

**The Effects of Poverty  
and Food Insecurity on  
Education in Baltimore  
County & the Mission of  
the Student Support  
Network**



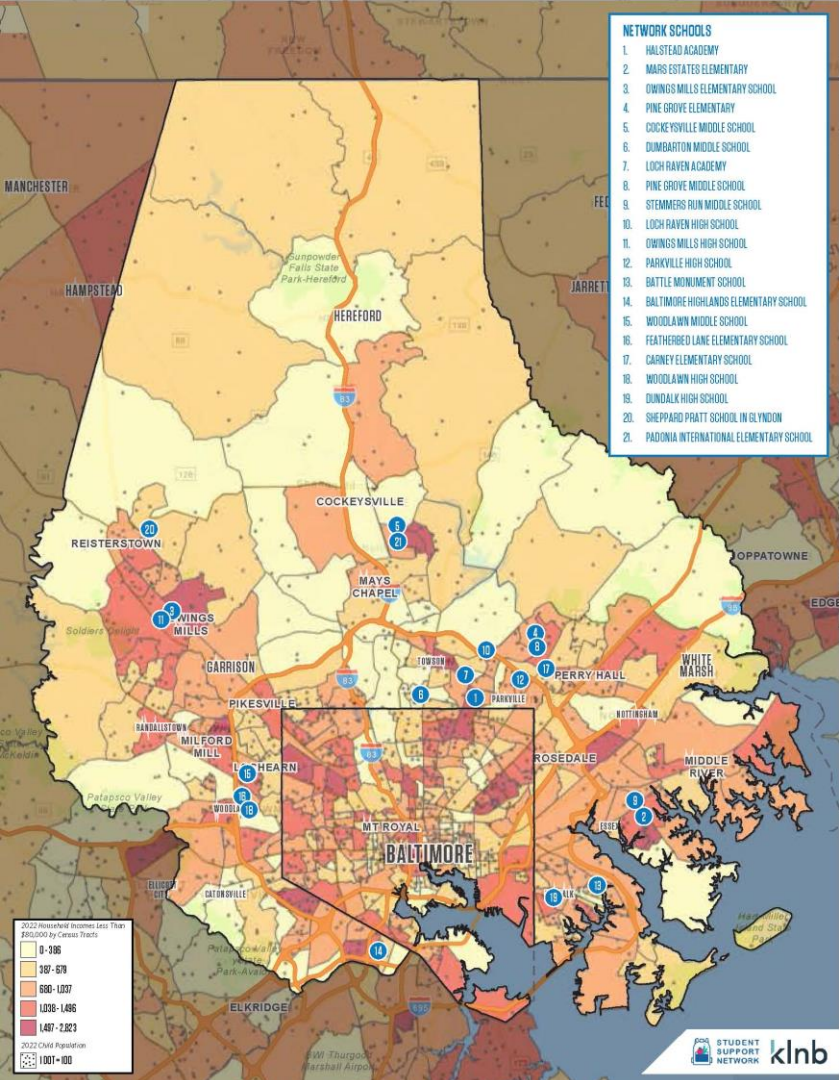
Dr. Laurie Taylor-Mitchell, Founder, SSN

Tam Lynne Kelley, LMSW, Advocacy Committee Chair

**1) The extent of student poverty in Baltimore County**

**2) The Student Support Network: Strategies to reduce effects of poverty and food insecurity in Baltimore County Public Schools**

