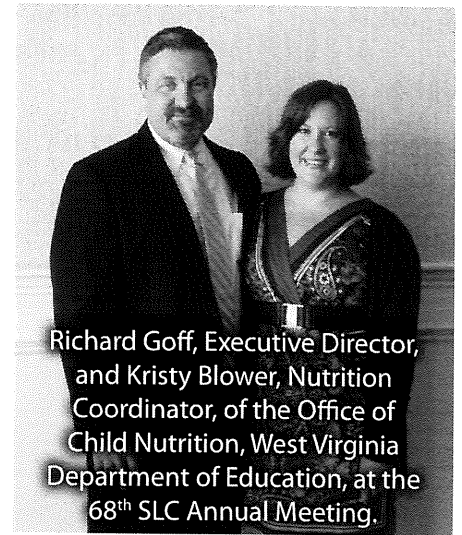


SOUTHERN LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

STAR TRANSFORMING GOVERNMENT



Richard Goff, Executive Director, and Kristy Blower, Nutrition Coordinator, of the Office of Child Nutrition, West Virginia Department of Education, at the 68th SLC Annual Meeting.

WEST VIRGINIA'S FEED TO ACHIEVE PROGRAM

Through the Feed to Achieve Act signed into law in April 2013, West Virginia's *Feed to Achieve* program addresses the three-fold problem of food insecurity as it relates to child poverty, health and education. Implemented by the Office of Child Nutrition and building on existing state and federal nutrition programs, the *Feed to Achieve* program seeks to provide a minimum of two nutritious meals a day to schoolchildren in West Virginia by way of innovative meal delivery systems. The program also incorporates innovative funding mechanisms, including directed donations and targeted federal grants, that enable the program to operate with negligible administrative cost, providing children with free meals.

Food insecurity is a persistent problem in West Virginia, where many students cannot afford or access healthy meals outside of school. Child hunger has several negative effects on children's health and ability to learn. Without access to healthy meals, children experience nutrient deficiencies and are at high risk for obesity. They have limited ability to pay attention in class, earn lower grades, and have increased risk of behavioral problems associated with lowered social skills, increased anxiety and aggression, and increased risk of tardiness and absenteeism. The *Feed to Achieve* program responds to these



problems by requiring schools to provide students the opportunity to eat breakfast. Since its enactment, 75 percent of schools in West Virginia have started innovative breakfast programs such as grab-and-go breakfasts, breakfast in the classroom, or breakfast after first period. In the year the program started, school breakfast participation increased 5 percent statewide, from 37 percent to 42 percent — a difference of about 40,060 students.

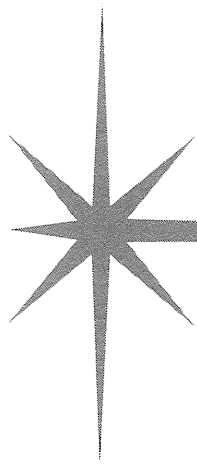
The Department of Education funds these additional meals in partnership with county education boards, collecting public and private tax-deductible donations, grants, and bequests toward special-purpose Feed to Achieve Fund accounts. Every county education board in the state has a fund. The state Office of Child Nutrition also directs federal funding to reach school districts with the greatest needs. This combination of revenue resources allows 330 schools in 38 counties to offer free breakfast and lunch to every student.

The *Feed to Achieve* program also encourages partnerships between coun-



ty education boards, agricultural agencies, and gardening and farming communities to provide students with additional access to healthy, locally sourced foods, and teach them about farming, nutrition and cooking. Half of all county education boards have since implemented farm-to-school partnerships, using these resources to source local ingredients in school meals, build school gardens, offer culinary classes and take farming field trips.

