A stylized landscape illustration featuring a bright yellow sun partially obscured by a range of mountains in shades of brown and orange. A light blue river flows from the left side of the frame, winding through the foreground. The text is overlaid on this scene.

THE WAY BREAKFAST SHOULD BE:
BEST PRACTICES FOR SERVING
BREAKFAST TO MORE
MAINE STUDENTS

A Tool Kit for Food Service Directors



Preble Street
Maine Hunger Initiative

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Barbara Nichols of Westbrook Schools
Martha Spencer of South Portland Schools
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A special thank you to the many Maine students and their families.
These efforts are dedicated to you.



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INTRODUCTION

Imagine being a student again. You are trying to focus on what the teacher is saying, but your stomach won't stop growling. You tap your foot or your pencil to try to stay focused, but all you can think about is how hungry you are.

No one seems to know how hard you're trying.



IN MAINE, 1 IN 4 CHILDREN LIVE IN A FOOD INSECURE HOME

The above story is the reality for Maine's food insecure children.

Food insecurity is defined as having limited access to adequate food or nutrition.

- It means not being sure where your next meal will come from or when you will eat it
- It means skipping meals or not eating enough to fill your nutritional needs
- It means coming to school hungry

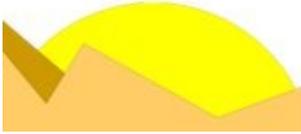
SCHOOL BREAKFAST IS A SOLUTION: IT REDUCES THE RISK OF FOOD INSECURITY¹

It is important for Maine school districts to work to increase school breakfast participation in order to help students to be healthy and ready to learn. It is also essential that school districts invest in increasing student participation in this program in order to ensure the longevity of the program for future students. Maine schools receive federal reimbursements for breakfasts served to students through the National School Breakfast Program. However, in some Maine school districts, breakfast participation among students is so low, Food Service Departments are considering cutting the school breakfast program. Statewide, average student participation in school breakfast for the 2012-2013 school year was only 22%.

Students who eat school breakfast perform better on standardized tests, earn better grades, concentrate more easily, have better health, and fewer behavioral problems. The School Breakfast Program is designed to level the playing field, by allowing all students to start their day full and ready to learn.

Increasing student participation in the school breakfast program will help make your school more equitable and boost your school's budget. There are many ways to increase program participation. The goal of this tool kit is to help guide Food Service Directors through the process of growing your school breakfast program and better serving your students. This tool kit outlines best practices for serving school breakfast, steps necessary to implement these new practices, and provides you with additional important information and contacts. Increasing participation in school breakfast will boost your department budget and ensure better educational opportunities for all your students.

¹ "Breakfast for Health." Food Research and Action Center. Fall 2011. <http://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/breakfastforhealth.pdf>



WHY INCREASE PARTICIPATION?

BREAKFAST SUPPORTS STUDENT HEALTH, ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, AND CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

STUDENT HEALTH

- School breakfast may help protect against childhood obesity: eating school breakfast is associated with a lower probability of being overweight or obese
- School breakfast improves students' dietary intake: students are more likely to eat foods that meet or exceed standards for important vitamins and minerals
- Students who benefit from a universal school breakfast program (offered free to all students) experience less hunger symptoms and make fewer visits to the school nurse
- Access to school breakfast decreases the risk of breakfast skipping, especially among low-income students; breakfast skipping is associated with higher cholesterol and insulin levels, smoking, alcohol use, physical inactivity, disordered eating, and unhealthy weight management practices

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

- Students who eat school breakfast, closer to class and test-taking time, perform better on standardized tests than those who skip breakfast or eat breakfast at home
- School breakfast is associated with improved attendance and decreased tardiness
- Students who eat school breakfast demonstrate improved learning, comprehension, memory, concentration, and alertness
- Eating school breakfast is associated with improved math grades and vocabulary
- Breakfast improves student performance on challenging mental tasks

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

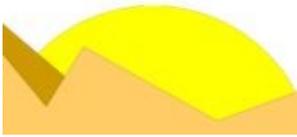
- Participating in school breakfast is associated with improved student behavior
- Children who increase their school breakfast participation show improvements in hyperactivity, depression and anxiety
- Eating breakfast improves a child's ability to react well to frustrating situations
- Serving breakfast in the classroom is associated with fewer disciplinary referrals