**3) Advocacy: Alleviating poverty and food insecurity in Maryland**

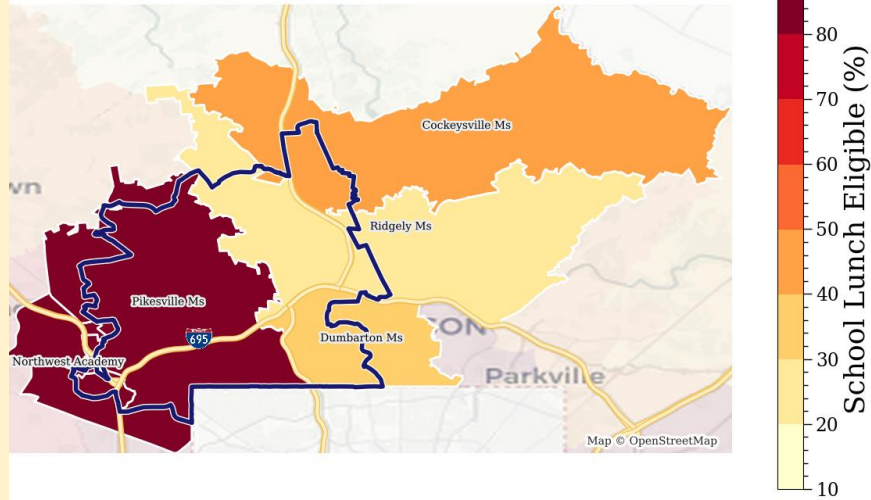


## 2023: BCPS

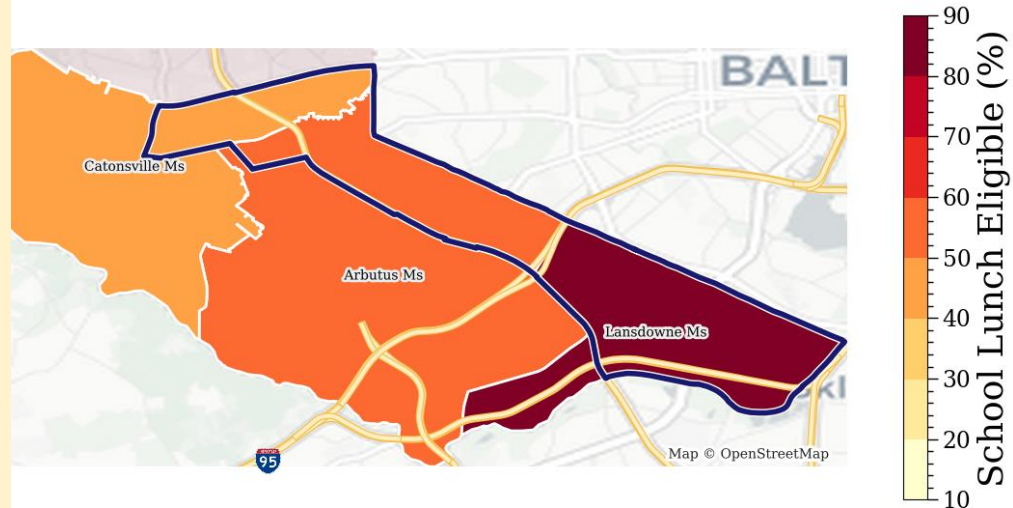
Over 73,000 students, 66% of all students, qualify for Free or Reduced School Meals ([FARMS](#))

>70,000 of these students live in families qualifying for SNAP: annual income for family of four cannot exceed \$39,000

## Legislative 11B Middle Schools



## Legislative 44A Middle Schools



For maps with school catchment areas and concentrations of poverty, go to <https://studentsupportnetwork.org/information-center/>

## **Equity Metrics Report, BCPS, 2021-2022**

### **Poverty's effects on academic performance**

**Elementary Schools: Children qualifying for FARMS performed 25% below their peers in reading and 27% below their peers in math**

**Middle Schools: Chronic absenteeism rates for students eligible for FARMS is nearly 22% higher than for non-FARMS eligible students**

[https://go.boarddocs.com/mabe/bcps/Board.nsf/files/CJUIJCE4C6162/\\$file/2021-22%20Equity%20Metrics%20Expanded%20Report%20-%20v2.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/mabe/bcps/Board.nsf/files/CJUIJCE4C6162/$file/2021-22%20Equity%20Metrics%20Expanded%20Report%20-%20v2.pdf)

<https://www.baltimoresun.com/education/bs-md-baltimore-county-schools-equity-report-20221011-pmvo3jz63jddjcbpxi5ljbwq-story.html>

