



## VBCPS Beach Bags Program...

**You can help our community by packing a “Beach Bag” for a beach child!**

Did you know that there are children right here in Virginia Beach who do not have enough to eat? It's hard to believe, but it's true. This is especially the case during weekends and school vacations when children cannot take advantage of available school breakfasts and lunches. In addition, the tough economic times we face as a country have created a situation where some families must choose between keeping their home and buying food for their family. Being deprived of food on a regular basis is called “food insecurity.” The U.S. Department of Agriculture defines food insecurity as *“households that are uncertain of having, or unable to acquire, enough food to meet basic needs of all their members because of insufficient money or other resources.”* When the guardian of a child has to choose between food and other necessities, e.g., having electricity shut off because they don't have enough money, it is an indicator of food insecurity. It is impossible to predict the impact that being deprived of food has on a child's development, but parents and teachers agree that even short-term hunger has an immediate impact on student alertness, behavior and academic achievement.

Fortunately, Virginia Beach City Public Schools Parent Connection is addressing this critical need through the **Beach Bags** program. Beach Bags provides needy students with necessary food items over the weekend. Currently the program serves hundreds of students from elementary, middle and high schools throughout the division. Food is packed by volunteers and distributed to participating schools. The **Beach Bags** are actually packed in brown paper (or plastic) bags and placed in student backpacks at the end of the day (so they are not embarrassed or stigmatized for having been selected).

Schools and the community can help in the following ways. The Virginia Beach Public Schools Education Foundation will accept tax deductible donations at [www.vbef.org](http://www.vbef.org). Schools, PTAs, parents, and community members can also “pack a **Beach Bag**” by assembling the ten items in the attached list in a paper or plastic (unsealed) bag. **Beach Bags** can be delivered to School Administration at building 6 of the Municipal Center Complex (across from the Post Office). In addition, arrangement can be made for pickup of Beach Bag items by calling the Office of Community Engagement at 757-263-1936.



**Beach Bags Food List  
Virginia Beach City Public Schools**

**Each Beach Bag Contains:**

**2 - Individual cereal boxes**

- Small, individual sized boxes or bowls

**2 – 8 oz. shelf stable milk**

- Individual cartons (juice box sized)

**2 – Shelf stable main course items**

- Ravioli, spaghetti & meatballs, beef stew, chicken & dumplings, tuna/chunk chicken, macaroni & cheese, chunky soups

**2 – 4 oz. (or larger) Fruit cups or 100% juice boxes**

**2 – Snack items**

- Granola bars
- Toaster pastries
- Cereal bars
- Pudding cups
- Raisins
- Pretzels
- Trail mix
- Snack crackers
- Peanut butter crackers
- Cheese crackers

**A complete “Beach Bag” contains a minimum of ten items from the list above. Individual food donations are gladly accepted. Donations should be delivered to the School Administration Building (2512 George Mason Drive) or to participating schools. Questions~ please call the Office of Community Engagement at 757-263-1936 or email [jody.blaufus@vbschools.com](mailto:jody.blaufus@vbschools.com).**