Data from Food Research and Action Center *Breakfast for Health* and *Breakfast for Learning* briefs

For more information visit:

<http://frac.org/federal-foodnutrition-programs/school-breakfast-program/>





BEST PRACTICES FOR SERVING BREAKFAST

The best way to serve students breakfast depends on many factors including your cafeteria size, the size of your school, & the number of food service staff. This section of the tool kit provides information on various best practices for serving school breakfast, including the benefits and challenges of each. It is important to use this information in order to facilitate a discussion with various school stakeholders regarding the most effective option for your school environment.

Traditional Breakfast: Breakfast is served before the first class of the day in the school cafeteria.

Benefits: least amount of time investment needed by food service and custodial staff

Challenges: participation in this form of breakfast service tends to be low due to several factors—stigma associated with eat free or reduced meals, students don't want to miss out on socialization or play time, students may not arrive early enough to eat breakfast before the start of school

Universal Breakfast: Breakfast is served free to all students regardless of their eligibility for free or reduced meals.

Benefits: reduces the stigma associated with eating free school meals, increases equity by insuring every student has access to a healthy meal to start their day, reduces financial strain and burden on families

Challenges: may not be financial viable for all schools & school districts, especially if the school has low enrollment in free or reduced meals



Breakfast in the Classroom: Students are served breakfast in the classroom during the first few minutes of class.

Benefits: reduces stigma associated with eating school meals, affords teachers the opportunity to model healthy & positive eating habits, increases student readiness to learn, students do not have to leave class if they arrive at school too late to eat before class

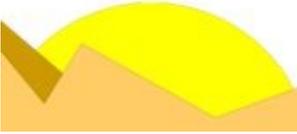
Challenges: increased food staff and custodial staff time needed for packaging delivery and clean up, coolers/cooler bags needed to keep breakfast items at food safe temperatures, teacher cooperation needed for logging breakfasts eaten & for allowing eating in their classroom, time for clean up

LOCAL LOOK

After switching to Universal Breakfast and Breakfast in the Classroom, Portland Public Schools saw participation in school breakfast jump from 30% to 80%.

After introducing Universal Breakfast in the Classroom, Lincoln Middle School in Portland, ME saw...

- Teachers reported a decrease in disruptions, an increase in students' ability to focus and stay on task, and improvements in students' grades
- A 38% decrease in the number of behavioral referrals
- Zero visits to school nurse for students feeling ill due to hunger; school nurse had 5 visits per week for such students the year before



BEST PRACTICES FOR SERVING BREAKFAST

Second Chance Breakfast: The school serves breakfast before classes in the morning and again another time during the morning, often between first and second or second and third period. Students can go to the cafeteria, or to a breakfast kiosk set up somewhere in the school, during this second serving time and grab a breakfast that can be taken with them and eaten in their class.

Benefits: students can still eat breakfast even if they do not arrive early enough to eat before classes begin, students who are not hungry first thing in the morning have an opportunity to eat later, few additional resource needed to implement changes

Challenges: food service staff may need to work additional hours or pause lunch preparation to serve breakfast a second time

LOCAL LOOK

Lake Region Middle School, in the Lake Region School District, began serving a Second Chance Breakfast distribution, in addition to the traditional breakfast. Students could make a trip down to the cafeteria between classes, from 8:50 AM—9:10 AM, and pick up a grab and go breakfast to eat during class. The school experienced a 75% increase in school breakfast participation in the first week of serving Second Chance Breakfast.



Grab and Go Breakfast: Breakfasts are pre-bagged and students can pick them up from the cafeteria or a kiosk in the hallway on their way to class. Students eat these breakfasts during class.

Benefits: students who don't arrive to school in time to eat breakfast before class can still eat, teachers don't need to any record keeping because students pick up the breakfast outside of the classroom

Challenges: coolers/cooler bags needed to keep cold items cold if kiosks are outside of the cafeteria, buy-in required from food service workers and custodial staff

Expanding Cafeteria Hours: The hours of the school cafeteria are extended throughout the morning and students can obtain a pass from a teacher, school administrator, nurse, etc. to go pick up a breakfast to either eat in the cafeteria or the classroom.