Annual federal income limit for family of four to qualify for SNAP:

**\$39,000** (130% of federal poverty level)

Annual income (before taxes) for family of four to meet basic expenses in Baltimore County:

**\$106,000**

# Rooms of Support in Every Partner School

## Currently 21 Schools in Network





**Over \$7.2 million  
in food and  
essential items  
distributed**



**July 2022 - June 2023:**

**SSN distributed over \$500,000 in food and supplies to students and families in great need**

**July 2023 – December 2023:**

**SSN distributed over \$325,000 in food and supplies**



# Continuing Food Distributions Before School Breaks: Thanksgiving, December, Spring Breaks



**Over half (54%) of all students in Maryland public schools, more than 485,000 students, qualify for FARMS**

How can state government provide sustained support to successful non-profits providing essential supplies to students living in severe poverty?

SCHOOLS CURRENTLY IN THE NETWORK: **21**

SCHOOLS ON THE WAITING LIST TO JOIN THE NETWORK: **26**  
(20 ES, 4 MS and 2 HS)

# Maryland Youth Risk Behavior Survey / Youth Tobacco Survey (YRBS/YTS)

- Survey of public middle and high school students in the US
- 58,000 students in Maryland took the survey in 2021-2022
- Measures substance use (tobacco use, secondhand smoke, alcohol use, other drug use), sexual behavior, violence, bullying, diet, physical activity, gambling, mental health, adverse childhood experiences, unstable housing, etc.
- <https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/ccdpc/Reports/Pages/YRBS-Main.aspx>

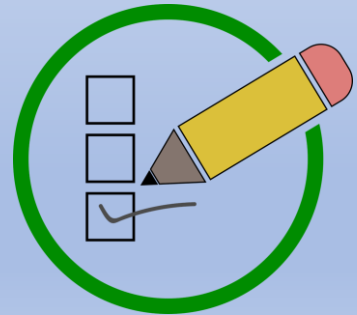
**In 2018, Maryland was the first state to measure food insecurity on the YRBS/YTS**

