

# Food for the Homeless

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**Howard County Public Schools Subject Area:** Math      **Grade Level:** 6-12

This service-learning program is infused into the math curriculum, focusing on topics in consumer math and preparation for the Maryland Functional Math Test. The unit is called Business Skills, and it reinforces basic skills such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, decimals, fractions, and percents. We spend about one week on business concepts of profit, loss, gross, net, discounts and taxes. The students then conduct a fund raiser using these skills, and take their profits to buy food to make bag lunches to donate to a local soup kitchen. Partnerships are created among the students, the school, community food wholesalers and potential donators, and the soup kitchen itself. Because the fund raiser is held at school, it enhances school spirit, especially if a thematic approach is taken; selling balloons for Mother's Day or Valentine's Day, for example. Teachers may choose to do this project as a one-time or ongoing project, as many times per year as they find it fits into the curriculum. It is best used to reinforce the above mentioned basic skills.

**Preparation:** Students prepare for service by building business skills and vocabulary, and through readings and discussions on the issue of homelessness.

**Action:** Students create poster advertisements, work rosters, order forms and letters to local businesses to solicit donations for the fund raiser. With the profits from the fund raiser and donations, they make 300 sandwiches and bag lunches to donate to a soup kitchen.

**Reflection:** Students write in their journals each day, and produce a poster that represents their contribution to the project.

