

For several years, Mrs. Wood, High School Family and Consumer Science teacher has envisioned transforming her back room into a food pantry to serve the needs of food insecure students. This time last year, the Career and Technical Departments consisting of FCS/FCCLA, Ag/FFA, Business/FBLA, and Industrial Technology banded together to host a food drive to stock said food pantry.

Upon returning to school this past fall, Mrs. Wood was brainstorming better ways to get the food to students in need. She had a conversation with Mr. Watts, the Instructional Coach at the High School, expressing her concerns and the fact that students seem overwhelmed with the amount of food on the shelves and just what to do with the food. They came up with the idea for food kits and after doing some research, Mrs. Wood was able to find 25 shelf stable food pantry kit recipes. These recipes would be printed and bagged along with all the food needed to fulfill the recipes. An example would be a zip top bag complete with a creamy chicken casserole recipe that includes 2 boxes of mac and cheese, 1 large can of chicken, and a can of creamed soup. This meal can be made without milk or butter which is sometimes not available in the home.

After a full scale campaign involving the high school and the community, and upon writing a one thousand dollar grant, Mrs. Wood is ready to roll out the meal kits. Signs are posted in the high school and announcements will indicate that free food is available for anyone who can stop and get it. "We have a lot of food," says Wood, who has worked alongside FCCLA and FBLA members to package the kits.

Students have been notified via email and by signage around the school that free food is available every day after school from 3:00-3:30. It is open to anyone that feels the need to use it, no questions asked. Please contact Mrs. Wood at the Denison High School for more information.

