nutrition and Wellness at KSDE) presented the “nuts and bolts” of the Summer Food Service Program. Their presentation included information on the requirements, regulations, and reimbursement rates associated with participation in the Summer Food Service Program. Rebekah Gaston (Staff Attorney with Kansas Appleseed) then presented an analysis of data showing the existing gaps in access to the Summer Food Service Program for Kansas kids.

After hearing more about the Summer Food Service Program and the need in Kansas, Steve Smith and Dusty Jones from Hiawatha (located in Brown County) described the collaborative efforts that resulted in the Summer Food Service Program being implemented in their community. They shared their successes and also their lessons learned in the process. Heading into the breakout sessions, the themes that emerged from the morning speakers were collaboration, creativity, and consistent messaging.

## Regional Breakout Group Strategies

Following the morning's informational sessions, the afternoon was dedicated to having participants gather in breakout groups divided by geographic region: 1) Eastern Kansas, 2) Central Kansas, 3) Wichita/Sedgwick County and 4) Western Kansas. Each breakout session included a brief presentation from a panel consisting of summer meal sponsors, site managers, and advocacy partners. Panelists talked about issues such as implementation barriers, best practices, regional needs, and myths and misinformation. The panel presentation was followed by a facilitated discussion around possible gaps/challenges in the region.

The group then had the opportunity to develop specific strategies for their region. One of the purposes of the day was to leave with priority strategies related to what might be a starting point for action in Kansas. Each of the four breakout groups worked on developing strategies to increase participation rates in the Summer Food Service Program in 2015 and in future summers. Each of the four breakout groups came back to the larger group to share the top two strategies they developed for their region.

### **Eastern Kansas Region**

The breakout group for Eastern Kansas had about 35 participants from cities including Coffeyville, LaCygne, Lawrence, Parsons, Topeka, and the Kansas City area. Rebekah Gaston from Kansas Appleseed served as the moderator. Panelists for this group included:

- Angela Jeppesen, Harvesters
- Judith Neely, KSDE
- Kent Hill, Compass Behavioral Group
- Shane Hastings, USDA Rural Development

The top strategies developed for this region were related to enhancing networks and removing barriers to participation.

#### **Strategy #1: ENHANCE NETWORKS**

Enhance networks by piggybacking on organizations that are already:

1. Drawing kids
2. Involved in distribution/transportation
3. Communicating

#### **Strategy #2: REMOVE BARRIERS**

Remove barriers to low-income kids by including and/or going to activities like swimming pools, basketball, etc.

## **Central Kansas Region**

The breakout group for Central Kansas was the largest with just over 40 participants from cities including Emporia, Eureka, Garnett, Hiawatha, Hutchinson, Manhattan, Salina, and Wamego. Peggy McAdoo from KSDE served as the moderator. Panelists for this group included:

- Barb Depew, KSDE Consultant
- Brenda Gutierrez, Salina Area United Way
- Bridget Sheehan, Midwest Dairy Council
- Marian Hedges, USD 462
- Tamara Grubb, Second Harvest

The top strategies developed for this region were related to creating a clearinghouse for information and sharing stories of success.

### **Strategy #1: CREATE A CLEARINGHOUSE**

Create a focal point for all information (like a clearinghouse) for a starting kit:

- Transportation
- Site selection
- Coordination
- Promotion (social media)
- Up front money/funding

### **Strategy #2: SHARE STORIES**

Share more positive stories of impact – sharing information in community

- Profile impact across generations
- Emphasize adult involvement

## **Wichita/Sedgwick County Region**

The breakout group from Wichita/Sedgwick County had approximately 30 participants from Wichita and cities in the Wichita area including Andover, Augusta, Derby, El Dorado, Halstead, Haysville, Mulvane, and Newton. Lynette Osner from KSDE served as the moderator. Panelists for this group included:

- Amy Droegemeier, USD 232
- David Paul, USD 259
- Lonna Summers Rocha, KSDE
- Lyndon Drew, Catholic Charities
- Lynette Osner, KSDE

The top strategies developed for this region were related to creating a clearinghouse for information and increasing discussions to help facilitate partnerships, learning, and networking.