Benefits: few, if any, changes needed to food service workers schedules, students can eat breakfast whenever they are hungry, teachers can send a student to get a breakfast whenever they notice any of symptoms of hunger, no additional resources needed to institute the program

Challenges: food service workers may need to step away from lunch prep to ring out students, may need to add additional staff hours, buy-in needed from teachers & staff so that they will distribute passes to students

LOCAL LOOK

At Portland High School, school administration chose to expand cafeteria hours by keeping the cafeteria open from before classes start until lunch is served. In order to avoid issues with tardiness, the cafeteria closes its doors right before first bell until shortly after first period begins. Participation increased significantly after switching over to this form of distribution.



FINANCIAL VIABILITY OF EXPANSION

In order to ensure the financial viability of your school breakfast expansion, you must work to increase the participation rates of students who are eligible for free/reduced breakfast. The reimbursement rates for free/reduced students are higher than the reimbursement rate for paid students – increasing free/reduced participation will significantly increase the food service department revenue.

SCHOOLS ARE REIMBURSED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AT A RATE OF...

NON-SEVERE NEED SCHOOLS:

\$1.55 Free Students
\$1.25 Reduced Students
\$0.27 Paid Students

SEVERE NEED SCHOOLS:*

\$1.85 Free Students
\$1.55 Reduced Students
\$0.27 Paid Students

*Schools that serve at least 40 percent of lunches to free or reduced students

HOWEVER, IN MAINE, THE STATE PROVIDES ADDITIONAL REIMBURSEMENTS, SO THAT SCHOOLS ARE PROVIDED \$1.55 FOR REDUCED STUDENTS (OR \$1.85 IN SEVERE NEED SCHOOLS), IN ADDITION TO FREE STUDENTS.

INCREASING FREE/REDUCED STUDENT PARTICIPATION

One of the biggest barriers to free/reduced student breakfast participation is the stigma associated with being a “low-income” student who has to eat breakfast at school. In order to get students to participate, you have to make eating school breakfast normal and even cool.

In order to make school breakfast the norm, you have to target and increase participation across the student body. The serving methods discussed in the “Best Practice for Serving Breakfast” section of this tool kit are keys to increasing school-wide participation in your breakfast program. Although some of the best practices for breakfast expansion may require initial financial investments, the increase in participation will result in more reimbursement dollars coming into your department. Therefore, the expansion process will pay for itself!



Switching to Universal Breakfast is a great way to ensure an increase in overall program participation. If 50% or more of your school’s student body is eligible for free or reduced meals, Universal Breakfast is great option for you! Because Universal Breakfast can increase participation so significantly, the increased revenue from reimbursements for free/reduced students will pay for the free breakfast served to paid students.



FINANCIAL VIABILITY OF EXPANSION

CONSIDER A NON-SEVERE NEED SCHOOL WITH 400 STUDENTS & 50% OF THEM ELIGIBLE FOR FREE/REDUCED MEALS...

NOW IMAGINE THAT PARTICIPATION INCREASES JUST 20% FROM 30% → 50%

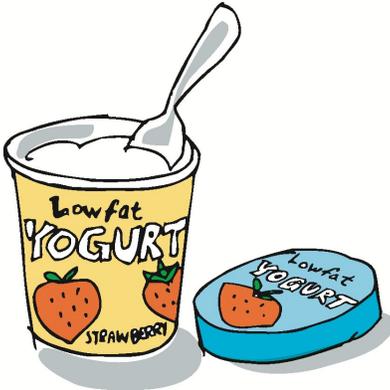
THIS SCHOOL WOULD SEE \$11,160 IN ADDITIONAL ANNUAL REVENUE



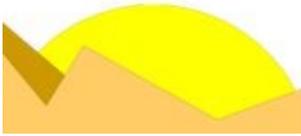
PAID STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN THE UNIVERSAL BREAKFAST PROGRAM WILL NOT DAMAGE YOUR FOOD SERVICE DEPARTMENT BUDGET

No matter how much effort you put into school breakfast expansion, not every student, particularly not every paid student, will eat school breakfast. Due to this, the additional reimbursements you receive because more free/reduced students are eating will cover the cost of not charging the paid students for breakfast. Moreover, without targeting all students for your school breakfast expansion, you will never reduce the stigma that goes along with receiving a free school breakfast.