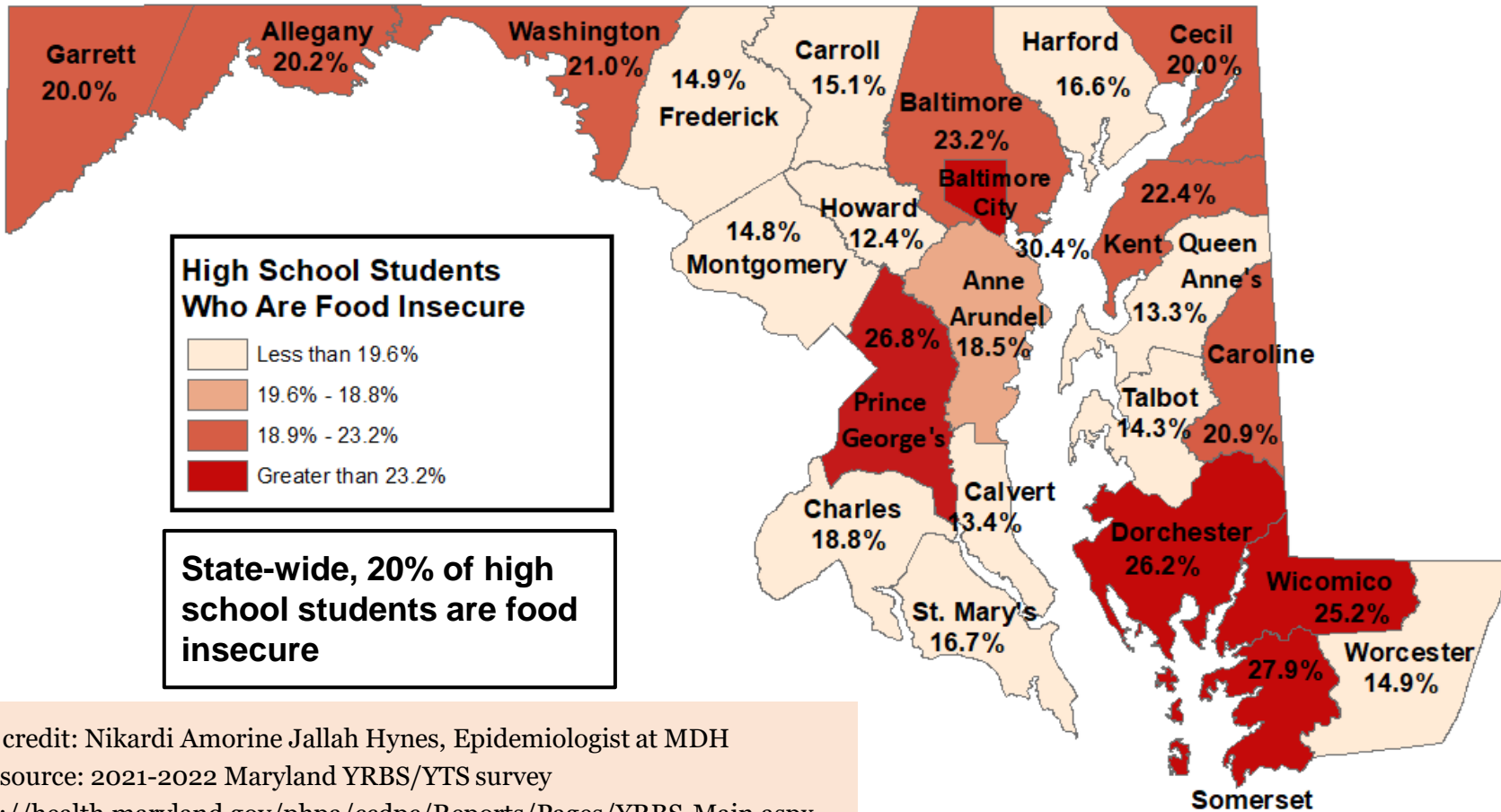
**Students experience food insecurity when their family has limited or uncertain access to adequate food**

“During the past 12 months...

How often was your family worried that your food would run out before you had money to buy more?

How often did the food your family bought not last, and you did not have money to get more?”



