

# Breakfast after the Bell

These talking points will help you plan to introduce school stakeholders to serving breakfast after the official start of the school day. It is one of the most effective ways to significantly boost school breakfast participation and increase academic success.

## All School Stakeholders

- » Millions of kids in America do not get enough food at home. One out of six kids struggle with hunger. There are hungry kids in every kind of community, from big cities to rural towns to wealthy suburbs.
- » Hungry children cannot learn. Childhood hunger negatively affects health, academic achievement and future economic prosperity. Students who eat school breakfast tend to miss less school, get better grades and are more likely to graduate.
- » Breakfast after the Bell reaches more students than traditional cafeteria breakfast. Fewer than half of the kids who get a free or reduced-price school lunch, on average, get a free or reduced-price breakfast. Multiple barriers prevent students from getting traditional cafeteria breakfast (before the bell), including buses arriving late at school; stigma that school breakfast is for “poor” kids; students preferring to socialize instead of eat; and the cafeteria not being conveniently located for students. Making breakfast a part of the school day addresses all of those barriers and enables more kids to start the day with a healthy meal.
- » School breakfast is a balanced breakfast. Kids who eat school breakfast are more likely to have a better overall diet, eating more fruits and dairy. Food items served at breakfast must meet strict dietary guidelines created by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Menu items rotate to provide variety, but a school breakfast always includes milk, fruit and whole grains.

## Teachers

- » Breakfast after the Bell does not take away from instructional time. Breakfast only takes 10-15 minutes for students to eat. When breakfast is served in the classroom, use the time to take attendance, collect homework, or make announcements.
- » Breakfast cleanup is quick and easy. School administrators, custodial staff and teachers work together to create a cleanup plan that is best for your classroom and the school. The plan may include placing extra trash bins in hallways and in classrooms so that students can quickly and responsibly dispose of their trash.
- » School breakfast is healthier than you may think. Schools participating in the National School Breakfast Program must adhere to nutrition guidelines provided by the USDA. Even though breakfast items provided to students at school sometimes look like the same breakfast items found in stores, school breakfast items often have more whole grains and less sugar, sodium, fat and calories.

## Principals

- » Breakfast after the Bell can help meet your academic goals. School officials report that they see better attendance, less tardiness and fewer behavioral problems when all kids eat breakfast. This means better test scores and higher graduation rates. Breakfast after the Bell gives kids the fuel they need to learn and grow.
- » Choose the Breakfast after the Bell model that best fits your school’s needs. The most effective models to increase breakfast participation are Breakfast in the Classroom, Grab and Go to the Classroom, and Second Chance Breakfast. Many schools operate a hybrid model that combines certain elements of these models.

## Superintendents

- » Breakfast after the Bell can increase participation and revenue. The more students that participate in the school breakfast program, the more federal reimbursement schools receive. Breakfast after the Bell increases student participation in the school breakfast program. Feed more kids, bring in more money. These additional funds can offset other school nutrition program costs.
- » Providing kids with breakfast improves test scores, reduces behavioral issues, and creates calmer classrooms. When kids eat breakfast they perform better on tests, exhibit fewer behavior problems, and visit the school nurse less often. Breakfast after the Bell gives more kids a chance to reap the benefits of breakfast and start the school day ready to learn.

For more information about Breakfast after the Bell and other resources, visit: <https://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org>.

Adapted from No Kid Hungry Center for Best Practices.  
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

