

# SCHOOL BREAKFAST MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Starting the day with a nutritious meal is proven to help students do better in the classroom and protect against long-term health issues. School breakfast makes it possible for all students to access this important meal and its benefits.

## SCHOOL BREAKFAST HELPS...

### Students Succeed

**Boost brainpower:** Eating breakfast at school is proven to help students' comprehension, learning and focus, helping them perform better on tests and in the classroom. It also provides long-lasting energy to help students fuel their morning.

**Improve classroom behavior:** Students are better able to pay attention and less likely to act out when they have a full belly. Principals confirm that they see fewer discipline problems when students eat school breakfast.

**Improve attendance:** Studies show that students who eat school breakfast are absent and tardy less often.

### Students Stay Healthy

**Start healthy habits:** Regularly eating school breakfast helps protect against obesity and other long-term health problems.

**Fewer nurse visits:** It can also stop hunger-related tummy aches and headaches, ensuring students feel better during school. Nurses report fewer hunger-related office visits when students eat school breakfast.



# YOU CAN HELP MORE STUDENTS EAT BREAKFAST

All school staff members have a hand in making school breakfast a success!  
Here's how you can be a school breakfast champion.

## All Staff

- Promote the breakfast program wherever you can: in the classroom, through parent communications, at meetings, during school announcements, or with posters/flyers throughout the school.
- Voice support for breakfast model changes, Breakfast After the Bell, or more time for school breakfast with administration and other staff members.
- Reduce stigma associated with school breakfast by encouraging all students to participate (and participating yourself!)

## Administrator

- Work with other staff members to prioritize nutritious and accessible school breakfast.
- Voice support to district administration and your school nutrition director about implementing breakfast model changes, Breakfast After the Bell, and universal free breakfast.
- Use breakfast as a way to build social emotional learning into the morning routine by scheduling time for students to eat together, socialize, and have a nurturing start to the day.

## School Nurse

- If you see students affected by hunger in the mornings, talk with your school administration about ways to expand access to school breakfast.
- Speak with students about how eating breakfast positively impacts their health.

## Custodial Staff

- Share your expertise with teachers and school nutrition staff to create a plan for collecting breakfast waste that works for everyone.

## Teachers

- Incorporate lessons about the importance of eating breakfast into the classroom.
- Allow and encourage students to eat breakfast in the classroom. This counts as time on learning!
- Build social emotional learning into the morning through breakfast—eating breakfast together in the classroom can be a great way to provide a nurturing and interactive start to the day.
- Give students breakfast tasks to build responsibility, such as clean up duties, or returning unused food to the cafeteria.

## Social Worker

- Give students and families information about school breakfast and let them know how to apply for free or reduced-price meals.
- If students and families that you work with are impacted by stigma associated with school breakfast, support efforts to expand access and create a school culture that champions school meals.
- For families experiencing food insecurity, Project Bread's FoodSource Hotline can help locate nearby resources.

## Nutrition Staff

- Ensure all students, families, and staff know when and where breakfast is available, the benefits of eating school breakfast, and who to approach with questions about the program.
- Look into new ways to increase participation, like menu changes, new breakfast models, taste-tests, and colorful signage, and offer to pilot new ideas at your school.

For additional assistance locating food resources, please contact  
Project Bread's FoodSource Hotline at **1-800-645-8333**.

For help building your breakfast program and for free resources:

**CALL**  
617-723-5000

**EMAIL**  
[cnop@projectbread.org](mailto:cnop@projectbread.org)

**VISIT**  
[meals4kids.org](http://meals4kids.org)

