



For more information, contact:
Vanessa Mercado: 951-359-4757 ext. 115
vnmercado@feedingamericaie.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Feeding America Riverside / San Bernardino To Open Districtwide Pantry for Perris Schools *Perris Elementary School District Resource Center to Host Ribbon Cutting*

(Perris, CA / April 23, 2019) – Feeding America Riverside | San Bernardino (FARSB) announced it will begin providing free food at a school pantry for all 9 schools in the Perris Elementary School District beginning, Tuesday, April 23, 2019 at the Rob Reiner Children & Families Center located at 2221 S A Street, Perris, CA.

FARSB and local leaders will kick-off the new program, funded by the Pechanga Development Corporation's Foundation, with a ribbon cutting ceremony, open to community members with proper identification, at the resource center beginning on Tuesday at 8:00 a.m. The ceremony will be immediately followed by a food distribution.

Each school pantry provides healthy shelf stable foods to at-risk children and their families who might not otherwise be able to afford such nutritious foods. The pantry will be open year round during the academic school year.

Feeding America Riverside | San Bernardino has collaborated with school district staff to promote the upcoming pantry opening. "We are very excited and thankful for this opportunity to serve 9 schools in the district, as it would not be possible without the commitment of the school district staff," says Stephanie Otero, FARSB CEO.

FARSB is truly making an impact in our community with programs like the school pantry. One in five children is currently food insecure in the Inland Empire, whereas, just last year that figure was one in four children at risk of going hungry every day. The pantries are designed to impact our communities and to enable more children and families access to food that might not be available otherwise.

"While tens of thousands of families, including those served by FARSB's more than 400 community partners in the Inland Empire, are receiving meals through our regular distribution programs, many of the poorest and hungriest children slip through the cracks. The pantry program targets public schools where we find the highest percentage of children receiving free/reduced-price meals during the school week," said Vanessa Mercado, Director of Programs at FARSB.

“By focusing our attention on how access to healthy foods affects educational outcomes, we are creating a holistic approach in supporting our community’s kids. Hunger causes a myriad of problems for students like missing class, inhibited cognitive and developmental growth and even poor academic performance. The pantry is a program that addresses these issues and removes one of the main hurdles on access to nutritional food,” added Mercado.

To RSVP for the ribbon cutting or for more information please contact Vanesa Mercado:
vmercado@feedingamericaie.org.

About Feeding America Riverside | San Bernardino

Feeding America Riverside | San Bernardino began in 1980 as Survive Food Bank in response to the increasing concern about the dual problems of hunger and food waste in the Inland Empire. Today, FARSB is the primary source of food for over 300 local nonprofit organizations, distributing over 2 million pounds of food monthly to emergency food pantries, homeless shelters, soup kitchens, high-need elementary schools, halfway houses, senior centers, residential treatment centers, shelters for the abused, after school programs and group homes. More than 100,000 men, women and children, rely on the food bank’s distribution center each month to make ends meet.