INCREASING STUDENT-WIDE SCHOOL BREAKFAST PARTICIPATION, LEADS TO AN INCREASE IN FREE/REDUCED ELIGIBLE STUDENTS EATING SCHOOL BREAKFAST, LEADS TO MORE REIMBURSEMENT DOLLARS COMING INTO YOUR FOOD SERVICE DEPARTMENT.



In addition to switching over your breakfast serving methods, outreach to families may need to be conducted in order to get them to fill out the Free and Reduced School Meals Application. For more information on how to do this, please see the Free/Reduced School Meals Application Outreach worksheet in this tool kit.



GAINING SUPPORT: SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Gaining support from school administrators is extremely important to the sustainability of school breakfast expansion. Generally speaking, school administrators are primarily concerned with these issues: student wellness, student academic achievement, and school budget. The “Why Increase Participation” section of this tool kit provides information on student wellness and academic achievement, which will be useful in swaying administrators. In addition, the “Financial Viability of Expansion” section of this tool kit can be used to help explain why school breakfast is important for your school budget.

THESE ARE SOME STEPS TO TAKE THAT WILL HELP YOU GAIN SUPPORT FROM ADMINISTRATION:

Find an administrator to be your “school breakfast champion”

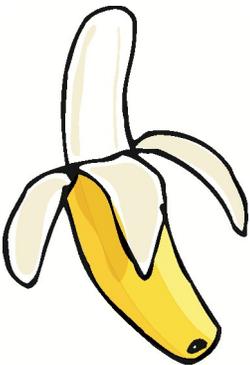
Gaining support from a school board member or superintendent can really help launch your school breakfast expansion. Reaching out to an administrator who has expressed interest in school breakfast, school meals, student health, or test scores in the past is a great place to start. If necessary, explain to this administrator why school breakfast expansion is so important and ask if they are willing to support your expansion. Invite this administrator to any meetings you hold regarding school breakfast expansion. Their support in the room will help sway other people to give the best practices for increasing school breakfast expansion their seal of approval as well.

Find a principal who wants to pilot a school breakfast best practice in their school

Often school districts choose to run a school breakfast pilot in one school before making district wide changes to the way school breakfast is served. If you don’t know which principals in your district are interested in expanding their schools breakfast programs, reach out to principals to gauge their interest. Select a principal who excited about serving more students, and who is willing to devote the time and energy into supporting the expansion by promoting the changes to students, parents, and school staff.

Keep an open dialogue with school administrators; allow them to take part in the decision making process

Fill administrators in on the benefits and challenges of various breakfast serving models. Host meetings with them, particularly the pilot school principal, to gain their input on what model(s) would work best in their school. These steps will help ensure that when changes are implemented, they feel ownership over them & they will help to ensure that things run smoothly.



Communicate successes

When you have a positive response, such as increase in student participation, due to a change you’ve made in your school breakfast serving procedures, be sure to inform school administrators. You can do this via a memo, a meeting, or through a simple email. Knowing that new breakfast serving models are well received will make school administrators more likely to support further school breakfast expansion throughout the district.



GAINING SUPPORT: FOOD SERVICE STAFF



Without support from food service staff, your school breakfast expansion cannot be a success. These steps will help ensure that your food service staff will aid in school breakfast best practices.

INVOLVE FOOD SERVICE STAFF FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE PROCESS

Before making any decisions about expanding, shadow and observe the school breakfast preparation and serving process in your school kitchens. Talk to the food service staff about what the feel is going well with school breakfast, what challenges they face, and what changes to the process they'd like to see implemented. Food service staff generally have a pulse on the students' food preferences, how often kids eat, and their feelings regarding the school meals served. They are some of your best advisors in what best practices can and should be implemented at their school.

