



Sisters Elementary School students conducted a successful food drive.

Students raise 700 pounds of food

By Erin Borla
Correspondent

Sisters Elementary School students raised close 700 pounds of food during their first-ever Peanut Butter and Jelly Food Drive for the Sisters Kiwanis Food Bank.

Kid-friendly foods were brought into the school Wednesday, March 9 through Friday, March 18. Piles of peanut butter, jelly, macaroni and cheese, fruit cups and more overflowed boxes on the stage.

Students could be seen piling items into each of the boxes every day.

“Students and their families were so generous,” said a volunteer. “I remember one day I was counting items and a student laid down his backpack and started pulling items out to donate. There was more and more... I don’t know how

his backpack held so many and how he was able to carry it!”

Each day of the food drive an announcement would go out from Principal Becky Stoughton about how many items had been brought in and what the total was. Easier than tracking the pounds of food at the school — volunteers counted the number of items. Students had a goal of 500 different items by the end of the drive.

Ten minutes before the bell rang and students left for spring break, Principal Stoughton came over the PA system and shared the good news. Not only did the students beat their goal of bringing in more than 500 items — they brought in 605 by the time the final bell rang.

Community businesses got in on the food drive as well. Both Melvin’s Fir Street Market and Ray’s Food Place

hosted drop-boxes during the last week. 37 jars of peanut butter and jelly that were purchased by community members and left at the stores were picked up from both locations and added to the final weight at the food bank.

The Sisters Kiwanis Food Bank is located at the corner of Main Avenue and Oak Street, and accepts donations throughout the year. The food bank is open from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Thursdays, and donations can be dropped off in the donation box in front of the food bank during off hours. Larger donations should be coordinated ahead of time. Visit www.sisterskiwanis.org for contact information.

“There are going to be a lot of happy kids with full bellies thanks to the students at Sisters Elementary School,” said Suzanne Carvlin, Sisters Kiwanis Club President.

Ore. moves neediest to front of line for college

PORTLAND (AP) — Oregon will begin offering college grants to the state’s low- and middle-income students based on their level of need.

That’s a change from the former first-come, first-served system.

Students who filled out their request for financial aid the soonest used to jump to the front of the line provided they were Oregon residents with an annual family income of less than \$70,000, said Bob Brew, director of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission’s Office of Student Access and Completion.

“Lower-income students tended to apply later and not get the money,” Brew told *The Oregonian* on Friday. Once the state money allocated to the Oregon Opportunity Grant had all been assigned, it was gone.

State lawmakers tweaked the system in 2015, adding more money to the grant and allowing the neediest students to be first in line.

They increased the program by nearly 24 percent for the 2015-17 cycle, dedicating \$140.9 million to the program. The expansion will allow an additional 16,000 people to receive grants, Brew said.

About 40,000 students

currently receive an Oregon Opportunity Grant.

Lawmakers also approved rules to guarantee the neediest students who apply for the program receive preferential treatment when the state distributes aid for upcoming school year.

But some administrators are concerned about the impact of those rules, which could mean some full-time students who had been receiving a maximum of \$2,250 in state aid will no longer qualify. “We want to make sure those students aren’t further disenfranchised in their path to get a degree,” said Hans Bernard, associate vice president for state and community affairs at the University of Oregon.

Low-income students face funding gaps even if they qualify for the Federal Pell Grant and the state program, said Bernard.

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