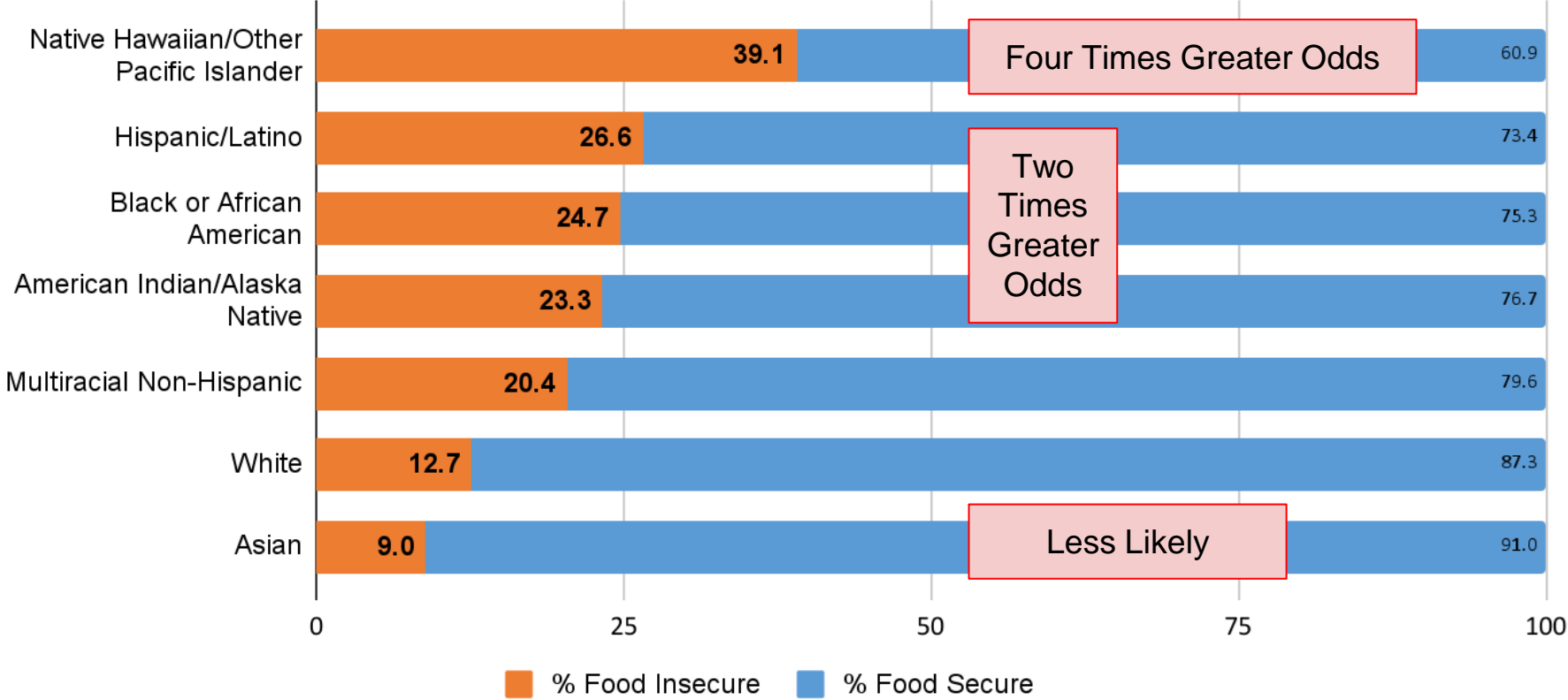


Slide credit: Nikardi Amorine Jallah Hynes, Epidemiologist at MDH