CHECK IN WITH FOOD SERVICE STAFF REGULARLY

In addition to checking the number of students served before and after a best practice for serving school breakfast is put in place, ensure that you are communicating regularly with your food service staff. They can tell you about student responses to the changes, if there is a lot of additional work involved in the best practice, and whether or not they need to be scheduled for more hours.

SHOW APPRECIATION FOR YOUR FOOD SERVICE STAFF

Making changes to school breakfast serving processes can be challenging at first. Moreover, food service staff are really the folks on the ground running the whole process. Thank them for all their hard work with recognition such as a card or a staff lunch.





GAINING SUPPORT: TEACHERS

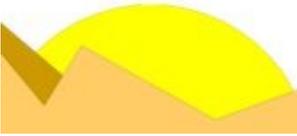
WHY IS GAINING TEACHER SUPPORT SO IMPORTANT?

- Without teacher support many of the best practice models will not work (e.g. breakfast in the classroom, second chance breakfast) – teachers may need to check off that a student received a breakfast, allow breakfast to be eaten in their room, provide a pass to go pick up a breakfast, etc.
- Teachers should help students make the connection of why breakfast is important not only to their health, but also to their academic achievement.
- The more adults telling a student to eat breakfast, the more likely they are to participate in the school breakfast program. This will provide multiple positive influences. In addition, students may have a particular teacher whose opinion they value. Encouragement from this teacher will significantly increase the chances that a student will eat school breakfast.



STEPS TO GAIN TEACHER SUPPORT

- **Attend school staff meetings**
Explain the changes to the school breakfast program. Listen and respond to teacher questions and concerns regarding expansion.
- **Find a “champion” on teaching staff**
Find a teacher who is excited about and extremely supportive of school breakfast expansion to rally and raise support among their fellow teachers.
- **Ensure principals are communicating needs and changes to their teaching staff**
When principals communicate their personal buy-in to the school breakfast expansion, generally speaking, their staff will follow suit. Having policy changes come down from the principal will make teachers more likely to follow them.
- **Make any changes necessary as easy as possible for teachers**
If you’re switching to breakfast in the classroom, and teachers will need to document which students are eating, ensure that the checklist for that day’s breakfast is delivered with the meals to that classroom.
- **Alleviate concerns about trash in the classroom by meeting with the custodial and teaching staffs**
Talk to custodial staff about the proper way to handle any waste (e.g. they want teachers to put food trash outside the door, leave it in the classroom, etc.). Communicate these needs & preferences to teachers to avoid any tension between teachers and custodial staff.



GAINING SUPPORT: TEACHERS

QUESTIONS TEACHERS MAY ASK

Q: Will the food be nutritious? Should we feed students breakfast if it's not nutritious?

A: All food items served in school meals must meet USDA Food and Nutrition Services nutritional guidelines. Though you may not view these guidelines as perfect, they are being updated to try to provide students the nutrition necessary for them to be healthy and succeed. Moreover, some students who are eligible for free or reduced meals may not have eaten since school lunch the day before. Failure to feed these students means they will be far less prepared to learn, thus creating and widening achievement gaps.



Q: Will there be a lot of waste in my classroom?

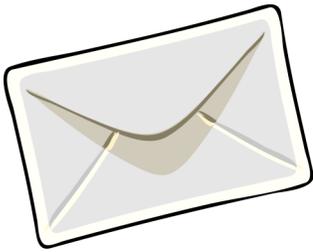
A: It is important that you, as the food service director, have developed a plan with school custodial staff to manage any additional classroom waste that will result from an update school breakfast service model. Ensure you communicate this plan with the teaching staff.

STAFF INVOLVEMENT IS KEY: STUDENTS ARE FAR MORE LIKELY TO EAT SCHOOL BREAKFAST WHEN THEY'RE ENCOURAGED TO DO SO BY A SCHOOL STAFF MEMBER. INCREASING BREAKFAST PARTICIPATION IS NOT SIMPLY THE RESPONSIBILITY OF FOOD SERVICE STAFF. ALL SCHOOL STAFF, INCLUDING PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS, NEED TO BE ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS BY ENCOURAGING STUDENTS TO EAT, SENDING STUDENTS TO GET A BREAKFAST IF THEY ARE HUNGRY DURING CLASS, AND ALLOWING STUDENTS TO EAT IN THE CLASSROOM.





