



The Open Door
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Students Raise More Than \$17,000 for The Open Door at Ipswich Middle School Walk for Hunger



*From left to right: Peyton Epple, Annabelle Ma, June O’Riordan, Piper Stewart, Adelaide Pitner, Gracyn Cummins, Jade Deacon, Lilly Hodge, Sarah Cheney, Maya Erijman, Gabija Markevicate, Madison Colby, Maggie Marsella, Grace McCarthy, Chloe Hanchett, and Teagen Ouellette.
(Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)*

IPSWICH— Students, staff, parents, and guardians rallied around a single cause this April at Ipswich Middle School: connecting local people to good, healthy food.

Ipswich Middle School’s annual Walk for Hunger raised more than \$17,000 for The Open Door on Friday, April 14, to connect local people to free groceries, meals, nutrition education, and more.

“Year after year, Ipswich Middle School students go the extra mile to make sure their neighbors have access to good, healthy food. We’re so thankful to the students, staff, families, and community members for all the hard work that goes into making this event possible,” President and CEO Julie LaFontaine said. “This is what community is all about.”

More than 300 sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students raised funds leading up to the event and pledged to walk approximately 10 miles, from High Street to Great Neck and back.

“The Walk for Hunger is a wonderful tradition in our Middle School and teaches our students the value of giving back to the community,” Superintendent Brian Blake said. “I’m incredibly proud of our students and staff for their commitment to this event.”

In 2022, The Open Door helped stabilize the lives and health of 8,486 people from 4,872 households through the distribution of 1.78 million pounds of food across its service area.

In Ipswich, The Open Door distributed 189,000 pounds of food to 366 people through the Ipswich Community Food Pantry, and an additional 31,697 pounds of food through its Mobile Markets at Doyon and Winthrop Elementary Schools and the Ipswich Council on Aging.

“This year, the Ipswich Middle School teaching staff incorporated the annual Walk for Hunger into our No Place for Hate initiative,” Principal Kathleen McMahon said. “All students participated in lessons and classroom discussions focused on food insecurity in local and global communities, with the goal of understanding and empathy. We are proud that our students have compassion for the needs of others and take the additional steps to find solutions to these issues.”

The Ipswich Middle School Walk for Hunger has benefited The Open Door since the nonprofit took over the management of the Ipswich Community Food Pantry in 2016. Each year, students strive to raise \$10,000 through the Walk for Hunger.

About The Open Door

The mission of The Open Door is to alleviate the impact of hunger in our community. We use practical strategies to connect people to good food, to advocate on behalf of those in need, and to engage others in the work of building food security.

Founded in 1978, The Open Door is a 501 (c)(3) tax exempt nonprofit and community food resource center for low-income residents of Gloucester, Rockport, Manchester, Essex, Ipswich, Hamilton, Boxford, Rowley, Topsfield, and Wenham. In 2022, The Open Door helped stabilize the lives and health of 8,486 people from 4,872 households through the distribution of 1.78 million pounds of food.

For more information, visit [FOODPANTRY.org](https://www.foodpantry.org).

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Eighth grade student Andrew Young, center, raised more than \$2,000 this year with help from Collin Ramey, right, eighth grade student. The pair smile with The Open Door President and CEO Julie LaFontaine, left. (Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)



Students high-five The Open Door President and CEO Julie LaFontaine at the start of the Ipswich Middle School Walk for Hunger this April. (Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)



From left: Photo 3 (L to R): Adri Hardy, Juliana Jimenez, and Asha Nixon at a water station at the 2023 Ipswich Walk for Hunger. (Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)



Hundreds of students participated in Ipswich Middle School's Walk for Hunger this April. (Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)