



BREAKFAST in the classroom

NEA Health Information Network School Breakfast Toolkit

Why is Breakfast Important?

Many Americans experience hunger and food insecurity

In 2012, 14.5 percent of households—about 49 million people, including 15.9 million children — were food insecure at least some time during that year (i.e. having limited or uncertain access to nutritious, safe foods necessary to leading a healthy lifestyle). On average, black (24.6 percent) and Hispanic (23.3 percent) households experience food insecurity at far higher rates than the national average.¹

Missing meals and experiencing hunger impair children's development and achievement

Studies published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, *Pediatrics*, and the *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* document the negative effects of hunger on children's academic performance and behavior in school.²

- ▶ Hungry children have lower math scores and are more likely to have to repeat a grade.
- ▶ Children experiencing hunger are more likely to be hyperactive, absent and tardy, in addition to having behavioral and attention problems more often than other children.
- ▶ Children with hunger are more likely to have repeated a grade, received special education services, or received mental health counseling than low-income children who do not experience hunger.

Breakfast plays a significant role in shaping the learning environment³

- ▶ **Eating breakfast at school helps children perform better.** Numerous published research studies show that academic achievement among students who eat school breakfast tends to improve, especially in vocabulary, math and standardized tests.

- ▶ **Students who eat breakfast at school have better attendance and exhibit fewer behavior problems.** In studies of school breakfast programs in Massachusetts, Maryland, Minnesota, and Rhode Island scientists found that students who eat breakfast at school have better attendance, are less likely to be tardy and exhibit fewer behavioral and psychological problems.
- ▶ **Eating breakfast can improve children's diets and may reduce obesity risk.** Studies show that children who regularly eat breakfast have a better quality of nutrient intake and are less likely to be overweight or obese. In fact, regularly eating breakfast may serve as a safeguard against childhood obesity.
- ▶ **School breakfast changes lives.** A report conducted by Share Our Strength and Deloitte found that children who eat breakfast attend 1.5 more school days a year, score an average of 17.5 percent higher on standardized math tests, are 20% more likely to graduate from high school and are less likely to experience hunger as adults.

1 U.S. Department of Agriculture

2 Food Research and Action Center. Breakfast for Learning: Scientific research on the link between children's nutrition and academic performance. Available at: <http://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/breakfastforlearning.pdf>

3 Share Our Strength and Deloitte. School Breakfast: A Social Impact Analysis. Available at: <http://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org/school-breakfast/school-breakfast-social-impact-analysis>.

What Is the School Breakfast Program?

The School Breakfast Program is a federally funded meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. Like the National School Lunch Program, it is administered at the federal level by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), through its Food and Nutrition Service. At the state level, the program is usually administered by state education agencies, which operate the program through agreements with local food authorities in more than 89,000 schools and institutions. School districts, charter school, and private schools that choose to take part in the breakfast program receive cash subsidies from the USDA for each meal they serve. In return, they must serve breakfasts that meet Federal requirements, and they must offer free or reduced price breakfasts to eligible children. School Breakfast Program

K-5, 6-8, and 9-12. Schools must offer more fruit to students beginning in the 2014-15 school year and must meet the first target for reduction of sodium. All school breakfasts must meet federal meal requirements, though decisions about which specific foods to serve and how they are prepared are made by local school food authorities.¹

On average, less than half of the children who eat school lunch every day participate in the School Breakfast Program. In the 2012-13 school year over 30.7 million children participated in the National School Lunch Program, while only 13.2 million children participated in the School Breakfast Program.²

Implementing universal school breakfast in addition to an alternative meal delivery model such as Breakfast in the Classroom can help increase School Breakfast Program participation.

school breakfast to students by opting for the Community Eligibility Provision or Provision 2 status within the federal School Breakfast Program. They can also use non-pricing, where they continue to count and claim school meals as usual, but do not collect breakfast fees from students eligible for free and reduced-price breakfast. As long as schools break even with their federal reimbursements, no additional revenue sources are required for any of these models. If the district does experience a short fall in revenues, it must use non-federal sources to make up the difference (such as state revenues, general funds or à la carte revenues.)

Community Eligibility Provision³

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) allows high poverty schools to offer breakfast and lunch at no charge to all students, eliminating the traditional school meal application process. CEP benefits students and the school nutrition department's bottom line by offering breakfast and lunch for free to all students and improving the financial viability of the school nutrition programs in high poverty schools. CEP will be available in all states at the start of the 2014-2015 school year.

- ▶ CEP is available to any school with 40 percent or more "identified students" (students automatically eligible for free school meals, without a paper application, because they are in foster care or Head Start, are homeless, runaway, migrant, or are living in households that receive SNAP/Food Stamps, TANF cash assistance or the Food Distribution Program on American Indian Reservations benefits).
- ▶ Typically schools with 75 percent or more students eligible for free and reduced-price meals will meet the 40 percent requirement.

2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR	FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENT RATES*	STUDENT MEAL COST
Free Breakfast	\$1.62	Free
Reduced Price Breakfast	\$1.32	< \$0.30
Paid Breakfast	\$0.28	\$1.00-1.60

**Schools may qualify for higher "severe need" reimbursements if 40% or more of their lunches are served free or at a reduced price in the second preceding year. Severe need payments are up to 30 cents higher than the normal reimbursements for free and reduced price breakfasts.*

Federal reimbursement rates for the 2013-14 school year are shown above.

School breakfasts must meet the meal pattern and nutrition standards based on the latest *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. Most changes to the school breakfast program's meal pattern began in school year 2013-14 with more whole grains offered, zero grams of trans fat per portion and appropriate calories for grades

For more information visit the USDA Food and Nutrition Service website: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/>.