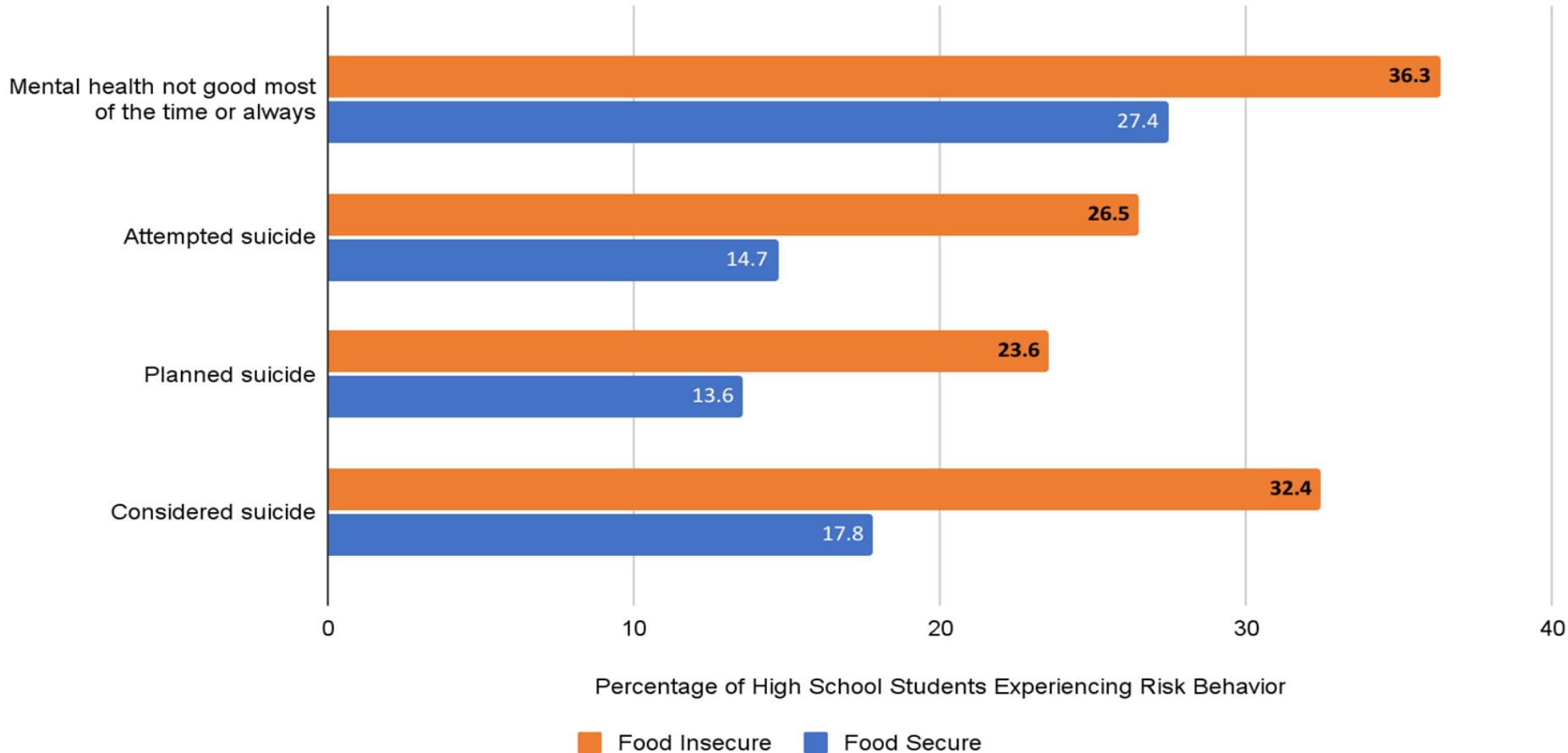
Data source: 2021-2022 Maryland YRBS/YTS survey

