

# Weekend Food Packs

## Sunrise Elementary School

### Aurora, CO



At Sunrise Elementary School, the 2023-2024 school year marked a new beginning for the community. For the first time, Sunrise has a full-time Community Liaison. As a Title I school, it is necessary to have a support system built in for families. Sunrise has several programs to support families in need, including a school-based food/resource pantry and community closet.

In partnership with SECOR's Food for Thought outreach program, Sunrise provided families and students with weekly non-perishable food packs for the weekend. The Community Liaison and paraeducator designed a process for students with 504 or IEP plans to deliver the food packs to classrooms. These students often have breaks built into their schedules. To earn the opportunity to deliver food packs during those breaks, students had to remain on task in class and complete their work. As a result, delivering food packs served as motivation for students to participate in class, thus teaching accountability and responsibility.



Each Thursday, students selected to deliver the food packs reviewed the job responsibilities and signed the job contract. On Friday, the food packs were distributed to classrooms. Four students worked two 20-minute shifts in the morning. With direction from the Community Liaison, they loaded the cart with the correct number of food packs corresponding to the classroom, one grade level at a time. They then pushed the cart through the school to each classroom, delivered the bags to the designated location in the room, and repeated for all 21 classrooms. At the end of their shift, the students were rewarded with a snack-pack and a handwritten affirmation for the day.



For years to come, Sunrise will continue to grow the practice of selecting students for this classroom job. Next school year, the goal is to implement more structure to build upon the skills of accountability and responsibility. Students will complete a job application on paper (instead of online) and write a personal statement about why they would be the best candidate. Students will interview for the job with the Community Liaison and paraeducator. To give the opportunity to as many students as possible, different sets of students will be selected for the fall and spring.

The paraeducator shared, "This job helps students in so many ways, most importantly in taking accountability for their actions. I have seen an increase in focus and responsibility and a will to do well all week so they can get to do the job. These students feel important while doing their job and they look forward to coming to school because of that."