### **Strategy #1: INCREASE DISCUSSIONS**

Increase round table discussions in regions and local level to facilitate partnerships and learning. Support networking at local level to develop specific strategies. Invite new partners to round tables. Schedule round tables so key partners can attend.

### **Strategy #2: CREATE A CLEARINGHOUSE**

Create a clearinghouse with entry level info, new sites, sponsors and partners who can work in support of local communities. Include grant funding opportunities.

## **Western Kansas Region**

The breakout group from Western Kansas was the smallest with about 25 participants from cities including Garden City, Great Bend, Hill City, Hugoton, Kingman, Larned, McPherson, Osborne, Russell, and Ulysses,. Kelly Chanay from KSDE served as the moderator. Panelists for this group included:

- Beverly Stafford, KSDE
- Davonna Daharsh, USD 210
- Debi Kreutzman, Kansas Food Bank
- Emily Sitz, Southwest Kansas Library System

The top strategies developed for this region were related to increasing awareness of what is available and already happening and finding ways to go where the kids are during the summer.

### **Strategy #1: INCREASE AWARENESS**

Become aware of what is already happening and what is available (e.g., through Kansas Food Bank and others).

- From there, identify and educate possible sponsors in communities (including responsibilities, requirements, options, etc.)

### **Strategy #2: GO WHERE THE KIDS ARE**

Find ways to go where the kids are, including:

- Finding ways to utilize schools
- Using other places in the community (i.e., the pool)
- Exploring grant money available through the Kansas Department of Transportation

While each of these breakout groups worked independently, the strategies they developed are surprisingly similar. Multiple groups had a strategy related to creating a clearinghouse or a place where people can go to learn more about the Summer Food Service Program and about what is available and/or already happening in their area. Each breakout group also identified strategies related to finding ways to increase networking, communication, and discussion in their community and in their region. These top strategies provide a place to start as individuals, funders, coalitions, and other organizations begin or continue their work to provide more meals to Kansas kids through the Summer Food Service Program.

## Summary of the Day

Jessica Donze Black, Director of Kids' Safe and Healthful Foods Project from the Pew Charitable Trusts, closed the day. She encouraged everyone by saying: START SMALL. Start where you are, and grow where you can. Can you provide more meals per day? Can you provide meals on more days per week? Can you provide meals during more weeks or during more months over the summer? Who can you partner with to help take those small steps toward providing more meals? Jessica talked about how networking and sharing successes – like at the Kansas Summer Meals Summit – are important. The more everyone hears about the success of various programs, the more those types of programs become the norm as opposed to the exception; they become expected and less surprising. Success begets success. What will success look like for Kansas?

*Wichita State University's Center for Community Support and Research (CCSR) is dedicated to creating and sustaining positive change within organizations and communities across the state of Kansas. CCSR's skilled teams work directly with community coalitions, non-profit health and human services organizations, and self-help groups from an interdisciplinary perspective. Serving Kansas for over 30 years, CCSR staff are Kansans who truly care about Kansas communities.*

Want to know more about this report? Contact Sarah Jolley at ([sarah.jolley@wichita.edu](mailto:sarah.jolley@wichita.edu)).

# Appendix

---

Each of the four breakout groups was tasked with developing strategies for their region and then bringing back their top two strategies to the larger group. This Appendix includes all strategies developed by each of the four breakout groups, including each group's top two strategies, which are also provided in the text of the report. For breakout groups that developed more than two strategies, a voting process was used to help determine which two strategies to take back to the larger group. In those cases, vote counts are included next to those strategies. In addition, each group talked about the gaps/challenges for their region, and the notes from those discussions are captured here as well.