SPREADING THE WORD: STUDENTS & PARENTS



LETTERS/EMAILS HOME

Sending a letter or an email home to parents at the beginning of your initiative is important, as parents can influence and encourage their student to eat school breakfast. In addition, this will allow parents to reach out to the food service department with any questions or concerns. A sample letter home to parents is included in this tool kit.

OPEN HOUSES

At the beginning of the year, and at any open houses throughout the year, be sure to have a table representing the food service department, staffed by a member of the food service department, to inform parents about school breakfast options and encourage families and students to participate.

FLYERS THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL

Post fliers regarding the changes to breakfast throughout the school. An example flyer can be found near the end of this tool kit.

ANNOUNCEMENTS TO STUDENTS

Before and after changes are made to your school breakfast serving style, make school wide announcements to promote breakfast and encourage students to participate.

CLASS PRESENTATIONS TO STUDENTS

Have a member of your food service staff provide fun presentations to about the way school breakfast is served, what sort of food options they have, and what “paying” for breakfast looks like. Many free or reduced students may be unaware that they can receive a free breakfast. Many paid students may not be aware that they don’t have to bring cash with them to school for breakfast, but that they can simply draw on an account that their parents deposit into.

Samantha Cowens of Windham Schools Food Service Department went to elementary school classrooms, gave food samples, and discussed school breakfast. These visits increased breakfast participation.

CONNECTING WITH THE STUDENT COUNCIL OR OTHER STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Connect with student organizations, such as student council, to have them promote new school breakfast programs to the students in your schools. Students promoting to students will further reduce the barrier of stigma, normalize school breakfast, and encourage more student participation.



LETTER TO PARENTS TEMPLATE

Dear [Insert School Name] Family,

Here at [Insert School Name] we value our students' health and education. In order to better serve our students, we are changing our school breakfast program.

School breakfast is linked to several important health and educational outcomes:

- School breakfast improves students' dietary intake: students are more likely to eat foods that meet or exceed standards for important vitamins and minerals
- Students who eat school breakfast, closer to class and test-taking time, perform better on standardized tests than those who skip breakfast or eat breakfast at home
- School breakfast is associated with improved attendance and decreased tardiness
- Students who eat school breakfast demonstrate improved learning, comprehension, memory, concentration, and alertness
- Participating in school breakfast is associated with improved student behavior

We felt that the old breakfast serving model was not reaching many of the students. Therefore, our school has decided to change to [Insert Breakfast Best Practice]. Serving breakfast in this way has been shown to increase student participation in the school breakfast program.

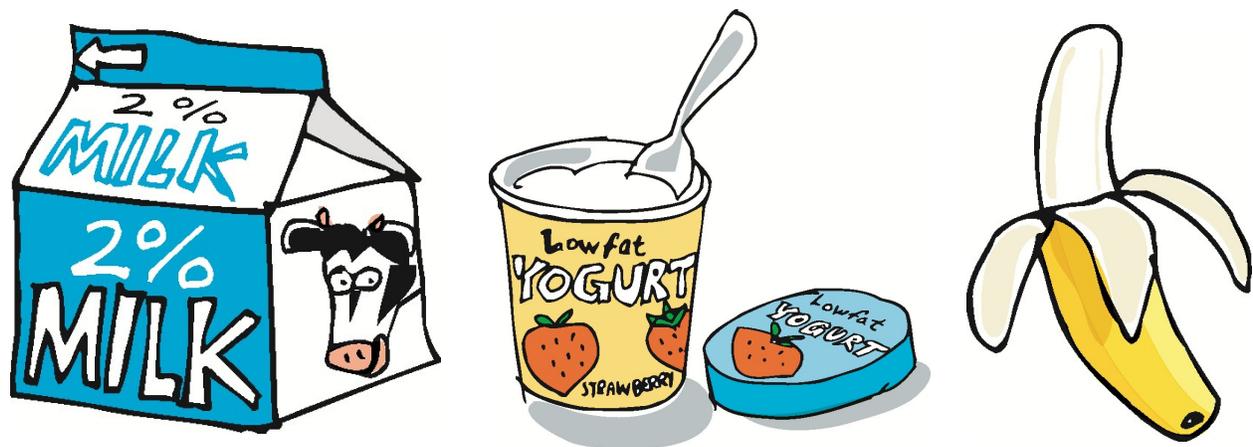
If you have not done so already, or if you think your eligibility may have changed, please fill out the application for free/reduced school meals, to see if your family qualifies for school breakfast for free!

