



2026 SCHOOL COMPETITION INFORMATION



CAN DO Community Challenge - At A Glance

Who: You!

What: Beyond Hunger's annual spring food and fund drive. Our goal is to raise \$250,000 this year and thanks to a match from the Friends of Beyond Hunger, every donation will be matched up to \$100,000!

When: April 1st to April 30th

Why: Donations to Beyond Hunger are typically at their lowest during the spring. We continue to see a huge surge in need for our services, and we encourage the community to spread the word, promote the food drive, sign up to volunteer, and/or make a donation.

For more information, contact:

Lauren Brightmore, Lauren@GoBeyondHunger.org (708) 386-1324 ext. 1102

Corina Robinson, Corina@GoBeyondHunger.org (708) 386-1324 ext. 1108

About Beyond Hunger

For 47 years, Beyond Hunger has helped fight hunger in our community. Last year we provided nutritious groceries to over 69,000 individuals across 13 priority zip codes. Our marquee program, the food pantry, operates twice per week. Program participants can utilize our walk-in Community Market or come to our drive-thru to receive pre-packaged boxes with dietary restrictions and cultural preferences in mind. We also supply meals to kids when school is not in session and deliver groceries to homebound older adults and adults with disabilities. We offer nutrition education and cooking classes and connect clients to income support benefits.

Beyond Hunger

848 Lake Street
Oak Park, IL 60301

(708) 386-1324
www.GoBeyondHunger.org



CAN DO SCHOOL COMPETITION

How will your school take home the CAN DO Challenge Trophy?

Starting April 1st, the competition begins! This year we are continuing our focus on collecting funds, food, and increasing awareness through advocacy activities. More information is below:

Fundraising Pages:

Like in years past, we will create your school's fundraising page on our CAN DO Challenge donation site (**10 points per \$1**). You will be able to see your progress in real time for all online donations. For every \$1 donated, we can provide 3 meals!



The online fundraising page is an easy way for donors to give securely and earn points for your team. You can even recruit fundraisers for your team to further your impact!

In 2025, participating schools collected enough food and funds to provide over 72,000 meals!

Food Donations:

With the rising need for our services as well as soaring food costs, we need your help to stock our shelves and donate non-perishable food items.

Below is a list of our most needed items for our Food Pantry and Home Delivery programming. You'll notice a few items are worth more points as these are more difficult for us to procure.

Beyond Hunger Food Donation List - Most Needed Items:

High Need Items (10 points each)

- Bagged White Rice
- Bagged Brown Rice (2lb bags)
- Canned peaches (in natural juice)
- Canned Tuna
- Canned Chicken
- Canned Salmon

Essential Items (5 points each)

- Canned Soup (Low Sodium)
- Cheerios' Cereal
- Canned Mixed Vegetables (low sodium)
- Tomato Paste
- Refried Beans
- Dry Beans (Pinto and Black)
- Canned Fruit (in juice)
- Gluten free pasta
- Canned sardines (in water)
- Vegetable oil (12 – 16 oz)

Bring Beyond Hunger's Van to Your School:

We are once again offering an exciting incentive for this year to increase food donations. **If your school collects 650 lbs. or more of our most needed items, the Beyond Hunger van will come to you!**

Please let Lauren@gobeyondhunger.org know if your school will likely meet this threshold by April 24th to coordinate pick up. We'll schedule a time for your students to load and take photo ops.



Van pickups will take place on Friday, May 1st during school hours.

Register Your Food Drive Drop Off:

For non-perishable donations under the 650 lbs. threshold, please register your donation drop offs date/time through [sign up genius](#). Beyond Hunger is located at 848 Lake Street in Oak Park. Enter the parking lot on Kenilworth, pull up to the window (off the playground), and let the staff know what school/organization you're with.



RESERVE YOUR DROP OFF DATE/TIME

As a reminder for volunteers dropping off food, **we cannot accept donation drop offs on Wednesdays or Saturdays during food distribution.** If you need to change the date you signed up for, please reach out to Lauren@gobeyondhunger.org. Thank you for your understanding!

All food donations will be weighed for a total number of pounds, but only the most needed items will be awarded points and count towards the competition.

Package and Sort Donations:

We appreciate your support in packaging donations before drop-off. You can make it an activity, designate a class to take on the sorting, or use it as a math lesson when figuring out weight. Contact us for ideas on how to organize this activity at your school.

1,000 Points



Support our Partners:

Help local businesses and Beyond Hunger by purchasing items from the *most needed list* through our incredible Rescue Partners. These partners include local grocery stores and retailers that do their part to help eliminate food waste by donating products that are nearing their expiration date, or those with minor cosmetic blemishes.

Partners include:

- Trader Joe's (483 N. Harlem, OP)
- Sugar Beet Food Co-op (812 Madison, OP)
- Jewel Osco (Any in Oak Park or River Forest)
- Aldi (Forest Park or any local)
- Costco (Melrose Park)
- Forty Acres (Chicago)

Advocacy:

A critical component to ending hunger in our communities is raising awareness. Your school or group can help educate others and use their combined voices to become anti-hunger advocates. Teachers or team captains can share videos and group activities as part of this advocacy component:

Classroom Visit

Start the Challenge with points by scheduling a visit with a Beyond Hunger staff member. We will come to your school and speak to your class or group about the Challenge and what services we offer at Beyond Hunger.