## **Eastern Kansas Region**

### Gaps/Challenges

- Publicity
- Rural Services
- Number of days of service
- Reaching teens/pre-teens
- Language
- Cultural foods
- Food sensitivity

### Strategy #1: ENHANCE NETWORK

Piggyback on organizations that are already:

4. Drawing kids
5. Involved in distribution/transportation
6. Communicating

Resources: VISTA, United Way, Food Bank/Network, Extension, KSDE, list of where kids are  
Who else: Business leaders

### Strategy #2: REMOVE BARRIERS to low-income kids

Activities like swimming pools, basketball, etc.

Resources: Money, transportation

Who else: Business, grants, churches

Strategy #3: Involve teens by employing them and by setting aside a teen area.

## **Central Kansas Region**

### Gaps/Challenges

- Rural isolation
- Staffing
- Kids will only go 3 blocks
- Misinformation - \$
- Racial/ethnic isolation
- Educating elected officials – “social program” averse
- Lack of volunteers
- Community perception
- Organizing – grassroots
- Getting started is overwhelming
- Generating buy-in – community

Strategy #1 (36 votes): Focal point for all info (like a clearinghouse) for a starting kit:

- Transportation
- Site selection
- Coordination
- Promotion (social media)
- Up front \$

Resources: Money

Who else: USDA, KSDE, food processors

Strategy #2 (6 votes): Build support for Summer Food Service Program into Unified School Districts' health and wellness policy

Resources: USD personnel time

Who else: School board, local food pantry or food bank, ministerial alliance, coaches and teachers

Strategy #3 (26 votes): More sharing of positive stories of impact – sharing info in community

- Profile impact across generations
- Emphasize adult involvement

Resources: Creating and disseminating – Staff and \$

Who else: Coaches, groups working with kids, students telling stories, physicians

Strategy #4 (13 votes): Just go do it! You want to feed hungry kids.

Resources: The whole community

Who else: Everyone

## **Wichita/Sedgwick County Region**

### Gaps/Challenges

1. Transportation – Don't leave house
2. Communication about sites to families
3. Consistency/continuity of staff from year-to-year
4. Knowing what is feasible and how to collaborate to address feasibility, communication
5. Isolated communities need strategies
6. "Schools have this covered" is a myth that people/faith communities think

To address Gap #4: Knowing what is feasible and collaborate to address needs

Strategy (15 votes): Increase round discussions in regions and local level to facilitate partnerships and learning. Support networking at local level to develop specific strategies. Invite new partners to round tables. Schedule so key partners can attend.

Strategy (6 votes): Clearinghouse with entry level info, new sites, sponsors and partners who can work in support of local communities. Include grant funding opportunities.

To address Gap #1: Transportation

Strategy (2 votes): Partner with KHF, schools, bus drivers/bus barn, AmeriCorps, and volunteers to create mobile sites

## **Western Kansas Region**

### Gaps/Challenges

- Lack of sites
- Transportation

Strategy #1: Become aware of what is already happening and what is available (e.g., through Kansas Food Bank and others).

- From there, identify and educate possible sponsors in communities (including responsibilities, requirements, options, etc.)

Strategy #2: Find ways to go where the kids are

- Including finding ways to utilize schools
- Including other places in the community (i.e., the pool)
- Including exploring grant money from KDOT

Note: This breakout group consisted of smaller groups of people who attended the Summit together and/or were from the same location. As such, these groups wanted to work together to develop strategies specific to their community (i.e., Kingman County, Larned, and Garden City). Strategies for each group are listed below along with the general strategies that were identified for the region.

General Strategies for the Region:

- Become aware of what is already happening and what is available (e.g., through Kansas Food Bank).
- Collaboration – Meet with those who are involved.
- Go where the kids are
- Longer term – school-based, seamless summer
- Grant money for transportation through KDOT

Strategy: Kingman County

- No sites currently
- Utilize the schools – this makes the most sense
- Examine shelf stable options
- School for hot meals, pool for cold meals

Strategy: Larned

- Find a sponsor for their community

Strategy: Garden City

- Include a community health education component, including cultural relevance and dietary restrictions/requirements