



BREAKFAST AFTER THE BELL

POLICY SOLUTIONS FROM ACROSS THE U.S.

School Breakfast Changes Lives

Students who eat school breakfast are more likely to perform better on tests, attend more days of school, and graduate from high school. Despite this, only half of the low-income students who eat school lunch are also eating school breakfast. Recognizing the connection between school breakfast and academic achievement, policymakers across the country are rethinking how and where school breakfast is served, in order to close this participation gap and ensure kids have the nutrition they need to succeed.

POLICY SOLUTION

Breakfast after the Bell

Schools traditionally serve breakfast in the cafeteria before the start of the school day, but too many kids miss out because of late arrival times, stigma, and a host of other issues. When schools make breakfast a part of the school day by serving it in the classroom or through other models outside of the cafeteria, participation rates skyrocket. Schools that implement these innovative breakfast models report better attendance, fewer disciplinary issues, and higher test scores.

States have enacted a range of policies related to school breakfast, but the policies with the largest impact on connecting students to school breakfast require schools to make breakfast a part of the school day. These policies can be structured in different ways. Some require all schools to implement an after-the-bell model. Others target schools by grade level or level of need, based on the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Policies can incorporate funding to help schools comply with a requirement, but many successful examples exist without this funding.

For more on school breakfast policy, including a policy brief, updates on school breakfast legislation, sample text, and more visit NoKidHungry.org/bfastpolicy

LOS ANGELES

School breakfast participation increased by 89 percent in the first year after the Los Angeles Unified School District, the second largest school district in the country, began rolling out breakfast in the classroom to most of its schools.¹ An evaluation of the program found that **schools implementing classroom breakfast had higher rates of attendance** than schools with traditional breakfast programs.²

COLORADO

In 2013, Colorado enacted legislation requiring that all high need schools serve breakfast after the bell beginning in the 2014-15 school year. The bill garnered support from a broad coalition of anti-hunger, health, and education groups.

NEW MEXICO

The number of children eating a breakfast at school rose by 13 percent after passage, with bipartisan support, of a 2011 law that required high need elementary schools to serve breakfast after the bell.³ Governor Susana Martinez (R) signed a 2014 law to expand this requirement to middle and high schools.

DALLAS

The Dallas Independent School District Board of Trustees established a policy for district-wide breakfast in the classroom implementation beginning in the 2013-2014 school year. The program started as a pilot in the fall of 2010 and resulted in more than a 200 percent increase in participation.⁴

HOUSTON

Breakfast participation rose by 45 percent in the first year after the Houston Independent School District board approved a policy to require breakfast in the classroom for all elementary and middle schools.⁵ An evaluation of the program found statistically significant **increases in attendance and passing rates for math tests** and a **decrease in disciplinary actions** after the first year of implementation.⁶

CHICAGO

Chicago Public Schools, the third largest school district in the country with almost 85 percent of its students eligible for free/reduced-price meals, enacted a board policy in 2011 to require all elementary schools to serve breakfast in the classroom. The school district saw an increase in meals served of over 25 percent.⁷



DETROIT

Detroit Public Schools, which passed a policy in August 2009 to require all grades from pre-K through 8th to serve breakfast in the classroom, now boasts over an 80 percent participation rate for school breakfast.⁸

WEST VIRGINIA

In 2013, West Virginia lawmakers passed legislation requiring all schools to implement a breakfast after the bell model by the fall of 2015. More than 75 percent of West Virginia's schools have already implemented in advance of the impending requirement.⁹

MARYLAND

Since 1998, Maryland has invested state funds into the Maryland Meals for Achievement (MMFA) program, supporting universal breakfast in the classroom for low-income schools. An analysis by Deloitte found that students in MMFA schools had as much as a 7.2 percent **lower rate of chronic absenteeism** and were up to 12.5 percent **more likely to achieve proficiency** on standardized math tests.¹⁰

WASHINGTON, DC

School breakfast participation rose by 32 percent in the first year after the 2010 Healthy Schools Act required universal breakfast after the bell for high-need elementary schools.¹¹

¹ "Make Café LA a Part of Your Day: Food Services Division Fact Sheet". Food Services Division LAUSD. http://notebook.lausd.net/pls/pl/docs/PAGE/CA_LAUSD/FLDR_ORGANIZATIONS/FLDR_COO/CHIEF_OPERATIONS_OFFICER/2013-14%20FOOD%20SERVICES%20FACTSHEET_O.PDF

² JAMA Pediatr. 2014 Nov 24. doi: 10.1001/jamapediatrics.2014.2042. Estimating Impacts of a Breakfast in the Classroom Program on School Outcomes. Anzman-Frasca S, Djang HC, Halmo MM, Dolan PR, Economos CD.

³ "School Breakfast Scorecard: School Year 2011-2012". Food Research and Action Center, January 2013. http://frac.org/pdf/Scorecard_SY2011-2012.pdf

⁴ "District receives national attention for innovative efforts to end childhood hunger", Dallas Independent School District, <http://www.dallasisd.org/site/default.aspx?PageType=3&DomainID=1&ModuleInstanceID=769&ViewID=047E6BE3-6D87-4130-8424-D8E4E9ED6C2A&RenderLoc=0&FlexDataID=23832&PageID=1>

⁵ "School Breakfast in America's Big Cities". Food Research and Action Center, January 2012. http://frac.org/pdf/urban_school_breakfast_report_2012.pdf

⁶ "First Class Breakfast Program: Findings Related to Student Performance, 2010-2011". Houston Independent School District, April 25, 2012. http://www.houstonisd.org/cms/lib2/TX01001591/Centricity/Domain/8269/PE_DistrictPrograms/Breakfast-Report-2010-2011.pdf

⁷ "School Breakfast: Making it Work in Large School Districts", Food Research and Action Center, January 2013, http://frac.org/pdf/urban_school_breakfast_sy2011-2012.pdf

⁸ "School Breakfast: Making it Work in Large School Districts", Food Research and Action Center, January 2014, http://frac.org/pdf/School_Breakfast_Large_School_Districts_SY2012_2013.pdf

⁹ "Feed to Achieve Already Sating More Kids". *West Virginia Gazette*, April 12, 2014. <http://www.wvgazette.com/article/20140412/GZ01/140419772>

¹⁰ "No Kid Hungry Starts with Breakfast". Deloitte and No Kid Hungry Center for Best Practices. <http://www.nokidhungry.org/pdfs/school-breakfast-brochure.pdf>

¹¹ "School Breakfast Scorecard: School Year 2010-2011". Food Research and Action Center, January 2012. http://frac.org/pdf/school_breakfast_scorecard_2010-2011.pdf

ABOUT THE NO KID HUNGRY CENTER FOR BEST PRACTICES

Share Our Strength's No Kid Hungry® campaign is ending childhood hunger by connecting kids to the healthy food they need, every day; teaches families how to cook healthy, affordable meals through Cooking Matters®; and invests in community organizations that fight hunger. The No Kid Hungry Center for Best Practices provides the tools and resources needed to help elected officials and their staff, educators and community leaders achieve success in fighting childhood hunger. Learn what works in the fight against childhood hunger and discover toolkits, case studies, hunger stats, issue briefs, reports and more at BestPractices.NoKidHungry.org.



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