What Is Universal School Breakfast?

Universal school breakfast refers to any school program that offers breakfast at no charge to all students, regardless of family income. Schools can provide universal

1 U.S. Department of Agriculture. The School Breakfast Program. Available at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/SBPfactsheet.pdf>

2 U.S. Department of Agriculture

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What is the School Breakfast Program?

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- ▶ Participating schools are guaranteed to receive the same reimbursement rate (or a higher one if the level of direct certification increases) for four years.
- ▶ School meal service is streamlined. School meal staff members do not have to collect payments or count and claim individual students. They simply count total meals served and ensure that each student only receives one meal at the point of service.
- ▶ Universal (free) meals make it easier for schools to implement alternative meal service such as “grab and go” and breakfast in the classroom.

Provision 2 ⁴

Provision 2 is an option outlined in the National School Lunch Act that enables schools and institutions to provide free meals to all students without the burden of collecting applications and tracking and verifying school meal data every year. Any school that participates in the National School Lunch Program or the School Breakfast Program may opt for Provision 2. However, typically only schools with high percentages of low-income students—75 percent or more—are able to utilize this option. Under Provision 2:

- ▶ All students receive free meals, regardless of income, and schools collect applications for free and reduced-price meals once every four years, at most.

- ▶ Schools do not have to track and record the different categories of meals served for at least three out of every four years.
- ▶ Provision 2 can be done with breakfast and/or lunch, by school or by district. Experience has shown that schools save more in administrative and time costs if Provision 2 is used for both breakfast and lunch.

Benefits of Universal School Breakfast

Increased student participation:

Nationally, less than half of the children who eat school lunch every day participate in the School Breakfast Program. Studies show that Universal School Breakfast programs increase student participation in school breakfast, and this impact is magnified when it is offered in the classroom at the beginning of the school day. For example, Memphis City Schools in Tennessee saw a 99 percent increase in school breakfast participation after it implemented Universal Breakfast in the Classroom at all 20 elementary and middle schools in the district during the 2010-2011 school year.

Reduced stigma for kids: Many students who are eligible for free or reduced-price school breakfast do not participate because of the stigma that “only poor students” go to the cafeteria for breakfast before school. By offering breakfast at no charge to all students, schools can implement strategies that allow all students to eat together in class, eliminating the stigma of eating school breakfast.

Less paperwork (CEP and Provision 2):

With CEP, paperwork for schools and families is dramatically reduced. Families no longer have to complete applications, and schools no longer have to certify individual student eligibility, which also eliminates the verification process. Provision 2 schools collect applications, record and track meal categories and conduct meal verifications once every four years, at most. Under Provision 2, lunch tickets, PIN numbers and ID cards for breakfast are no longer necessary since all students eat for free.



³ Food Research and Action Center. FRAC Facts: Community Eligibility. Available at: http://frac.org/pdf/community_eligibility_amazing_new_option_schools.pdf

⁴ Food Research and Action Center. Provision 2 of the National School Lunch Act. Available at: <http://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/provision2.pdf>

What is Breakfast in the Classroom?

School breakfast can be served in multiple ways, depending on the needs and capacity of the school district. Alternative meal service methods such as Grab and Go and Breakfast in the Classroom have been shown to increase participation in school breakfast.

School breakfast models: Breakfast in the Cafeteria

A traditional breakfast model where breakfast is served and eaten in the cafeteria either before or after the school bell. Benefits of this model are that hot food can be served easily and food requires no special transportation or packaging. In addition, the cafeteria is already set up to facilitate service of a large number of students in one central location. The downside of this model is that when breakfast is served before the official school day begins, many hungry students may not receive the meal due to an inability to get to school early, pressure to go directly to the classroom upon arrival at school and a stigma that “only poor students” go to the cafeteria for breakfast.

Grab and Go

An alternative breakfast model where students pick up bagged meals from mobile service carts equipped with a computer or point of service machine placed at the school entrance or another high-traffic area. Food service staff pack breakfasts into individual paper bags, usually the day before, or purchase prepackaged breakfasts in boxes to be served with milk the next morning. Breakfasts are usually cold, but can include hot items as well. Students can take the breakfast and eat it outside, in the hall, in class, or in the cafeteria, depending on what the school decides is appropriate. This model is convenient for students and takes less time to prepare than conventional cafeteria-served breakfast.

Breakfast in the Classroom

An alternative model where breakfast is eaten in the classroom after the official start of the school day. A breakfast of easy-to-eat items, such as breakfast sandwiches or burritos, low-fat muffins or cereals, plus milk and fruit or juice, are brought from the cafeteria to the classroom on mobile service carts or rolling insulated bags by students or food service staff. Students pick up a breakfast from the service bags and eat at their desk or a designated area in the classroom. When finished eating, students place their trash in a trash bag or a rolling trash bin. At the end of breakfast, the trash bag is left outside the classroom or brought to a central location for pickup by custodial staff. From start to finish Breakfast in the Classroom takes about 10 minutes and is usually considered part of instructional time. To make use of breakfast time, many teachers and educational support staff incorporate morning activities such as attendance and morning announcements, reading out loud, nutrition tips or traditional lesson plans into the allotted classroom breakfast time.

