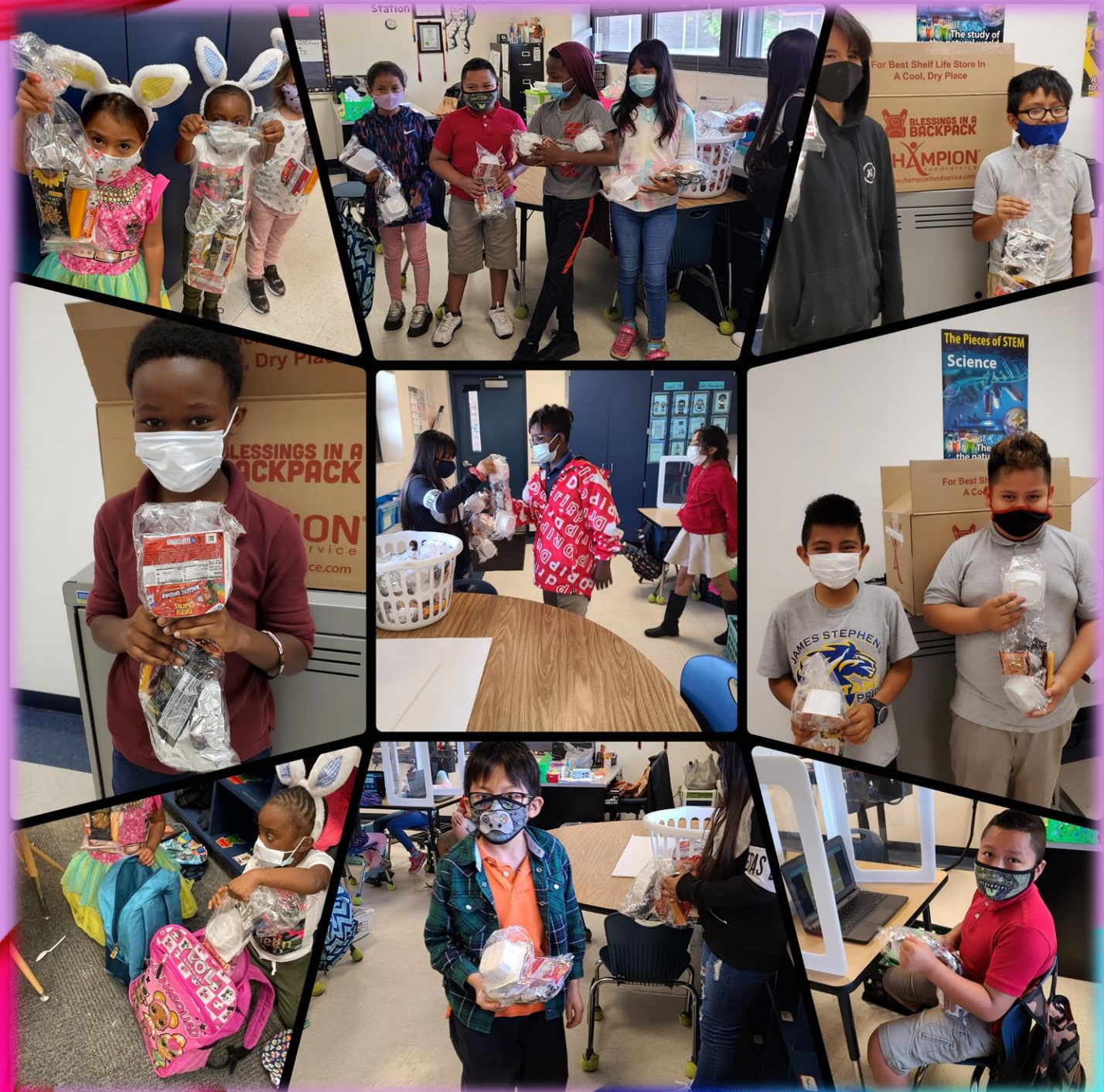


# James Stephens International Academy



A Huge Thanks from all of us at the J.



# **Blessings in a Backpack**

**James Stephens International Academy 2020-2021**

In the uncertain times of this past school year, no one knew for sure what to expect. One thing that we could count on though, was the continued support of the "Blessings in a Backpack" program. As our students slowly came back to campus, we were able to provide much needed extra food for the weekends. And, for our students who were still participating in "on line" schooling from home, our cafeteria staff was able to provide extra food along with the Blessings packages, to any family that came to the school to pick it up.

The Blessings in a Backpack program has played an important part for JSIA students since it was first introduced to our campus. For some families, it was just that "little extra" to see them through a weekend. For others, it could be whether or not the students had anything to eat on the weekend. Lost income, low wages and inflation are very real challenges for many of our parents and it has become increasingly difficult for them to feed their children. And even though we may not think that this problem exists here in our community, we must acknowledge that it does.

In the schools served by this program in Lee County, the general health and well being of the students has improved. They seem happier, eager to learn and, have a positive attitude towards learning. This is why this program is so very important to JSIA. Without the continued support of our donor, The Bobby Nichols Charity Foundation at Fiddlesticks, we could not provide the extra help that so many of our families need.

Thank you so much from all of the families and staff of James Stephens International Academy for you continued support and dedication to the welfare of our students.

Joan M. Clouse

Blessings Coordinator for JSIA

The blessing program is truly a blessing to many of our students and their families here at JSIA. If a student needs to leave early for the day, they always ask for their blessing. As a behavior specialist I see first-hand how hunger directly impacts students' abilities to learn and students' abilities to regulate their emotions/behaviors. Many of our children have little to eat at home and weekends without food are common. These blessings may be all that some of our children have to eat over the weekends and our long holiday breaks. We are grateful for your compassion and your generosity. These blessings teach children what empathy is and that there is always hope in a world that often does not project such values. The food nurtures their mind, body, and spirit. It is an altruistic program and Miss Clouse is truly one dedicated angel 😊

-Dr. K

I think having Blessings in A Backpack is enormously beneficial at our school. You see smiles on the children's faces each Friday and we've received such positive feedback from the parents.

-Mrs. LoCicero

The Blessings in a Bag program is incredibly beneficial to the students of James Stephens International Academy. For some of our families, programs like these are the only way their children can have access to an afternoon snack at home. Blessings in a Bag truly is a blessing to our school and the students of JSIA!

-Mrs. Cochran

As a teacher I am grateful for the Blessings in a Backpack program. My students look forward to receiving treats every Friday. Snacks are a luxury for most of our kids and this program helps the students at JSIA feel more normal and less deficient.

-Mrs. Adderley