

## JWB Board Special Meeting

September 8, 2025

### **Approve Budget Amendment to Transfer Lapsed Funds from the Family Services Initiative (FSI) Family Services Pool and Purchasing Waiver to contract with Feeding Tampa Bay**

**Item II.A.**

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Recommended Action: Request for Approval of a Budget Amendment to Transfer Lapsed Funds from the Family Services Initiative (FSI) Family Services Pool and Purchasing Waiver to contract with Feeding Tampa Bay

Strategic Plan Alignment: Strengthening Community

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#### **Overview**

Access to healthy, nutritious foods plays a critical role in both behavioral and academic success for students. The *Feeding Minds* program, led by Feeding Tampa Bay (FTB) in collaboration with Pinellas County Schools and other community partners, establishes food pantries within schools and the community most impacted by food insecurity. These pantries provide essential groceries to students and families facing economic hardship, thus serving as a foundation for student achievement and family stability. The pantries meet the children and families where they are for easier access for those who need the support.

The ongoing challenges of rising food, housing, and other expenses, coupled with lingering effects from recent hurricanes and wages not increasing to fill the gaps, have significantly strained families throughout Pinellas County. Families are having to make difficult decisions between housing, utilities, transportation, and food. Reductions in donations and federal dollars, along with the growing need in the community, heighten the need for robust support of the school- and community-based pantries. In response, JWB requests to use Family Services Initiative (FSI) Family Services Pool lapse funds to provide funding to assist with access to healthy and nutritious food for children and families. Pinellas County Schools (PCS) supports the pantries, not by funding the food that is in the pantries, but by providing space and access to volunteers who assist at the school-based pantries, supporting the activities and those served, and holding food drives.

There are fourteen sites within the schools and community in Pinellas County that would benefit from the FSI Family Services Pool funding. These sites served approximately 293,446 meals to children and families over the past year (FY24-FY25). Approximately 1,200 families, including 3,600 children, will benefit from JWB's investment over the next year at these sites. Food that would be purchased by the JWB FSI Family Services Pool would be pantry staple items, such as snacks and shelf stable foods, which are items that are usually purchased versus fresh food items that are more readily donated.

This action directly supports our commitment to strengthening the community by addressing food insecurity and fostering student well-being.

**Recommendation for Budget Amendment**

Staff have identified a lapse of \$250,000 within the FSI Family Services Pool program budget. We recommend reallocating these funds to support the *Feeding Minds* program and directly address urgent food insecurity among school-aged children in Pinellas County. The proposed amendment will transfer the \$250,000 in lapsed funds from the FSI Family Services Pool program budget to a new budget line designated for FTB's food pantry food purchases.

**Recommendation for Purchasing Waiver**

FTB is uniquely positioned as the lead agency overseeing both school-based and community-based pantry initiatives. FTB possesses the necessary capacity to respond efficiently to emerging needs, leverage bulk purchasing for cost savings, manage warehouse logistics, ensure timely delivery through a dedicated fleet, and collaborate seamlessly with PCS and community partners. Given these strategic advantages, JWB staff recommend approval of a purchasing waiver to contract directly with FTB, thereby optimizing the impact of the available funds and supporting the urgent nutritional needs of students and families.

**Recommendation to Approve Contract**

A contract for food purchases with FTB, supporting the pantry initiatives, has been prepared by JWB staff. The agreement has been executed, subject to Board approval of the proposed budget amendment, procurement, and authorization of the contract.

Staff Resources: Karen Boggess  
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