Second Chance Breakfast

Second chance breakfast is an alternative breakfast model where students eat breakfast during a break in the morning, usually right after first period. This works well for secondary schools because older students are often not hungry early in the morning and tend to arrive at school closer to the start of the school day leaving even less time for breakfast. Students arrive at school and go to first period classes. Some schools choose to serve breakfast before school as well, either in the cafeteria or from carts in the hallways. School nutrition staff serve breakfast after first period during a morning nutrition break or between classroom periods, either in the cafeteria or from carts in the hallway or other locations. Schools should offer breakfast at least two hours before lunch, typically between 9 and

10am, and should ensure that students have adequate time to go to the cafeteria or cart and eat breakfast. This model is also called Breakfast After First Period, 2nd Chance Breakfast, or Mid-Morning Nutrition Break.

Breakfast Vending

Breakfast Vending allows students to access nutritious breakfast foods through vending machines. This model is most often implemented in high schools and vending machines are usually only available prior to the start of the school day. Vending machines can be set up to offer complete reimbursable meal options and are linked to the school's point of sale system; students can use their ID or PIN to pay without cash. The benefit of Breakfast Vending is that students are offered options and are able to access breakfast independently.

Benefits of Universal Breakfast in the Classroom

Universal Breakfast in the Classroom encourages school breakfast participation and eliminates the barriers that prevent students from receiving school breakfast in a traditional cafeteria-based model. All students eat breakfast at no charge in their classroom, either at the beginning of the school day or early during the day.

A wide body of research proves that a Breakfast in the Classroom model is the single best way to increase participation and achieve the widespread gains in academic success linked to school breakfast consumption. Schools that provide Universal Breakfast in the Classroom report decreases in discipline and psychological problems, as well as visits to school nurses and tardiness. They report increases in student attentiveness and attendance, and generally improved learning environments.

What Does Universal Breakfast in the Classroom Mean for Me?

Teachers and paraeducators

Breakfast in the Classroom doesn't need to create extra work for teachers and paraeducators. Food service staff will continue to handle meal preparation and logistics; the only extra requirement for teachers and paraeducators is to complete a daily accountability roster to note which students take full meals. The roster can be easily completed by the teacher or paraeducator during attendance. Students, paraeducators, or volunteers can be responsible for transporting the bags of food to the classrooms, taking food out of the insulated bags, disposing of trash and returning the insulated bags to the cafeteria. For students, helping with the delivery and serving of breakfast can be an opportunity for leadership development or community service.

Special procedures and routines for your school should be developed that address all aspects of Breakfast in the Classroom, including:

▶ **Cleaning:** Any procedure that sets forth how the classroom is to be cleaned after Breakfast in the Classroom should be consistent with your school's comprehensive cleaning program. Breakfast in the Classroom cleaning routines should be based on existing surface and hand cleaning procedures and should establish what (if any) cleaning teachers and paraeducators are responsible for. Teachers and paraeducators should follow existing procedures before conducting cleaning and/or using approved products. Teachers and paraeducators can teach children how to manage minor spillage and clean up properly to prevent pests.

▶ **Food Allergies:** When establishing Breakfast in the Classroom routines, schools need to consider how they will prevent food allergic reactions and accommodate students with life-threatening food allergies. Routines and strategies should be consistent with your school's Food Allergy Management

and Prevention Plan. Strategies may include designating a seating area as allergy-friendly; establishing and enforcing a no-food sharing rule; and implementing effective hand washing procedures for students. Having well communicated procedures in place will pave the way for conducting Breakfast in the Classroom with ease.

Keep in mind that implementing Breakfast in the Classroom will require changes to the beginning of the school day and may be challenging during the first few weeks as a routine is established. In most cases where Breakfast in the Classroom has been implemented, teachers and paraeducators report that any additional work or initial issues were outweighed by the benefit of students becoming more focused, settled and ready to learn after breakfast. School-wide education about the benefits of Breakfast in the Classroom and training for teachers and paraeducators prior to the program's implementation are keys to the program's success.

Food service staff

Shifting to Breakfast in the Classroom does not have to mean more work for food service personnel, and proper training can help reduce the number of issues at the onset of implementation. Depending on the current breakfast service method at your school, Breakfast in the Classroom can be set up to work with current operations with very little change. When compared to traditional breakfast and lunch service, Breakfast in the Classroom requires the same amount of staff labor. Food service personnel run their regular kitchen operations, but pack food into coolers and/or hotboxes to keep food cold or hot, Grab and Go Kiosks, or bags rather than serving the food to students through the service line.

When dealing with special situations such as providing school breakfast to students with severe, life-threatening food allergies, food service workers should

follow the same procedures as they do for preparing and serving other school meals. Such procedures include knowing which students have diagnosed food allergies and what each student's allergy(s) is, how to read food labels, how to properly handle and store food, and how to separate equipment and utensils to prevent cross contact. The most current USDA guidelines are available on the USDA Food and Nutrition website. For questions about accommodating a student with a life-threatening food allergy in federal school meal programs, contact your state's Child Nutrition Program.¹

Custodial staff

Shifting to Breakfast in the Classroom does not necessarily mean more work for custodial staff, just a change in the trash removal procedure. School districts where Breakfast in the Classroom have been implemented have found ways to manage these concerns. Some strategies include:

▶ **Trash Removal:** Students are responsible for clearing away their trash into trash bags or rolling trash bins after eating. Students can then return the trash bags or bins to the cafeteria, or place them outside the classrooms for custodial staff to collect. Custodial schedules can be adjusted to facilitate collection of the additional trash bags.

▶ **Pest Prevention/Control:** Pest prevention is a common concern when implementing Breakfast in the Classroom. Specific strategies vary by school; the best plan to prevent problems is good communication and training for all custodial staff (and teachers and paraeducators if they are responsible for cleaning) at the outset of the program's implementation.