We are very excited about these changes. We hope that you will encourage your child to eat school breakfast.

Please feel free to contact the [Insert District Name] Food Service Department at [Insert Department Number & Email] with any questions, comments, or concerns.

Thank you very much,
[Principal or Food Service Director Signature]

Your student can eat breakfast at school every morning!



[Insert School Name] will now be serving
[Insert Breakfast Best Practice]

[Include additional details about breakfast distribution]



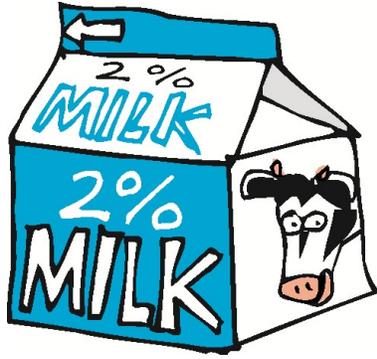
School breakfast is
linked to better test
scores & student
health

Your family may qualify for free or reduced price meals!
You can fill out the application at anytime & more than once a year.

Fill out the free & reduced meals application today.

Contact the Food Service Department at [Insert Number]

Your student can eat breakfast at school every morning!

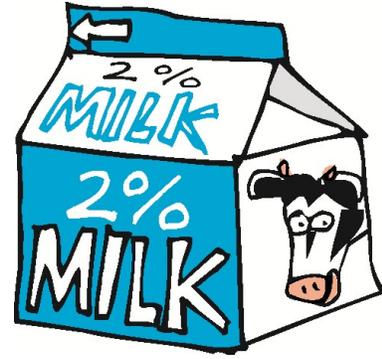


School breakfast is linked to better test scores & student health.

Your family may qualify for free or reduced price meals!
You can fill out application anytime.

Contact the Food Service Department at [Department Number]

Your student can eat breakfast at school every morning!



School breakfast is linked to better test scores & student health.

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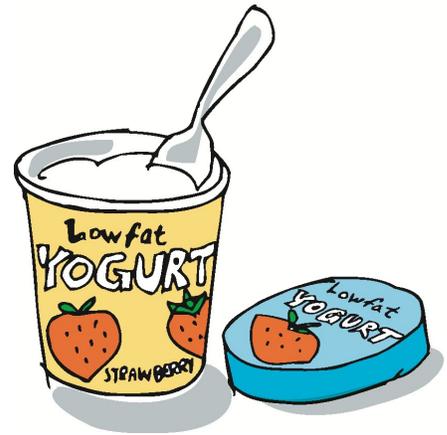
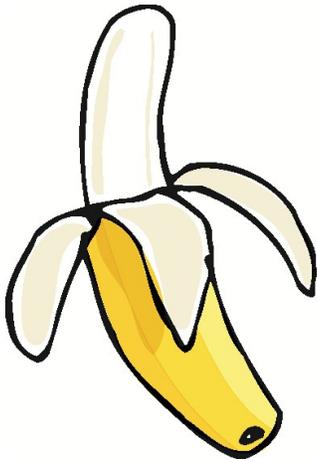
School breakfast is linked to better test scores & student health.

Your family may qualify for free or reduced price meals!
You can fill out application anytime.

Contact the Food Service Department at [Department Number]

Second Chance Breakfast

Did you miss breakfast before first period?



Stop by the cafeteria!

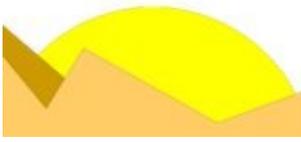
8:50–9:10 AM

Grab a breakfast to go



Breakfast can help you...