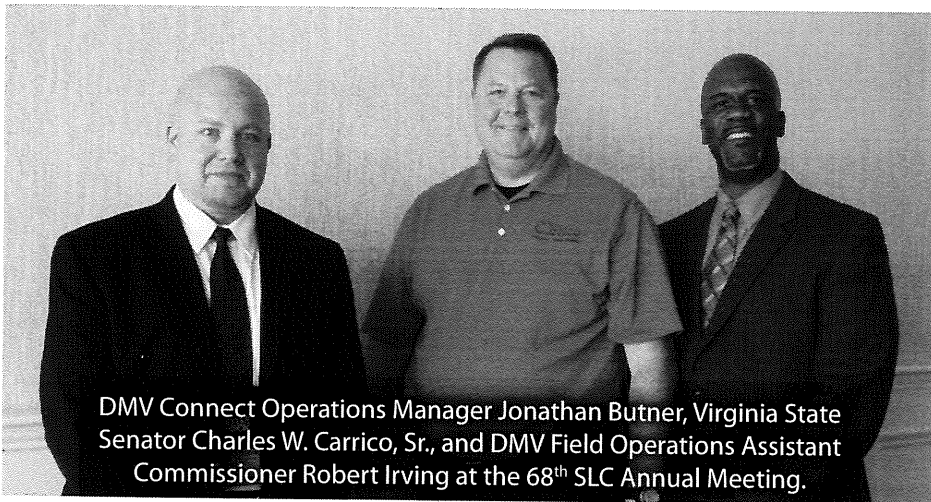
By building on existing state and federal nutrition programs and looking to the community for support, the *Feed to Achieve* program provides a creative and flexible solution to a multifaceted problem. While each community is able to shape their program to suit local resources and needs, continuous data collection and evaluation by the Office of Child Nutrition shows that the program has successfully increased availability of healthy meals to children statewide.



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DMV Connect Operations Manager Jonathan Butner, Virginia State Senator Charles W. Carrico, Sr., and DMV Field Operations Assistant Commissioner Robert Irving at the 68th SLC Annual Meeting.

VIRGINIA'S DMV CONNECT PROGRAM

In May 2012, the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and Department of Corrections (DOC) launched the **DMV Connect** program, an innovative, low-cost approach to reducing criminal recidivism rates in the commonwealth. The program was designed to smooth prisoners' transition back into society by ensuring they have valid state identification upon release — a necessity for finding employment, opening a bank account, obtaining housing, and applying for benefits and services. The program has since expanded and the DMV now offers similar services to other populations of limited mobility, including the elderly and disabled.

The **DMV Connect** program utilizes a portable equipment case specially manufactured for the Virginia DMV. The case contains a laptop, camera, back-

drop, and signature pad, and has the capability to connect securely to the DMV's computer system through a virtual private network, allowing the Connect team to make real-time transactions. As inmates approach their release dates, correctional facility staff collect and scan the necessary proof of identification documents, transmit them to the DMV, and charge the inmates' accounts for the cost of the ID. The **DMV Connect** team then visits the facility to take each inmate's picture and required signature and enter them into the system. The correctional facility holds the IDs on file and issues them to inmates upon release. The **DMV Connect** team also provides individualized driver compliance summaries to each inmate, informing them on how they may obtain a driver's license after they are discharged.

Since the program began, **DMV Connect** has issued more than 4,500 state

IDs to inmates at more than 40 state correctional facilities, two federal correctional facilities, eight sheriff's offices, and regional jails. In March 2014, the DMV expanded these services to other vulnerable populations, issuing more than 200 IDs at U.S. Veterans Affairs hospitals, homeless shelters, and assisted-living centers for the elderly and disabled. The Department aims to open additional training centers and broaden service reach to the homeless, elderly and disabled, and to begin providing child ID card services.

The **DMV Connect** program has an annual operating cost of \$187,000, with the frequency of visits determined by demand. In high-volume facilities, the **DMV Connect** team makes monthly visits, though in lower-volume facilities, the team may be dispatched bi-monthly or quarterly. The program's annual operating cost covers the price of the equipment cases, staff salaries, travel expenses, and DMV vehicles and cell phones, with the operating budget coming from the taxes and fees collected in the Virginia Motor Vehicle Special Fund.

This low-cost service provides immediate benefit to populations in need and long-term benefit to society. Recidivism rates in Virginia have dropped to their lowest levels on record. Although ongoing evaluation by the DMV and DOC will determine the exact effect the **DMV Connect** has on recidivism, the program has proven successful.