

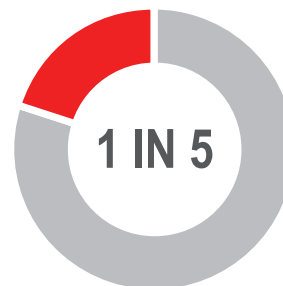
MAKING **breakfast** **BIG** *in TEXAS*

The Most Important Meal of the Day Just
Got Better for Texas Students & Schools

One in five children in Texas lives in a household that struggles with hunger

Twenty percent of our students may not know where their next meal is coming from. Studies show that children who eat breakfast have better behavior, higher grades, and improved attention spans.¹

It's true that nearly all school districts in Texas offer breakfast to their students, but many children who need breakfast miss out because of the time and location of meal service.



TEXAS
CHILDREN
AT RISK OF
**GOING
HUNGRY**²

Now, thanks to a new state law and creative approaches to school breakfast, the most important meal of the day just got better for students and schools. Beginning in the fall of 2014, high needs schools are required to offer a **free breakfast to every student every day of school.**³

TEXAS SCHOOLS WITH ROBUST BREAKFAST PROGRAMS SHOW:



**Better Class
Participation**



**Higher Student
Grades**



**Increased
Revenue**

SCHOOLS DECIDE HOW TO SERVE BREAKFAST

Using creative models, schools have the flexibility to design a breakfast program that works best for their students and staff, and increases revenue for the program. Since food reimbursements are based on the number of meals served, schools and districts—like the ones below—that maximize the number of students who have access to free breakfast, will benefit the most.

Corpus Christi: Soaring Participation & Revenues

Corpus Christi ISD piloted its breakfast in the classroom program in 16 elementary schools in 2008. Recognizing the pilot's success, the superintendent mandated universal breakfast for all CCISD elementary schools and has since seen **student participation increase from 27 percent to 87 percent**. The revenues created from this boost allowed the district to purchase higher quality breakfast foods and additional equipment to operate the program.

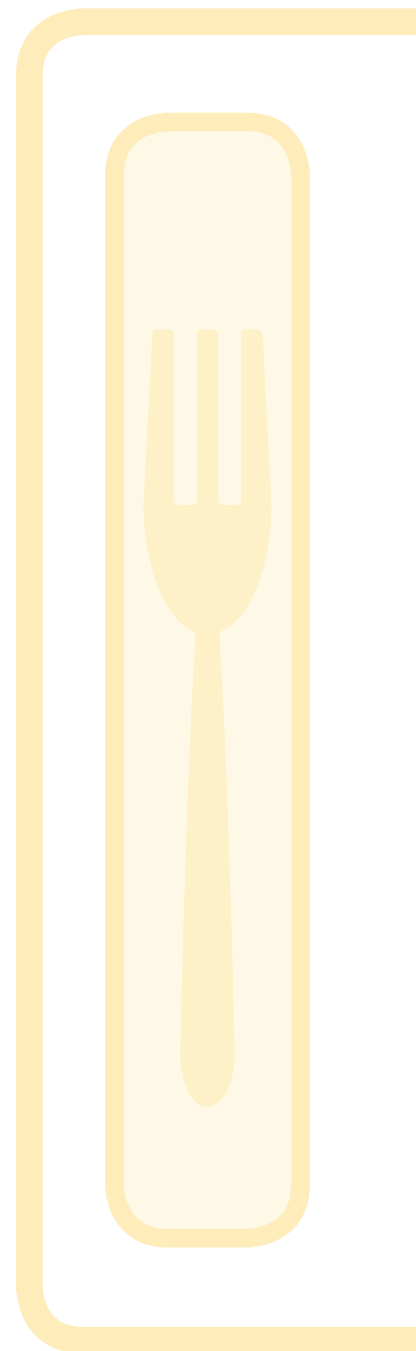
San Angelo: “Breakfast of Champions”

San Angelo ISD launched its breakfast in the classroom program, “Breakfast of Champions,” in 2010-2011. Student “breakfast managers”—**a sought-after volunteer role**—deliver meals to classrooms each morning. Teachers led the planning process for this program, which reached **78 percent student participation** in 2011.

Houston: “First Class Breakfast”

Houston ISD began its “First Class Breakfast” program in 2010. Thanks to active support from school board members, now **more than 80 percent of students in HISD are eating breakfast at school every morning**, up from 30 percent. A district study found that HISD students who eat school breakfast **scored higher on math and reading tests**.

More meals for kids = More money for schools



PROVEN MODELS FOR ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Breakfast in the Classroom

Prepackaged breakfasts are delivered to students' homerooms by cafeteria staff or student volunteers. Serving breakfast in the classroom means that children who want to eat breakfast aren't isolated in the cafeteria before school while other students play and socialize. Eating together in the classroom means no child feels singled out. Proven to be the single best way to encourage participation!

**MOST
EFFECTIVE
METHOD!**

Breakfast After the Bell or "Second Chance Breakfast"

Great for schools that prefer to keep food in the cafeteria, breakfast after the bell ensures that a child doesn't miss their chance to eat breakfast. Students report to the cafeteria after the beginning of the school day or during a mid-morning break to eat together as a class.

PROVEN MODELS FOR MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOLS

Vending Machines

A customizable vending machine allows students to obtain a fully reimbursable breakfast during or after first period by entering their PIN number. Students can choose from different options.

