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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Belt Line Elementary Students Combine Service and Academics Through Feeding With Reading Project

Lancaster, TX/Lancaster ISD – “Oooohhh, Sweet Potatoes!”

Kamari Price said as she and her fellow classmates looked at the food donated by the students of Belt Line Elementary for their service-learning project, *Kids Helping Kids - Feeding with Reading*.

For the project, students had to bring canned goods and non-perishable food items equating to the number of books or book chapters they read during a one-week period. The food will be donated to the North Texas Food Bank for families to enjoy during the holiday season.

Belt Line Elementary Counselor Rosalyn Nimmer explained, “We wanted to promote literacy and help those in need, especially this time of year. We realize that many families are going without and are not as fortunate as we are. We wanted to teach the students about giving and considering others beside themselves, so it was a two-fold purpose.”

The campus-wide project was for students in all grade levels and even their families. The Pre-K students are still learning to read so they used reading logs at home to track their reading time with their parents and while in the classroom, they read books in circle time or whole group story time to add to their canned good numbers. The students in third through fifth grades read novel chapters in addition to their required class reading assignments just to be certain that they made impactful contributions.

“Reading is not hard for me. I read every single day,” Price said. “Reading another chapter and bringing a can, well, it is just what I did.”

By the single week project-closing deadline, the campus leaders were pleased.

“We superseded our goal. We started a graph and planned to count by fives. We received so many that we had to go back and reorganize the graph to count by groups of 20,” Nimmer said. “The students really jumped on the idea and told their friends and family members.”

In a little more than one week, the students collected almost 600 canned goods.

“It makes me feel good and uplifts my spirit when I know that people have food that they can eat. Every day, when we go home, I see someone outside begging for food and I feel put down in my spirit because we do not help them as we should,” Price said. “So, when this came up at school, I just brought every can that I could.”

Fellow fifth grader, Briana Crocker, who was one of the top contributors in her class, was motivated to help someone in need.





“People don’t have a lot of food like we do and some people are homeless and I want to help them,” she said.

In addition to helping others, this project also helped students to improve academically. Belt Line Elementary Principal Wendy Hawthorne said that the project aligned with one of the campus’ goals related to literacy.

“We understand that if students have a solid foundation in reading, they will have a firm foundation on which to build across all content areas,” she said. “The *Feeding through Reading* program was an excellent way to link literacy and service.”

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