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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Covina-Valley Unified Partners with Nonprofit Organizations, Donates Food to Those in Need**

**COVINA, CA** – Covina-Valley Unified School District is partnering with nonprofit organizations Food Finders, Shepherd’s Pantry, and Project 29:11 to donate food and beverage items from schools that would otherwise be discarded.

The three nonprofit organizations provide food, resources, and services to those in need.

Volunteers from the organizations began picking up food items from schools in the District on Sept. 19 and donating them directly to families in need in surrounding communities. Donated food items vary from day to day based on meal participation trends and student preferences, but often include items such as produce, milk cartons, and unserved hot entrees prepared for breakfast and lunch service.

The District has made periodic donations to food banks in the past, and has also taken part in other food-saving initiatives to reduce waste at schools.

Prior to the pandemic, Covina-Valley Unified introduced a food recovery system at schools through “sharing tables.” These tables are designated areas at every campus where students can place unopened items they do not want to eat after going through the meal service line. Any student may take additional items left at the sharing tables. The tables have seen an increase in student traffic since their reintroduction in spring of 2022 after COVID-19 health guidelines became more flexible.

“Our students actively participate in our sharing table program, and now we have an opportunity to reduce our food waste even more by providing food that would otherwise be discarded to families outside of the school day,” Director of Nutrition Services Lizett Olivares said.

Olivares said the District is thrilled to expand their existing relationship with the food banks and impact communities by providing donations on a weekly basis.

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“We are incredibly excited to be partnering with these three organizations that have such an important mission,” Superintendent Dr. Elizabeth Eminhizer said. “By launching a food rescue initiative to repurpose food that would otherwise be discarded, we are helping these organizations to reduce hunger and improve nutrition in our community.”

### **PHOTO CAPTIONS**

**CVUSD\_DONATIONS1:** Volunteers from Shepherd’s Pantry pick up unused food and beverage items from Covina High School every Tuesday and Thursday.

**CVUSD\_DONATIONS2:** C-VUSD Nutrition Services staff help volunteers load up trucks with unused food and beverage items to donate to those in need.

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