

# THE DIALOGUE

The Kentucky Hunger Dialogue Newsletter



## Strengthening Campus Solutions Through Collaboration

Across Kentucky, campuses are strengthening their response to student hunger through collaboration and shared learning. The **Kentucky Hunger Dialogue's College Pantry Community of Practice (CoP)** continues to serve as a vital space where campus leaders, pantry coordinators, and partners exchange ideas that are both practical and scalable. From food recovery partnerships to campus garden initiatives, institutions are identifying strategies that meet students where they are.

Recent discussions have highlighted the growing interest in food recovery programs, including partnerships with organizations like Feeding Kentucky and University of Kentucky. Campuses are exploring how to safely redirect surplus food into student-facing resources, reducing waste while increasing access. In parallel, efforts such as edible campus models and Tree Campus initiatives are gaining traction as long-term, sustainable approaches to supplement pantry offerings.

As the need continues to grow, so does the importance of shared expertise. KHD invites campus practitioners and partners to join upcoming CoP sessions to present, learn, and collaborate. By working together, Kentucky campuses are not only addressing immediate needs but also building systems that ensure students can stay focused, nourished, and on the path to success. Interested? Contact Reba Prather at [reba.prather@engageky.org](mailto:reba.prather@engageky.org).

## Campus Hunger and Its Impact on Student Mental Health

Campus hunger significantly impacts student mental health. Uncertainty around food access can cause stress, anxiety, and feelings of isolation, making it difficult for students to focus and succeed academically. Research links food insecurity to higher rates of depression and burnout. By expanding campus food resources and support services, colleges can help reduce these barriers and create an environment where students are better able to thrive.