▶ **Recycling:** Milk and juice cartons are recyclable and recycling breakfast cartons is a great way to teach students about environmental sustainability. If your school does not have a recycling program, the Carton Council has

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What Does Universal Breakfast in the Classroom Mean for Me?

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produced a great “Go-Green Guide” program to start carton recycling that you could share with your administration. For more information and to download the guide, visit: <http://www.recyclecartons.com/>.

► **Cleaning:** Custodial staff has a key role in ensuring that hard surfaces such as cafeteria tables and classroom desks are cleaned to prevent pests, remove food allergens, and remove germs to prevent infectious disease. A school’s comprehensive cleaning program includes procedures for cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting in the classrooms. Procedures, including approved supplies and cleaning methods, should be followed when cleaning before and after Breakfast in

the Classroom. In turn, the cleaning program should be modified to include Breakfast in the Classroom. Ensuring a clean classroom before and after eating will not only help prevent pests but it will help prevent exposure to food allergens and will reduce the spread of infectious disease. Routines for Breakfast in the Classroom, including training and involvement of custodians in the comprehensive cleaning program prior to and after service, should be established and well communicated before the program is implemented. Custodians should be aware of any classrooms, tables, and areas that are identified as allergen-friendly.

It is important to remember that bus drivers, school secretarial staff and other support professionals can play a role

on your school’s breakfast team. These individuals should also be included as key stakeholders from the beginning.

For more information about what school employees need to know about food allergies, download or order copies of NEA HIN’s Food Allergy Book from www.neahin.org/allergy.

For information on school cleaning strategies and tips for Teachers and Paraprofessionals, Food Service Workers, and Custodial Maintenance Staff, download the handouts from NEA HIN’s Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Targeted Disinfecting Fact Sheet Series from <http://www.neahin.org/health-safety/environmental/cleaning-for-health.html>.

¹ Adapted from “The Food Allergy Book: What School Employees Need to Know” NEA Health Information Network, 2012. Available at: <http://www.neahin.org/educator-resources/foodallergybook.html>.

Frequently Asked Questions

How long does Breakfast in the Classroom take, and will it take away instructional time?

Concerns about lost instructional time have been raised; however in practice little teaching time is lost when using a Breakfast in the Classroom model. From start to finish, Breakfast in the Classroom usually takes about 10-15 minutes to serve, eat, and clean up. Teachers and paraeducators report that Breakfast in the Classroom does not take away from instructional time since breakfast usually takes place during morning announcements and attendance – time that previously was not being used for regular classroom instruction. In some cases, moving breakfast into the classroom can lead to a gain in instructional time because students are already settled down and focused when instruction begins. Teachers can also choose to incorporate classroom instruction into breakfast time. Some ideas include oral language exercises, chalkboard math problems, reading out loud or lessons about hand hygiene, healthy eating and table manners. Refer to the *Hand Hygiene Fact Sheet* and *Favorite Books to Read Over Breakfast* inserts in this toolkit for more ideas.

We don't have extra staff in our school to serve Breakfast in the Classroom. Will Breakfast in the Classroom create additional work for teachers?

Many schools have successfully implemented a Breakfast in the Classroom program without hiring additional help. A common myth is that teachers have to work “off contract” to successfully implement Breakfast in the Classroom. In reality, instruction or administrative activities occur during breakfast, thus making breakfast time “count” as allowable instructional time. The only extra requirement for teachers or

paraeducators is to complete a daily accountability roster to note which students take full meals. The roster can be easily completed by the teacher during attendance or done by a paraprofessional. Teachers are not expected to handle the food served during Breakfast in the Classroom and therefore will not need to get a food handling certification to participate.

What are the benefits to teachers of having Breakfast in the Classroom?

There is well-documented research demonstrating that children who eat breakfast at school have improved classroom performance, better test scores and grades, increased ability to concentrate, better attendance and less disciplinary problems, tardiness and visits to the nurse. Many teachers and paraeducators already spend their own money to buy snacks and other food items for students to eat in their classroom when breakfast is not available at school. With Breakfast in the Classroom, children will start the day fed and ready to learn. Some schools also provide a free breakfast to teachers as an added incentive for Breakfast in the Classroom; speak to your school administrator to see if this benefit is available at your school.

Does Breakfast in the Classroom take away from time that could be spent addressing the goals of my state's curriculum standards and other national voluntary standards such as the Common Core State Standards?

Purposeful learning activities can be designed for students during Breakfast in the Classroom. One such example is through the sharing of literature. Students can have books read aloud to them and be provided time to read independently

during breakfast time. This is an excellent opportunity to provide students with additional exposure to informational text and to demonstrate how non-fiction literature can help students gain information that is important for their health. This is an excellent opportunity to meet both the goals of the Common Core State Standards and the National Health Education Standards. The Common Core State Standards call for a special emphasis on information texts and the National Health Education Standards promote health literacy.

Will Breakfast in the Classroom make my classroom dirty?

As long as students are provided with a structured routine for the service and cleanup of breakfast, Breakfast in the Classroom has not been shown to dirty classrooms. When adopting Breakfast in the Classroom, teachers and paraeducators simply develop an in-classroom service plan that works best for their particular students. For example, teachers can choose a self-serve model where students pick items directly from an insulated bag at the front of the classroom, or choose to have student helpers or paraprofessionals deliver breakfast items to each student at their desk. Teachers can also enlist students to help with cleanup – each student cleans up his or her own desk after eating breakfast; alternatively, student helpers or paraprofessionals can assist with cleanup of desks after breakfast is eaten. For younger students, teachers or paraprofessionals might need to initially model for students how to clean and dispose of breakfast items. After a few weeks, students develop routines and classroom eating manners, eliminating any initial issues with bringing food into the classroom. Another reported benefit of Breakfast in the Classroom is an improvement in students' table manners and mealtime social skills.

