



School Breakfast

Information for Parents

Want your children to be alert, focused and ready to tackle the day's academic challenges? Encourage them to eat breakfast — not just on test days, but every day of the year. It's well-documented^{i ii} that breakfast eaters are more focused and energetic throughout the day.

Breakfast = Achievement

National studies consistently confirm that breakfast provides fuel for school and boosts brain power. Eating breakfast is linked to:

- Improved classroom performance, including better test scores and grades
- Increased ability to focus and concentrate on schoolwork
- Decreased behavior problems, tardiness and visits to the school nurse
- Increased attendance rate

Just as important, when students routinely start their day with breakfast, chances are good that it will become a habit that carries into their teenage and adult years.

School Breakfast Ensures a Nutritious Start Every Day

Breakfast is great! If your children don't have time to eat at home or simply aren't hungry first thing in the morning, have them give school breakfast a try. It's a great option for all children, regardless of income!

Here's why:

- School breakfast supplies 1/4 of the Recommended Daily Allowances a child needs.
- It can be a nutritious meal that provides a variety of foods.
- It's easy and convenient. You can feel comfortable that your child is eating a nutritious meal and getting the best possible start to a day of learning.

Expanding Breakfast: Why Parents Should Care

Many schools capture breakfast skippers by expanding breakfast service beyond the cafeteria's walls. This may already be the case in your child's school. If not, it's worth asking your school nutrition director to consider it as an option. Schools find that when they take breakfast to students instead of expecting the student to come to the cafeteria, more students eat breakfast and gain the academic, behavioral

and nutritional benefits. When all students in a classroom eat breakfast, everyone from teachers to students to parents wins.

Typically, schools use one of three approaches, depending on their unique setting:

- **Breakfast in the Classroom** — Students eat breakfast in their classroom, either at the beginning of or early in the school day. A breakfast of easy-to-eat items, such as breakfast sandwiches and burritos, low-fat muffins, Whole wheat french toast sticks or cereals, plus low-fat milk and fruit or juice, are brought from the cafeteria to the classroom, often by students.
- **Grab 'n' Go Breakfast** — Breakfast is packaged so students can quickly grab it from the cafeteria or carts elsewhere in the school. They eat it in the cafeteria, the classroom or on the school grounds.
- **Breakfast After First Period** — Usually served in middle and high schools, students are allowed to get breakfast after their first period in a grab 'n' go style.

See [Breakfast for Everyone—First Meal Matters](#), for information on all three!

Your [local Dairy Council](#)[®] is available as a resource for schools interested in Expanding Breakfast.

ⁱ Food Research & Action Center. [Research Brief: Breakfast for Learning](#). Accessed at: <http://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/breakfastforlearning-1.pdf> February 20, 2018.

ⁱⁱ GenYouth Foundation and National Dairy Council. [The Wellness Impact](#). 2013. Accessed at <https://dairygood.org/content/2015/the-wellness-impact> February 20, 2018.