

The Governor's Office of FOUNDATION LIAISON

A partnership between the
State of Michigan and the
Council of Michigan Foundations

Connecting Government and Philanthropy to Improve the Health of Michigan's Families

Michigan's nonpartisan Office of Foundation Liaison (OFL) was created in 2003 at the suggestion of Michigan philanthropic leaders. The Office — the first of its kind in the nation — works to foster partnerships between state government agencies and philanthropic organizations that are likely to result in policy and programmatic reforms to improve the lives of children and families in Michigan. Since its inception, OFL has brokered more than \$150 million in foundation investments for initiatives to increase Michigan's economic competitiveness through reforms in P-20 education, economic and workforce development, health, and land use.

OFL works in three priority issue areas: prenatal to postsecondary education, workforce development, and health. Within health, OFL has made great strides in connecting government and philanthropy to expand access to healthy, nutritious, and affordable food, especially for Michigan's most vulnerable populations.

Mitigating the Effects of Future Lead Exposure through School Breakfast

While lead was officially discovered in Flint's drinking water in September 2015, Flint's children and families had been drinking lead-poisoned water since April 2014. Although the damage was done, a solid nutrition foundation could still be created that could help mitigate the effects of future lead exposure and give Flint's children the best chance for a healthy future.

Prior to the Flint Water Crisis, OFL participated in conversations with Flint Community Schools around creating a district-wide alternative breakfast program. With the onset of the Water Crisis, a new approach to Flint's school breakfast program became a necessity to limit the effects of future lead exposure and to increase the capacity of Michigan's children to be engaged students despite their exposure to lead.

To help bring the alternative breakfast program to fruition, OFL connected government and philanthropic partners, including

Michigan No Kid Hungry, the United Way of Genesee County, Flint Community Schools, the Kellogg Corporation, Fair Food Network, the United Dairy Industry of Michigan, and the District's food service company, SoedexoMAGIC. Through these partnerships, OFL linked the Flint Community Schools to the funding and technical assistance it needed to carry out its unique and ambitious district-wide breakfast program plan.

Flint Community Schools tailored alternative breakfast programs to each school in the district, including: Breakfast in the Classroom, Grab and Go, and Second Chance Breakfast to cater to individual student's needs. Since the breakfast program's implementation, school breakfast consumption in Flint has nearly doubled. An evaluation of the program is currently underway, but preliminary reports from school officials indicate that both attendance and school culture have improved.

OFL was instrumental in bringing together the right partners at the right time to help Flint's children during a crisis. As partners have expressed through interviews, the success of Flint's district-wide Breakfast in the Classroom program would not have been possible without OFL's ability to bring government and philanthropic organizations to the table around a shared agenda.

OFL's Key Roles in Bringing Flint's Breakfast in the Classroom Program to Life

- Identifying support gaps in operating a district-wide school breakfast program and understanding where private partners can step in to help
- Connecting the right public and private partners at the right time that would work together to implement an ambitious and successful district-wide school breakfast program in Flint