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Frequently Asked Questions

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How does Breakfast in the Classroom fit in with my school's Integrated Pest Management plan?

Breakfast in the Classroom does not have to be at odds with Integrated Pest Management (IPM). The secret to success is clear, consistent communication between custodial and food service staff to ensure that breakfast foods are easy to eat, serve and clean up. For example, food service may want to serve foods like bagels or tortilla wraps instead of muffins to minimize crumbs. Classrooms should also be equipped with paper towels or wipes, so students can clean desks before and after breakfast, and large trash bags with stands or rolling trash bins to facilitate easy disposal of breakfast food items. If your school does not have an IPM plan, talk to your school administrator about putting one in place.

Will Breakfast in the Classroom create additional work for custodians?

Many custodians have successfully worked with school administrators and staff to implement Breakfast in the Classroom programs. A shift to Breakfast in the Classroom need not require extra work for custodial staff as long as it is properly implemented. Typical foods in a Breakfast in the Classroom program are easy to serve, eat and clean up, reducing the likelihood of spills and crumbs. Most schools provide large trash bags or a rolling trash bin to each classroom that are placed in the hallway or a central drop-off location after breakfast for custodial staff to collect. Custodial staff also benefit from not having to clean the cafeteria after breakfast before preparing

for lunch. Many schools have common areas for lunch room and physical education classes, which often causes scheduling problems; in these cases, the Breakfast in the Classroom program could actually reduce custodial cleanup time and allow for more effective use of common areas.

Shouldn't it be the parent's responsibility to feed their child breakfast at home?

Parents who choose to have their children eat breakfast at school are responsible parents! Busy parent lifestyles and bus and commuting schedules can interfere with children being fed breakfast at home. In addition, many children report not feeling hungry first thing in the morning but have a better appetite later in the morning. Serving breakfast at school, after the opening bell, provides all students with the morning nutrition they need to start their day.

Breakfast is already offered in the cafeteria at my school and hardly any students participate. Does moving breakfast into the classroom really increase participation?

One of the greatest benefits of an alternative service model such as Breakfast in the Classroom is that it can dramatically increase participation. In fact, Breakfast in the Classroom is associated with the highest school breakfast participation rates, which can be as high as 98% of the school's enrollment. With traditional before school, cafeteria-based breakfast models, it may be difficult to attract students due to bus schedules and drop off times. Often the students are in a rush and preoccupied with getting to class

and talking to friends, so even if they are hungry they do not take the time to go to the cafeteria. In addition, there is often a stigma that students eating school breakfast in the cafeteria are low-income, which keeps many students away regardless of their income level. When breakfast is served to all students in the classroom, after the opening bell, any stigma and schedule issues are removed.

How can schools ensure the safety of students with life-threatening food allergies?

Schools should create and implement Food Allergy Management and Prevention Plans (FAMPP) that address the daily management of food allergies; emergency response; bullying of and discrimination against students with food allergies; and education for staff, students, and parents/guardians. These plans should be based on school district policy and implemented by a food allergy management team or an existing health and safety team. Team members should represent various job categories, including (but not limited to) nurses, food service workers, custodians, counselors, bus drivers, and teachers or paraeducators.¹

Schools should carefully consider food allergies when building their school breakfast programs and work closely with families to determine the best course of action. Some schools will choose to eliminate certain food allergens from their breakfast menus (and other meal menus) altogether. Schools can work closely with food allergy experts to address school meals and service models, including Breakfast in the Classroom.

More information about managing food allergies in schools can be found online at www.neahin.org/allergy.

¹ Adapted from "The Food Allergy Book: What School Employees Need to Know" NEA Health Information Network, 2012. Available at: <http://www.neahin.org/educator-resources/foodallergybook.html>.

Student Activities For Breakfast Time

The activities below are organized by grade level to show how academic standards for multiple content areas can be addressed through the usage of instructional activities during Breakfast in the Classroom. They can be easily adapted or expanded for any grade level. All activities can be conducted in a 10-15 minute timeframe.

KINDERGARTEN

Activity: Sort-A-Race

Description: Make a colorful recording chart with a row for each food group and post in the front of the classroom. Every day for a week during breakfast, list the foods students are eating during breakfast onto index cards. Discuss, as a class, which group the foods belong to and post the card onto the correct row on your recording chart. Watch as the race unfolds throughout the week. Which food group will have the most food cards by Friday?

Another helping: Have students color a five-band rainbow picture and label each band as a food group. Students can write the name of a food from each group on each band.

Subjects supported: Health, English Language Arts, and Visual Arts

Key nutrition/health message(s): Eat a variety of foods from the five food groups.

Books to read over breakfast connection: *MMM...Let's Eat!* by Libby Koponen

1ST GRADE

Activity: Alphabet Scrambled Eggs

Description: Place a pile of alphabet cards in the center of each table group. Have students flip over the top card in their pile and agree on a healthy breakfast food that begins with that letter. Once the team agrees on the food, they must decide which food group they think it belongs to. (Example: Y is for Yogurt; yogurt is a healthy breakfast choice, yogurt is in the Dairy Food Group).

Another helping: The next day, turn the list of healthy foods from the day before into a class alphabet book – assign each student a page to publish, while eating breakfast they can work on their illustration.

Subjects supported: Health, English Language Arts, and Social Skills

Key nutrition/health message(s): Eat a variety of foods from the five food groups.