Grab and Go

A Grab and Go model allows students to pick up a prepackaged, portable breakfast meal in the cafeteria or another high traffic area on the way to class. Schools with point-of-sale terminals will find this model easy to implement.

BREAKFAST FOR ALL IS A WIN-WIN



Students

No child goes hungry and everyone eats together. All students have the opportunity to enjoy a healthy meal and be ready to learn without feeling self-conscious about being labeled “poor.”



Parents

Free breakfast for all students means parents who work in the morning or who are struggling to make ends meet don't have to worry that their child will go hungry until lunchtime.



Teachers

Starting with breakfast every morning improves focus in the classroom, student attendance, behavior, and learning. Many teachers have become champions for breakfast for all programs after witnessing the positive effects on their classrooms.⁴



Schools

Similar to providing textbooks and computers, schools that provide a healthy morning meal to all students prepare their students for learning and help to create a positive environment where every child can succeed.



School food service programs

Schools are reimbursed based on the number of meals served, so higher participation equals more money for the program. School districts in Texas that already offer free breakfast to all have experienced budget surpluses because more students are eating.

Sources

1. Food Research and Action Center. Breakfast for Learning: Scientific research on the link between children's nutrition and academic performance, Fall 2011. <http://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/breakfastforlearning.pdf>.
2. United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service. Household Food Security in the United States in 2012. Economic Research Report No. (ERR-155), September 2013. <http://www.ers.usda.gov/ersDownloadHandler.ashx?file=/media/1183208/err-155.pdf>.
3. SB 376 requires schools with 80 percent or more of students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals to offer a free breakfast to every student every day of school. <http://www.legis.state.tx.us/billlookup/Text.aspx?LegSess=83R&Bill=SB376>.
4. Share Our Strength, Hunger in Our Schools; Teachers Report 2013. http://www.nokidhungry.org/pdfs/NKH_TeachersReport_2013.pdf.

COMMON QUESTIONS

Which schools are affected by Texas' new breakfast law?

Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, the new law requires schools to offer a free breakfast to all if at least 80 percent of the students qualify for a free or reduced-price breakfast.

How is this better than our current school breakfast program?

Many existing school breakfast programs serve morning meals very early in the morning, and children who arrive close to the bell miss their chance to eat breakfast. Cumbersome paperwork sometimes discourages parents from enrolling their children in school meal programs. Using a creative model to provide a free breakfast to all students reduces these challenges.

Does breakfast in the classroom cut into instructional time?

No. Students consume breakfast quickly, and teachers gain time by having students settled down and focused when instruction begins. Some teachers incorporate educational activities like reading aloud, brain puzzles, or nutrition education into breakfast time, which takes less than 15 minutes.

How can our program increase revenue if all meals are served free?

The increased number of meals consumed usually brings schools enough federal reimbursements to offset any lost revenue. Extra funding allows schools to offer better quality foods such as fresh fruit and whole grains, invest in new equipment, or add staff.

Is breakfast in the classroom messy?

No. Food service staff provide garbage bags, paper towels, and other cleaning supplies when they deliver the morning meal to the classroom. Students are responsible for clearing away their trash, with student volunteers often returning the trash bags to the cafeteria or placing them outside the door.

If a child has already eaten at home, do they have to eat again at school?

No. While a school should make breakfast available to all students at no cost, they do not have to take a meal if they are not hungry.

How does our school get started?

Schools are encouraged to create an interdisciplinary School Breakfast Team that allows the superintendent, food service director, principals, teachers, students, parents, and custodians to be a part of the conversation.

RESOURCE LIBRARY

For active URLs, please visit ForABetterTexas.org/BreakfastForAll

Mini Grant Opportunities

Mini grants are available to help schools implement an alternative serving model for breakfast. Funds can be used to purchase items such as mobile carts, milk coolers, trays, trash receptacles, and marketing and promotional materials.

- [Dairy Dollars for Schools and Fuel Up To Play 60](#)
DairyMax.org

Implementation Resources

- [Assessing Your School Breakfast Potential](#)
United States Department of Agriculture
- [Improving Attendance, Health and Behavior: Moving Breakfast Out of the Cafeteria](#)
School Governance & Leadership: Winter 2013
- [Breakfast in the Classroom District Tools](#)
Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom, May 2013
- [Start School with Breakfast: A Guide to Increasing School Breakfast Participation](#)
National Education Association Health Information Network

Impact of School Breakfast

- [Breakfast for Learning](#)
Food Research Action Center, Fall 2011
- [Principals Share What Works: Start the School Day Ready to Learn with Breakfast in the Classroom](#)
National Association of Elementary School Principals & Food Research Action Center, November 2013
- [Hunger in Our Schools: Teachers Report](#)
Share Our Strength No Kid Hungry Campaign, 2013

The Community Eligibility Provision is a new federal option that allows schools with high poverty rates to offer breakfast and lunch free to all students while eliminating the need to collect meal applications. Schools in 15 other states using Community Eligibility have seen big increases in meal participation.

Learn More

- [A Guide to Implementing CEO](#)
- [Community Eligibility: Making High Needs Schools Hunger Free](#)

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and Food Research Action Center

The Center for Public Policy Priorities believes in a BETTER TEXAS, where economic and social opportunity is available in fair measure to all. We work on public policies to improve conditions for low-income Texans through independent research, policy analysis, public education, and advocacy.

Authored by Rachel Cooper and Jeanie Donovan.
For active URLs and more information, visit
ForABetterTexas.org/BreakfastForAll

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