1,000 Points

Videos

Create Your Own Cooking Video

Star in your own cooking show! Students can choose one of the Healthy Recipes from our [website](#) and create their own cooking video for Beyond Hunger to share on our social media and YouTube channel.

Please film horizontally, keep the video to approximately 2 minutes or less, and eliminate as much background noise as possible. Once we post your video, be sure to share it with your friends and school community.

500 Points

Create a Promotional Video

Work together to create a 1-minute shareable video about how your school is raising awareness, food, and funds for Beyond Hunger. Make it fun and send that video or public link to us so that we can brag about your efforts across our social media channels.

300 Points



Send cooking and promotion video submissions to corina@gobeyondhunger.org.

Optional Activities

Though the activities below are not worth points in the competition, here are some fun ways to kick off the challenge and engage students in a variety of ways:

Classroom Activities

We have many activities that students can do in the classroom or on their own to learn more about hunger and how they can make an impact. Activities include coloring pages, crafts, family projects, word finds and MORE. Classroom activities can be found on our google drive: <https://tinyurl.com/CanDoResources>.



Birthday Cards

Help spread some cheer and have students make birthday cards for our home delivery clients. Use the provided [template](#) on our google site. You can drop off the cards with your food donations at the end of the month.

Spread the Word:

Everything you need from posters, social media resources, images and more is in our Can Do School Resource folder: <https://tinyurl.com/CanDoSchools>. Please like and share any posts about Can Do with your networks.

Awards:

Once the competition has ended, we will tabulate each school's points. **You must drop off all food donations by 5/1 to qualify your points.** Points are weighted based on impact. The school with the MOST points across all categories will receive the CAN DO Trophy.



In addition to the overall CAN DO Champion, there are two more traveling trophies, so you can share your school's success all year. They are:

Shelf Stocker Supreme: awarded to the school that collects the highest amount of most needed food items

CAN DO Spirit: awarded to the school with the most spirit and engagement

Results will be shared in mid-May. Our staff will coordinate with the winning schools on a date to present the trophies. **Questions?** Contact Lauren@GoBeyondHunger.org

Thank you for providing support for our community at a time of uncertainty and great need!



TEAM CAPTAINS

IMPORTANT CHALLENGE INFORMATION

DONATION PAGE

Your school's page will be created for you and will show all online donations. We can also add any checks or cash that you collect offline and add them to your team totals.

To personalize or edit your team page, goal, or add images, please contact Lauren Brightmore lauren@gobeyondhunger.org 708-386-1324 x 1102

While you can see donations on your team page, you can also opt to receive emails as they come in. If you would like to receive these email notifications, please contact [Lauren](#) by March 15th to get it set up.

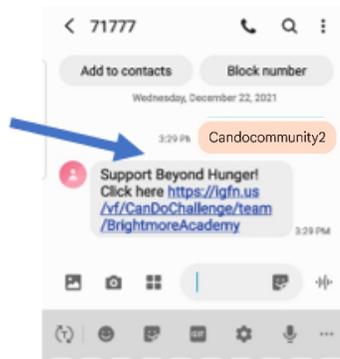
FOOD DONATIONS

Food donations will be added to team totals at the end of the Challenge. **For those with 650lbs. or more, please let us know and we will coordinate the day/time for pick up/photo ops.**

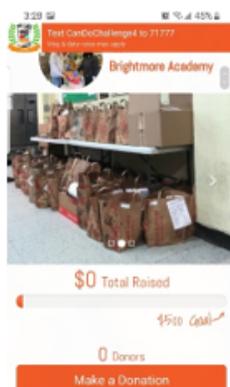
All other donations can be scheduled via the [signup genius](#) for drop off at the Oak Park office.

TEXT-TO-GIVE

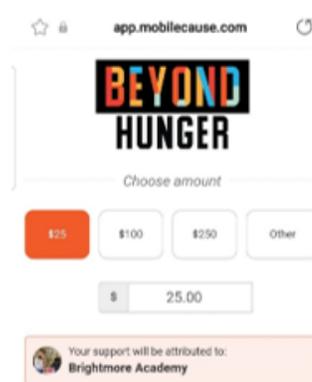
Your team can leverage your fundraising even further using text messages. Each team will have a specific keyword that supporters can text to 71777 to donate directly to your school. It's another terrific way to get the word out and easy to use.



Text your team's keyword (has # at the end of it) and click on the link.



They will go to your team's page and select [Make a Donation](#)



Then see a form with your team attributed to their donation

Most Needed Donation Items

Help stock our shelves and donate non-perishable food items. Below is a list of Beyond Hunger's most needed items for our Food Pantry and Home Delivery programs.

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Support our partners! Consider purchasing your donations from any of our rescue partners below:

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- Aldi (Forest Park or any local)
- Costco (Melrose Park)
- Forty Acres (Chicago)

Thank you for supporting Beyond Hunger this spring!



HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

DONATE

\$1 = 3 MEALS



COLLECT

our most needed
food items



ADVOCATE

to raise awareness



For more information, go to GoBeyondHunger.org/CanDoSchool