



## **Making Breakfast Part of the School Day: New Options for School Breakfast**

Making breakfast a part of the school day dramatically increases participation by making it convenient and accessible to all, no matter how students arrive at school. For instance, it eliminates the barrier often caused by tight bus schedules. New service options include breakfast in the classroom, "grab and go" breakfast service from carts or kiosks set up in school hallways or cafeterias, and breakfast after first period in middle and high school students.

### **It Works Best When Breakfast is Free to All**

- Providing breakfast at no charge to all students, often called "universal", helps remove the stigma for low-income children of participation in school breakfast.
- Studies show that universal school breakfast programs increase student participation.
- Programs that provide breakfast in the classroom after school starts have the highest participation rates.

### **School Breakfast Improves Student Achievement, Diets and Behavior**

- Schools that provide breakfast in the classroom report decreases in discipline and psychological problems, visits to school nurses and tardiness; increases in student attentiveness and attendance; and generally improved learning environments.
- Children who eat breakfast at school - closer to class and test-taking time - perform better on standardized tests than those who skip breakfast or eat breakfast at home.
- Children who have school breakfast eat more fruit, drink more milk, and consume a wider variety of foods than those who don't eat breakfast or have breakfast at home.



## Breakfast During the School Day: Promising Practices

### Portland Public Schools: "Grab and Go" Classroom Breakfast Program

Portland has achieved an impressive success with expanding participation in school breakfast after implementing its "Grab and Go" classroom breakfast program. Students take their breakfasts (milk, juice and hot breakfast sandwich) from a portable cart in the hallway. Food service personnel then count the meals served. The program takes place in schools that provide breakfast at no charge, through Provision 2 of the National School Lunch Act.

In this program, students in grades K – 8 are offered "grab and go" breakfast as they enter the building just before or after the first bell. They take their breakfasts into the classroom and eat them during the first ten minutes of the day. Breakfast is distributed in high schools between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> periods; passing time between classes is extended by five minutes to allow for the time needed to grab the breakfast. Students eat during the first ten minutes of their 2<sup>nd</sup> period class. Classrooms have a supply of napkins, straws and paper placemats. Students dispose of the wrappings in classroom trash bags, which are placed in the hallway for pickup.



### Los Angeles Unified School District: Second Chance Breakfast

Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) implemented the "Second Chance Breakfast" program in all of its school sites to address barriers to student participation in the school breakfast program, such as before-school activities and late bus schedules. This program allows for a second breakfast service during morning recess or snack break, usually sometime between 9 and 10 a.m. Students who are not able to participate in the breakfast service before school starts are able to obtain a healthy morning meal during this period.

There are no changes to the usual before-school breakfast program, but some planning is required to ensure that an adequate number of meals are prepared and available for both service times. The second breakfast service is generally the same meal served during the earlier cafeteria breakfast. This program has proven to be an excellent strategy for making sure that every student has an opportunity to eat a healthy breakfast at school, and is particularly effective with adolescents who are less likely to eat breakfast before school. LAUSD phased this program into schools starting in the 2002-2003 school year and realized an immediate increase in breakfast participation of 11 percent from the previous year.



### Houston Independent School District: "First Class" Breakfast

Students at 20 Houston Independent School District (HISD) schools began getting "first-class" treatment in their classrooms in the fall of 2006, thanks to a new board-approved program offered by the district's Food Services Department. The "First Class Breakfast" program, designed specifically to improve student achievement, went into effect in September 2006, and gives students the option of having their morning meals brought to them at their desks every day rather than requiring them to go to the cafeteria to get it. The meals are free to all students, and the program was expanded to 35 schools in the spring of 2007.

"The idea is to make it as easy as possible for both the students and the teachers," said HISD Food Services Communications Director, Julie Spreckelmeyer. "This program is different from the Breakfast in the Classroom program, where teachers had to maintain a roster of the students and monitor who ate breakfast and who didn't. In First Class Breakfast, teachers don't have to do anything. Food Service attendants take care of it all. They bring in the food and set it up, then clean up all the trash afterwards."