Books to read over breakfast connection: *The Victory Garden Vegetable Alphabet Book* by Jerry Pallotta and Bob Thomson

Learning activities that can take place while students eat breakfast in the classroom:

- › Calendar activities
- › Character Education
- › Class meetings
- › Homework review
- › Instructional media viewing
- › Learning games
- › Math facts practices and challenges
- › Oral problem solving
- › School news broadcast
- › Science demonstrations
- › Show and tell
- › Spelling games
- › Student presentations
- › Read aloud, independent (silent reading) or pre-reading activities
- › Vocabulary
- › Word Wall activities

2ND GRADE

Activity: Water Ways

Description: Bring in several clear glasses and a pitcher of water. Discuss how much water students think they should drink every day and record the students' predictions. Demonstrate the right amount and teach students how to estimate that they are drinking enough water. Discuss the benefits of drinking water.

Another helping: Have students write poems about water. Collect the poems and publish them as a class book. Periodically read the book aloud to students as another activity to carry out at breakfast throughout the school year.

Subjects supported: English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Health

Key nutrition/health message(s): Water is a necessary daily beverage choice; our bodies need water to be healthy.

Books to read over breakfast connection: *Never Take a Pig to Lunch and Other Poems about the Fun of Eating* Selected and illustrated by Nadine Bernard Westcott

3RD GRADE

Activity: Eye See It

Description: Give students a copy of a MyPlate handout, or post a list of fruits and vegetables on the board. Pick a fruit or vegetable and give the students clues (such as appearance or nutrient content) to guess which one you have picked.

Another helping: Have students make their own hidden foods pictures by cutting

out pictures of fruits and vegetables from old magazines. Have students use the ChooseMyPlate website and other Internet sources to create clue cards for the foods pictured on their collages. They can exchange collages with a partner and take turns giving one another clues and guessing the fruits and vegetables. Repeat the activity with the other food groups.

Subjects supported: English Language Arts, Technology, and Health

Key nutrition/health message(s): Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.

Books to read over breakfast connection: *Frannie's Fruits* by Leslie Kimmelman

4TH GRADE

Activity: What Is Our Class's Favorite Physical Activity?

Description: Have students brainstorm and name their favorite ways to be physically active. Then use the information to create a class graph.

Another helping: Have students survey, collect data, and create a graph of physical activity for the whole school or certain grade levels. Display for everyone to see.

Subjects supported: English Language Arts, Math, Health, and Physical Education

Key nutrition/health message(s): Be physically active for a minimum of 60 minutes every day. Get your 60 minutes with bouts of activity – it all adds up!

Books to read over breakfast connections: *Graphing Food and Nutrition* by Isabel Thomas

5TH GRADE

Activity: Food Group Groups

Description: Card games and munchies go hand and hand! Make a set of food cards with foods from the five food groups (or download a set at www.neahin.org) and have the students play familiar card games (Go Fish, Rummy) by making minor adjustments to the card game rules (for Rummy, try to make sets of five cards with one card from each food group).

Another helping: Have students record what they eat at every meal in a weekly food log (each morning they can record their choices from the previous day). After a week, take stock and set a personal health goal (to eat a wider variety of foods).

Subjects supported: English Language Arts and Health.

Key nutrition/health message(s): Eat a variety of healthy, nutrient-rich foods every day.

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Student Activities For Breakfast Time

► *continued from front*

Books to read over breakfast connection: *Blue Potatoes, Orange Tomatoes: How to Grow a Rainbow Garden* by Rosalind Creasy

6TH GRADE

Activity: Nutrition Facts Label Shuffle

Description: Collect and sort out a variety of Nutrition Facts Labels (NFL) to create a set of at least 50 NFL cards. Each day of the week teach students a new skill for reading the NFL (i.e., how to tell what nutrients the food provides, how to tell if the sodium level is too high, how to tell if the first ingredient is whole grain). Shuffle the set of NFL cards and distribute them evenly to small teams. Have students read one NFL at a time and work together to practice the NFL reading skill taught for that day.

Another helping: After a week (or more) of practicing NFL reading skills, have students write explanatory essays describing how to read and interpret an NFL.

Subjects supported: English Language Arts, Math, and Health.

Key nutrition/health message(s): The Nutrition Facts Label is an important resource to help you make important choices about the foods you eat (i.e., make half of your grains whole grains; reading a product's ingredient list will enable you to make this determination).

Books to read over breakfast connection: *Bones* by Steve Jenkins

7TH GRADE

Activity: Better Beverage Choices

Description: Demonstrate how much added sugar is in common beverages using clear

Sample Breakfast in the Classroom Activity Schedule for Mrs. Marian's Third Grade Class:

Monday

Souper Class Meeting

Have a classroom "picnic" style breakfast and conduct a class meeting to kick off the school week.

Tuesday

Read and Grub

Read aloud to the class.

Wednesday

Nutrition Knowledge

Teach an integrated nutrition lesson.

Thursday

Mang-o-Math

Place a problem on the board for students to discuss and solve orally using mental math skills.

Friday

Tossed Salad Time

Pre-scheduled student sharing time ("Show and Share" from the student of the month and group project sharing from this week's Social Studies unit).

cups, a teaspoon measure, and granulated sugar.

Another helping: Have students create a Better Beverages Display for the school to see.

Subjects supported: English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Health

Key nutrition/health message(s): Watch out for the amount of added sugar when choosing a beverage.

Books to read over breakfast connection:

Be Fit, Be Strong, Be You (Be the Boss of Your Body) by Rebecca Kajander

8TH GRADE

Activity: Physical activity

Description: Working in small groups, have students brainstorm and record a list of ways to be physically active. Discuss different types of physical activity (moderate, vigorous, etc.) and the benefits and need for being physically active every day. Have the groups go back to their original list and discuss which activities are moderate and which are vigorous.

