

Breakfast — in the — Classroom

Frequently Asked Questions



How much time will Breakfast in the Classroom take out of the school day?



Breakfast in the Classroom usually only takes about 15 minutes and is often done during morning activities – such as announcements, turning in homework or individual reading time – so minimal instructional time is lost.



My school already provides traditional breakfast free of charge to all students. Why should we consider other breakfast models?



You've already made an incredible start! However, not all students may have equal access with traditional breakfast models. Challenges like bus and parent drop-off time, size or location of the cafeteria, and the stigma that can be associated with eating breakfast at school are all mitigated by offering breakfast to all students in a classroom setting. Plus, your participation will increase – on average, schools who implemented the Breakfast in the Classroom model increased participation by 30%.



What about trash and sanitation? Will teachers be responsible for cleanup?



Early planning with school nutrition and custodial staff can help ensure that Breakfast in the Classroom doesn't create extra work for anyone, especially the teachers. Strategies for trash and sanitation vary by school, but examples include:

- Serving foods that have low risk of spillage, especially for elementary schools.
- Providing each classroom with basic cleaning supplies and assigning students cleanup tasks – such as disposing of trash or wiping down desks – which teaches them responsibility and teamwork when performed in pairs.
- Placing breakfast waste in a separate trash can or bag to be placed in the hallway and collected promptly after breakfast by custodial staff.





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How can I get buy-in from my principal and district administrators?



A successful program depends on the full support of superintendents and principals. It helps to educate them on the academic, health and budgetary benefits of Breakfast in the Classroom, such as increased breakfast participation and increased learning time. When students have eaten breakfast, there are often fewer disruptions from tardiness, students misbehaving or requests to see the school nurse.

Example strategies

- Show school breakfast participation rates to your principal; they often are unaware of how few students participate in traditional school breakfast.
- Highlight the health and learning benefits of school breakfast participation, including improved nutritional intake and increased test scores.
- Show principals and administrators firsthand how alternative breakfast service models work by organizing a visit to a school that operates one of the alternative breakfast models.
- Ask superintendents to send a letter to principals in their district describing the value of alternative breakfast service models or incorporate a presentation about Breakfast in the Classroom into meetings or trainings.



How can I get buy-in from teachers?



Teachers can be powerful allies for convincing other stakeholders if you engage them early in the planning process; they see firsthand how Breakfast in the Classroom helps children start the day well-nourished and ready to learn. Many teachers will have concerns about trash and sanitation, food service and instructional time, but it helps to address those concerns head-on through training sessions and clear communication – assuring teachers that child nutrition will work cohesively with cafeteria staff and custodians to run the program with minimal extra work for teachers.

Example strategies

- Use in-service day trainings to educate teachers on both the benefits of and barriers to breakfast participation.
- Have teachers encourage students to participate in the program, not just in eating but also in serving and cleaning up afterwards.
- Provide training for teachers to ensure that students are receiving a full reimbursable meal and, if applicable, counting and claiming meals properly.
- Help teachers develop lessons that can be taught during the 10-15 minutes that students are eating, such as a lesson about the importance of proper nutrition, a math lesson using recipes or nutrition labels, or a science lesson about growing fruits and vegetables.