<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/ccdc/Reports/Pages/YRBS-Main.aspx>

# High School Student Food Security Status, by Race and Ethnicity

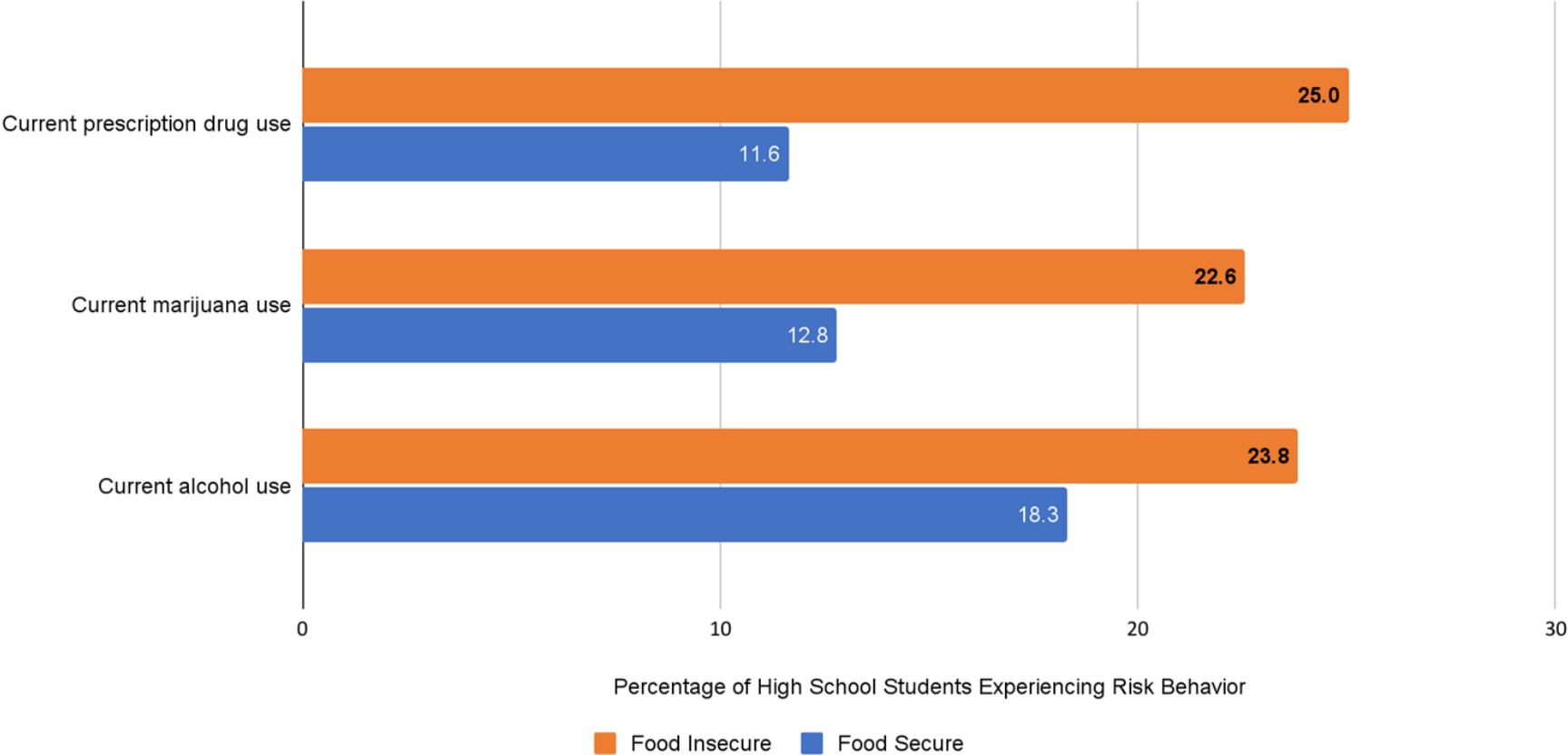


# High School Student Mental Health Risk Behaviors, by Food Security Status

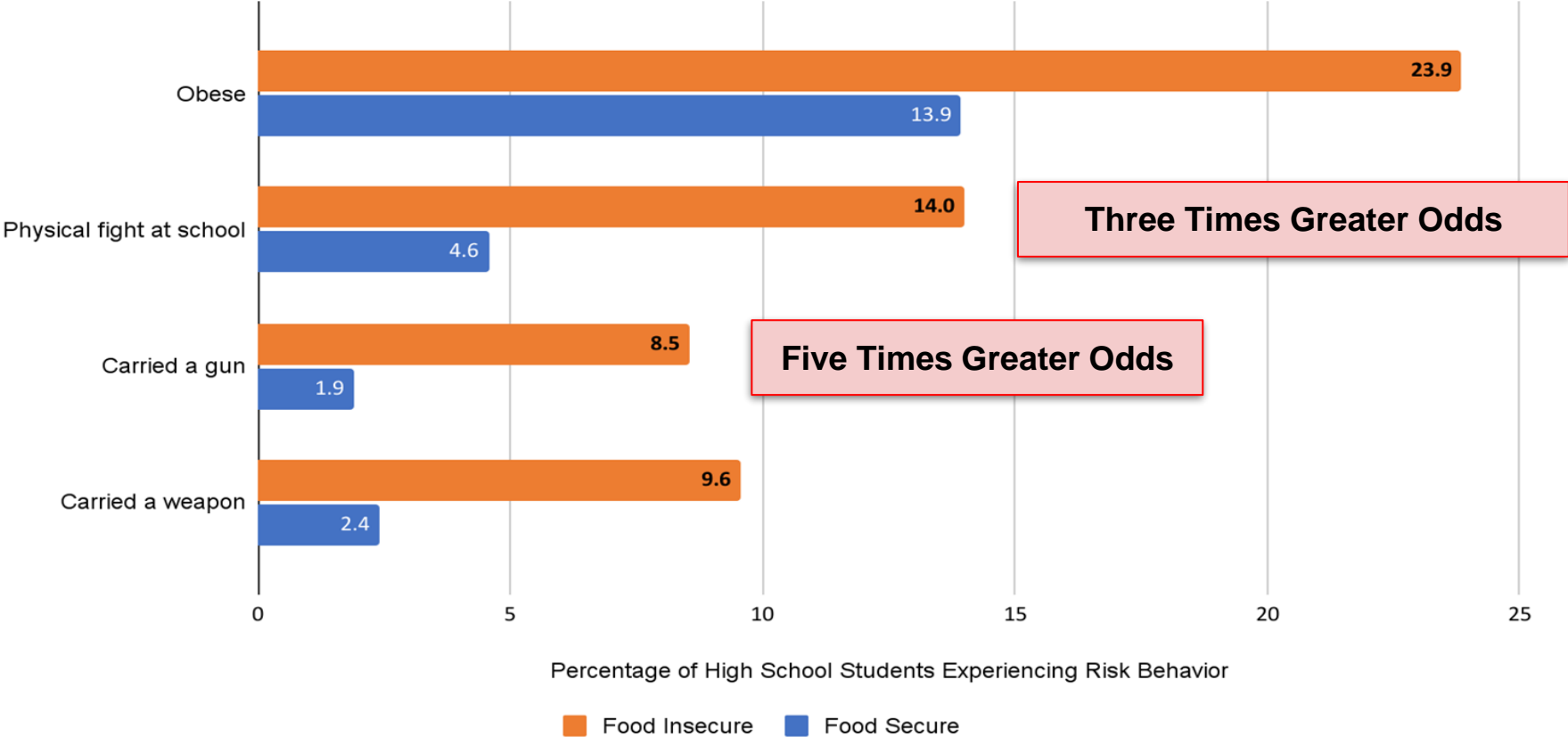




# High School Student Substance Use Risk Behaviors, by Food Security Status



# High School Student Physical Risk Behaviors, by Food Security Status



# Universal School Meals with the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

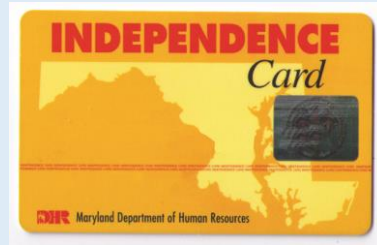
Lowers food insecurity rates for students and families

In the 2022-2023 school year, **351 schools** in Maryland enrolled in CEP

\*\* Baltimore County joined CEP district-wide in 2023-2024 \*\*



# Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)



- Helps low-income households buy food
- Reduces food insecurity by 30%
- Reduces child poverty by 28%
- Increases high school graduation rates by 18%
- Lower rates of obesity, heart disease, and stunted growth

## Maryland's Summer SNAP for Children

- A state and county funded SNAP supplement for low-income children under age 19 enrolled in SNAP
- Helps families access food during school breaks
- \$100 per child is automatically added to existing SNAP EBT card
- Towson University economists found that increasing funds for this program will "greatly benefit" the economy by creating additional jobs and increasing tax revenues, all while reducing food insecurity for children in low-income families

Source: <https://www.towson.edu/campus/partnerships-research/economic-studies/documents/resi-policy-brief-food-insecurity.pdf>

thank you!



**Tam Lynne Kelley, LMSW**

Advocacy Committee Chair

[Advocacy@StudentSupportNetwork.org](mailto:Advocacy@StudentSupportNetwork.org)

**Laurie Taylor-Mitchell, Ph.D.**

[founder@studentsupportnetwork.org](mailto:founder@studentsupportnetwork.org)

410-583-0774

**Web:** [www.studentsupportnetwork.org](http://www.studentsupportnetwork.org)

**Instagram:** [student\\_support\\_network](https://www.instagram.com/student_support_network)

**LinkedIn:** [www.linkedin.com/company/77174909](http://www.linkedin.com/company/77174909)

**Facebook:** [StudentSupportNetworkBC](https://www.facebook.com/StudentSupportNetworkBC)

**Twitter:** [SSNBaltimoreCo](https://twitter.com/SSNBaltimoreCo)