

SECTION I: Contact Information

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SECTION II: Organizational Description

The Mission of Harvest Regional Food Bank is to eliminate hunger in Southwest Arkansas and Northeast Texas through food distribution and education. Harvest Texarkana began in 1989 when a group of concerned citizens organized with the belief that the excess food that was being discarded by restaurants should not go to waste, but should instead be used to feed the hungry. In 2005, Harvest became a member of Feeding America, and expanded their services to include food banking for partnering organizations. In 2015, Harvest distributed over 2.9 million pounds of food, or 2.4 million meals, through a network of approximately 75 pantries, soup kitchens, shelters and other programs in the region. In addition to our work through partnering agencies, Harvest also provides direct hunger relief through its Mobile Pantries and Childhood Hunger Programs. In rural areas, lacking hunger relief options, Harvest Regional Food Bank hosts quarterly mobile pantries. These events usually serve approximately 120 families with two boxes of shelf stable items, as well as produce, straight from the Food Banks trucks. Our childhood hunger programs including Summer Feeding programs as well as a Backpack for Kids Program, which reaches over 700 chronically hungry school age children.

SECTION III: Program Description

- A. According the most recent Hunger Study, conducted in partnership with Feeding America, one in six in Harvest Regional Food Bank's service area is struggling with food insecurity, and one in four children are struggling with hunger. Some 15,000 children live at or below the poverty line and experience food insecurity at some point during each year. The backpack program strives to reach the most vulnerable of that population to ensure that elementary aged children have access to meals over the weekends when they cannot access school provided breakfast and lunch. This population is helped by providing reliable and consistent sources of kid-friendly foods to bridge the gap over weekend. By providing consistent nutrition, the children arrive at school on Mondays well

nurished and prepared to take advantage of academic opportunities rather than worrying when lunch will come.

- B. Through the BackPack program, Harvest Regional Food Bank partners with school administrators to identify the children at most risk for chronic hunger. The schools select the children to participate and receive written permission from the parent prior to the child beginning to receive foods. The children are provided with a weekly bag of shelf stable, kid friendly foods that they can prepare, if necessary, delivered to the school for each student in the program. These foods are meant to supplement their diet for the weekend when they are away from school provided breakfasts and lunches. Backpacks are prepared at the Harvest Regional Food Bank warehouse and delivered to the campus mid-week so that they may be sent home with the child each Friday. The bags are discreetly placed into the students backpacks while the children are out of the classroom, preserving their anonymity. Each bag includes entrees, breakfasts, juice, and healthy snacks as well as the occasional hygiene product, books, or information about other social services the families may be able to use.
- C. The objective of this program is to ensure that the most vulnerable students in our public schools have access to enough food to ensure their mental, academic, emotional and physical development. During the 2016-17 school year, Harvest Regional's Backpack for Kids Program plans to serve 800 food insecure children on all elementary school campuses of TISD, T ASD, Pleasant Grove, Liberty Eylau, Genoa, Fouke, New Boston, Ashdown and Lafayette County school districts. The program is offered at no cost to any participating student.
- D. The backpack program has been replicated on other campuses in our region either serving students at the Middle School or in communities where a small organization pledges to only serve a small number of students at one or two campuses.
- E. See attached budget
- F. The goal of the Backpack program is to provide at least 800 children identified as chronically hungry by school administrators based on academic performance, behavior and school provided breakfast and lunch, with nutritious, kid friendly, shelf stable food each weekend for the 2016-2017 school year. With this food, the children's overall quality of life and academic performance will improve. The goal of the Backpack program is to provide at least 800 children identified as chronically hungry by school administrators based on academic performance, behavior and school provided breakfast and lunch, with nutritious, kid friendly, shelf stable food each weekend for the 2016-2017 school year. With this food, the children's overall quality of life and academic performance will improve.

The program is evaluated by school administrators, parents and children who are surveyed at the beginning, middle and end of the school year. Due to

confidentiality issues around services provided for children, we do not collect information that can be tracked to a specific student. All parent and child surveys are anonymous and ask general questions about the student's performance and how it has changed due to backpacks, whether the food was helpful and the types of foods that the kids would eat. School personnel are surveyed on the programs impact on academic performance, attendance, behavioral improvements and social/emotional improvements. We expect overall positive responses to surveys to be between ninety and ninety-five percent.

- G. Beginning the first week of School, Harvest program director meets with each backpack coordinator to determine the number of students to participate for the year. Permission slips and allergy forms are sent home and returned to the counselor. Harvest receives all forms before entering the child into the program. Starting in late September, weekend food bags are delivered to each campus. Each week, the bags are packed by volunteer groups at the Harvest Regional Food Bank facility. Parents, teachers and backpack coordinators are surveyed at the beginning, middle and end of year to evaluate the programs performance and benefit for the participating students.

<i>2016-17 BACKPACK EXPENSE</i>	Requested	Other Sources	Total
<i>Salaries & Wages</i>		\$8,500	\$8,500
<i>Employee Benefits/Payroll Taxes</i>		\$1,875	\$1,875
<i>Consultants & Contract Services</i>			
<i>Supplies</i>		\$3,000	\$3,000
<i>Telephone</i>			