Another helping: Have students log their physical activity by completing a chart each morning listing their activity from the day before. At the end of the week, have students take stock of their own activity level and set a personal health goal based on the information collected. Have students use the information from their logs to determine what their estimated daily caloric intake should be (based on their activity level).

Subjects supported: English Language Arts, Physical Education, and Health

Key nutrition/health message(s): Be physically active for at least 60 minutes a day; include bouts of moderate and vigorous activities.

Books to read over breakfast connection: *The All-American Girls Professional Baseball League* by Daisy Scott

More information about Books to Read Over Breakfast can be found in this toolkit or online (for a list of over 100 books) at www.neahin.org. USDA's Team Nutrition Website www.choosemyplate.gov contains comprehensive lesson plans and resources (MyPlate handouts and posters) that can be used to teach students important concepts about nutrition and physical activity.

Meeting Educational Standards Through Breakfast in the Classroom Activities

This list is intended to provide a broad example of the umbrella of educational standards that can be supported during Breakfast in the Classroom.

An Educational Standards Alignment Chart connecting each of these sample breakfast time activities to national curriculum standards in multiple content areas can be found at www.neahin.org.

National Health Education Standards:

✓ Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.

✓ Analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.

✓ Students will demonstrate the ability to access valid information, products, and services to enhance health.

✓ Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

✓ Students will demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.

✓ Students will demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.

✓ Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

National Physical Education Standards

✓ The physically literate individual recognizes the value of physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression and/or social interaction.

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

✓ Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

✓ Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

✓ Adapt speech to a variety of

contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

✓ Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.

✓ Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

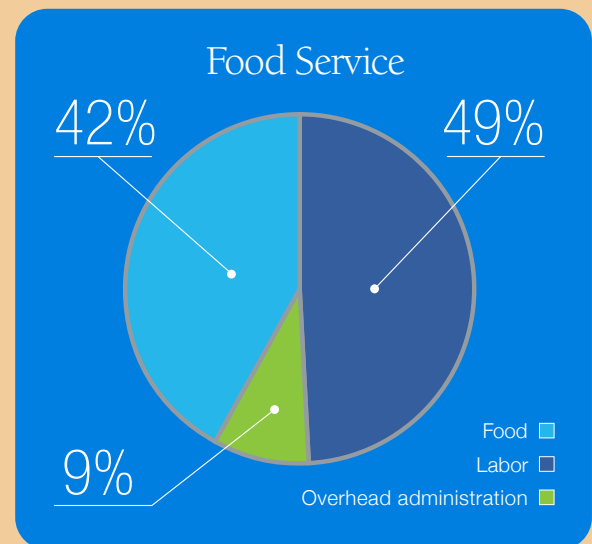
Common Core State Standards for Mathematics

✓ Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.

School Food Service 101: The Cost of School Breakfast¹

Many people may wonder why schools serve the food they do. Below is an overview of how a typical school food service works and information for approaching your food service director about changes to school meals.

- ▶ Unlike other school departments, the food service program does not receive money from the school budget. It is expected to be self-funding, meaning that it must bring in enough revenue from food sales to support its day-to-day operations.
- ▶ Food service program costs include food, labor (salary and benefits), overhead (pest control for the cafeteria, utilities, maintenance of kitchen equipment, garbage collection, etc.), and expenses associated with running the food service department (ordering and inventory, processing and filing meal applications).
- ▶ Usually what students pay for their meals doesn't fully cover the expenses to run the food service. To help cover costs, the federal government provides reimbursements to school districts. In 2014–15 the School Breakfast Program federal reimbursements are*:



2014–2015 SCHOOL YEAR	FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENT RATE**	STUDENT MEAL COST	MAXIMUM TOTAL REVENUE PER MEAL
Free Breakfast	\$1.62	Free	\$1.62
Reduced-Price Breakfast	\$1.32	≤ \$0.30	\$1.62
Paid Breakfast	\$0.28	\$1.00–1.60	\$1.63

*To access the most current reimbursement rates, visit: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/governance/notices/naps/naps.htm>

**Schools may qualify for higher "severe need" reimbursements if 40 percent or more of their lunches are served free or at a reduced price in the second preceding year. Severe need payments are up to 30 cents higher than the normal reimbursements for free and reduced price breakfasts.

The actual amount spent on food varies by school district; in most cases, about 42 percent of the cost of School Breakfast can be attributed to food. So, if a school receives \$1.62 to serve a free/reduced-price breakfast, only 68 cents of that is available to purchase food.

Of the money left over to purchase food, about 20 cents must be used to purchase milk, which is required at breakfast. That

leaves about 48 cents to purchase the rest of the meal, which, in addition to milk, is federally required to contain a vegetable or fruit and grain product.

Given those facts, imagine going to the grocery store and trying to purchase a full breakfast, which meets nutrition standards, for 48 cents. Try to keep those constraints in mind when going to speak with your school food service department.

¹ Adapted from: Start School with Breakfast: A Guide to Increasing School Breakfast Participation. NEA Health Information Network and Share Our Strength, 2011. Available at www.neahin.org and www.strength.org.

What can NEA members do to advocate for Breakfast in the Classroom and increase school breakfast participation?

Teachers and educational support professionals can play an important role in helping children reap the benefits of school breakfast. If breakfast isn't served in your school, or is only served in the cafeteria, talk with your school nutrition director and school administrators about starting a program. Efforts to educate principals, superintendents and other school administrators about the health, educational and financial benefits of school breakfast are essential to the expansion of Breakfast in the Classroom.