- Stay healthier
- Concentrate in class
- Get better grades



FREE/REDUCED APPLICATION OUTREACH

Stigma often deters parents and families from applying for free and reduced school meals. Fear that their family will be labeled and targeted based on their income stops families from applying for this important benefit. Families' misconceptions about eligibility requirements and the belief that they are making too much money to qualify for the program also make them hesitant to apply. Despite the fact that 46% of the students in Maine are enrolled in free or reduced meals, it is evident that there are many more students who are eligible but unreached.

Schools benefit from having 50% or more of their student body enrolled in free or reduced meals. They can benefit from increased opportunity for federal programs and private grants. Federal programs include

- Open Summer Food Service Program Sites
- At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program
- Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program

In addition, once a school has 50% or more of their students enrolled in free or reduced meals, best practices for breakfast distribution, such as universal breakfast, become more viable. Additional funds from the majority of students being enrolled allows schools to offer higher quality and more appetizing meal options, which in turn, increases participation.

Increasing enrollment in free or reduced school meals is pivotal to ensuring the vitality of your food service department budget. Andy Madura, Food Service Director for Lake Region Schools, in the process of trying to resolve debt in the food service department budget, spoke with many families who had large bills due to the department because they lacked the financial resources necessary to pay for school meals for their students. If these parents were enrolled in free or reduced school meals, the debt would never have accrued in the first place.

The largest barrier to applying for free or reduced meals is the stigma that surrounds the program. Parents are often afraid their student and family will be looked down on for being the recipient of free or reduced meals. Below are solutions that can reduce this stigma and increase enrollment in free or reduced meals in your district.

Solutions:

- Establish a district/school wide expectation that the free/reduced meal application is returned by every family, regardless of their perceived eligibility. If this expectation is in place, a family won't fear returning the form and being stigmatized for needing assistance.
- Add a reminder to your school meals menu that the application can be filled out at any time. Families' circumstances may change throughout the year, and they may become eligible even if they weren't at the beginning of the term.
- In addition to a mailing with other forms at the beginning of the year, do a second mailing of the form to families who did not return the form the first time.
- Create and attach an attractive cover letter to the application.
- Host a table, staffed by a member of the food service department, at open houses at the beginning of the year. Include an interactive display of some kind to attract families and students to the table. Talk with families about the importance of school meals and of enrollment in the free/reduced meals program.



IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Preble Street Maine Hunger Initiative

Michelle Lamm, Program Manager

mlamm@preblestreet.org

207-775-0026 x 2082

Contact if you have questions regarding... someone to help with/deliver a presentation to stake holders, if you're having trouble convincing stake holders, convening an initial meeting, deciding on best practices for your school/district, trouble contacting another person on this list, the School Breakfast or other Federal Nutrition Programs

Gail Lombardi

Maine Department of Education, Child Nutrition Services, Education Specialist

gail.lombardi@maine.gov

207-624-6843

Contact if you have questions regarding...the percentage of students eligible for free/reduced lunch, state-wide numbers of free/reduced eligible students

Andy Madura

Food Service Director, Lake Region Schools

andy.madura@lakeregionschools.org

207-693-6467, 207-647-5343

Contact if you have questions regarding...your school breakfast expansion (especially if you're a rural school district), convincing your staff to make changes, free/reduced school meals application outreach

Tonya Arnold

Principal, Lake Region Middle School

tonya.arnold@lakeregionschools.org

207-647-8403, 207-693-4784

Contact if you have questions regarding...how to get a principal to champion your breakfast initiative; how students, teachers, and staff received school breakfast expansion, Second Chance Breakfast

Ron Adams

Food Service Director, Portland Public Schools

adamsr@portlandschools.org

207-874-8231

Contact if you have questions regarding...the financial viability of your universal breakfast program or breakfast in the classroom, finding grants, buying financially viable and nutritionally valuable food, getting farm fresh foods into your school

Debbie Migneault

Principal, Portland High School

migned@portlandschools.org

207-874-8250

Contact if you have questions regarding... how to get a principal to champion your breakfast initiative; how students, teachers, and staff received school breakfast expansion, extended cafeteria hours