When superintendents and principals put their full support behind Breakfast in the Classroom, participation reaches the fullest potential. In addition to this toolkit, several other resources may be helpful when approaching the school administration:

- ▶ The School Nutrition Foundation has created an online Breakfast in the Classroom Resource Center that includes detailed information about alternative school breakfast models and resources such as sample menus, videos and financial planning tools. Visit the online center at: <http://docs.schoolnutrition.org/SNF/BIC/>.
- ▶ The Food Research and Action Center's Breakfast for Learning fact sheet provides an overview of the evidence linking breakfast and academic performance. Download the report at: <http://www.frac.org/breakfast>.
- ▶ The National Association of Elementary School Principals Foundation has developed some great resources for engaging principals around Breakfast in the Classroom. Download them

at <http://www.naesp.org/naesp-foundation/breakfastintheclassroom>.

What can NEA members do to engage parents, caregivers and families in Breakfast in the Classroom?

Parents, caregivers and families can play a vital role in expanding school breakfast and advocating for Breakfast in the Classroom. Informed and motivated families can have an influence on school and district administrators and policy makers. Ensure that families grasp the benefits of an effective school breakfast programs for all students. A body of informed families as stakeholders can help garner the level of community support needed to keep school breakfast initiatives moving forward. Parents, caregivers and families as leaders can be powerful allies to bring about change. Include families in all communication efforts. NEA members should seek out families who are interested in moving forward with exploring Breakfast in the Classroom.

- ▶ You can motivate parents, caregivers and families to become involved by serving school breakfast for lunch or in the evening and inviting them to attend. The Food Research and Action Center offers several ideas for addressing concerns and educating parents. Visit their website at <http://frac.org/federal-foodnutrition-programs/school-breakfast-program/breakfast-in-the-classroom/#13>.

Once parents, caregivers and families are engaged, what can they do?

Once parental and family engagement has been achieved, they can become partners and advocates for Breakfast

in the Classroom themselves and communicate with other decision makers. Parents, caregivers and families can serve on school breakfast exploration and start-up committees, as well as policy advisory committees, and help secure additional funding. USDA's Food and Nutrition Services provides sample letters, information sheets, talking points and ideas on ways for different stakeholders, including parents, to get involved. Visit their website at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sbp/involving-key-stakeholders>.

Strategies for parents, caregivers and families to use:

- ▶ Form a School Breakfast parent action group or Breakfast in the Classroom exploration team.
- ▶ Work with the existing PTA or PTO, School Improvement Team, School Nutrition Team and/or Health Committee.
- ▶ Meet with teachers, educational support staff and administrators at your school. Ask how to support a whole school effort to explore options to expand the school breakfast program at your school. At the end of the meeting ask: What is the next step, who will be responsible for the step, and when will the next step take place?
- ▶ Work with your school's principal to set up a Breakfast in the Classroom information table during Back to School Night or other events where parents come to the school (i.e., Muffins with Moms, Kindergarten Registration). Place a sign-up for your Breakfast in the Classroom exploration team at the information table.
- ▶ Prepare a site-specific written document about Breakfast in the Classroom to create awareness and recruit more

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Advocacy

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parents into your advocacy efforts. Include facts about the benefits and use common terminology when explaining the program to parents. Customize the document (i.e., flyer or letter) for the parents and families at your school in order to emphasize the goals and benefits for your kids as well as to address the potential concerns and questions specific to your area. Share the written document in the PTA or PTO newsletter or other media, both print and electronic (email list, Facebook page, etc.).

- Survey school families and research your community needs – determine

how the issue of increasing school breakfast participation relates to your families; find out if your school participates in the school breakfast program and if so, how many students currently participate.

- Invite experts to parent meetings to share about the benefits of breakfast and to share how and why Breakfast in the Classroom can significantly improve participation in school breakfast programs.
- Meet with community leaders and representatives (i.e., local and state government and/or boards of education) to create

awareness, establish support, and explore options for program support through legislation and policy.

For more information about Breakfast in the Classroom advocacy or to order additional copies of this toolkit, contact the NEA Health Information Network at info@neahin.org or (202) 822-7570.





Classroom Recipes for Success

Key Ingredients for Breakfast in the Classroom Success:

- Involve all affected employees (e.g. teachers, paraprofessionals, food service staff and custodial staff) in planning the program before it is rolled out.
- Plan ahead to prevent pests. Work with custodial staff to develop a plan for gathering trash; consult existing Integrated Pest Management plans to ensure classroom breakfast models are in compliance.
- Prior to program roll-out, distribute educational materials to staff about the academic, behavioral and health benefits of Breakfast in the Classroom.
- Encourage teachers and paraprofessionals to develop a structured routine for student service and cleanup of classroom breakfast, and implement it from Day 1 of the program.
- Engage parents and caregivers from the beginning. Include them as an audience for informational materials when distributed, invite participation when developing implementation plans, and utilize parents and families as advocates to garner program support as your school breakfast initiative gets off the ground.
- Market, market, market! Work with your school's communications department to develop marketing materials for parents, principals, and school staff. Consider a promotional push during national School Breakfast Week in March.
- Arrange for trainings for all staff on Breakfast in the Classroom logistics and implementation.
- Be patient! The first few days or weeks of Breakfast in the Classroom may be challenging. Stick with it; once routines are developed, everything will run smoothly.
- Consult with school administrators to ensure breakfast time counts as instructional time.



NEA Health Information Network

Safe and Healthy Schools... A Basic Right for All



This toolkit was developed by the National Education Association Health Information Network, a member of Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom.

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