



BREAKFAST

KEY TO

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

WHY ALL SCHOOLS SHOULD LAUNCH OR EXPAND BREAKFAST PROGRAMS: BOTTOM LINE...IT TAKES MORE THAN BOOKS FOR A CHILD TO LEARN

Every student needs to eat breakfast because a hungry child can't learn. Yet many children come to school without eating breakfast because: they don't have time; they aren't hungry when they wake up; their parents are too busy to prepare it; or they have a long bus ride to school. Those who do eat may choose low-nutrient foods that don't sustain energy levels throughout the morning. Many core subjects are taught in the morning, so why not make sure your students are fueled with the energy they need to perform better in school?

"The link between good nutrition and good education is clearly demonstrated by higher test scores, better attendance and fewer behavior problems in school."

— Dan Glickman, Former US Secretary of Agriculture

BENEFITS OF SCHOOL BREAKFAST

Principals/Superintendents benefit because:

- Attendance increases
- Test scores increase
- Discipline problems decrease

Teachers benefit because:

- Behavior improves
- Academic success improves
- Attention increases

Food Service Personnel benefit because:

- Participation increases
- USDA funds increase
- Nutritious foods are served

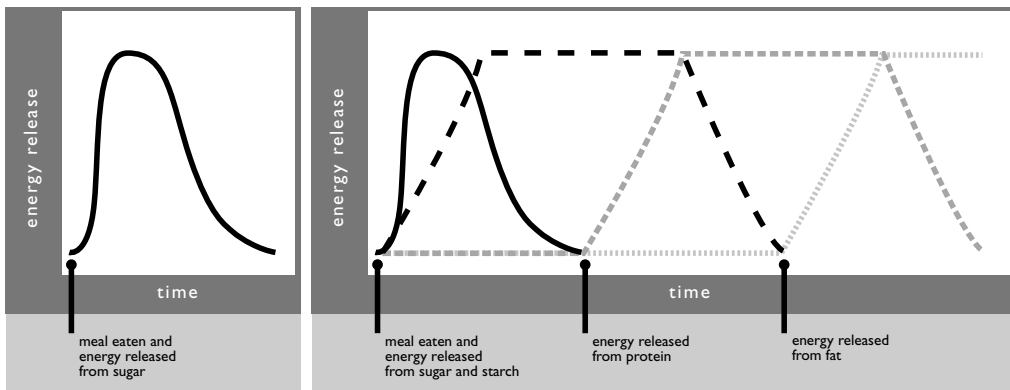
Parents benefit because:

- Mornings are easier
- Kids start the day ready to learn
- Concerns about breakfast skipping are relieved



WISE FOOD CHOICES ENHANCE LEARNING

Comparison of energy available for learning from two different breakfasts



Sugary foods, such as fruit, fruit juice, candy, or soda pop, eaten in place of a meal cause a quick rise in blood sugar and energy in children. About an hour later, blood sugar and energy decline rapidly, bringing on symptoms of hunger.

A typical school breakfast provides food from at least three Food Groups such as fruit or juice, bread or cereal, and milk. These foods contain sugar, starch, protein and fat that digest at different rates and keep blood sugar up so energy levels are sustained throughout the morning.

— sugar — starch — protein — fat

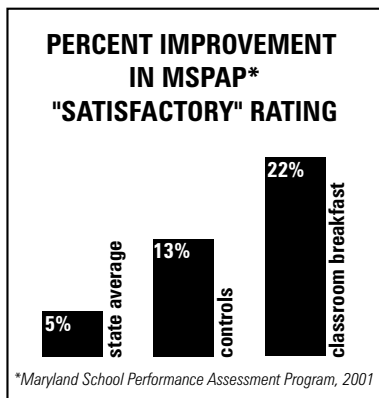
RESEARCH CONFIRMS THAT BREAKFAST EATERS:

- Have higher test scores, work faster, make fewer errors and are more creative
- Are less likely to be sent to the principal or visit the school nurse
- Are more able to concentrate on learning
- Are more cooperative and get along better with classmates
- Are healthier and have improved attendance



BREAKFAST PROGRAMS BOOST BRAIN POWER

Maryland Meals for Achievement breakfast pilot program offers classroom breakfast to all students. The program found tardiness declined 8 percent, suspensions decreased by 1.6 days per month, standardized test scores increased 17 percent over the state average and behavior improved.



By offering a nutritious breakfast to all students at little or no charge in more than 300 elementary schools, Minnesota's Fast Break to Learning school breakfast program helped prepare more than 40,000 children for a full morning of learning. The results from this breakfast program further support the link between making school breakfast available, students' readiness to learn and academic achievement.

BREAKFAST SUCCESS STORIES

Colorado's Jill Kidd, Director of Nutrition Services in Pueblo School District No. 60, implemented a Provision 2 universal classroom breakfast program that provides free breakfast to all children in qualified schools. Participation rose from 15 percent to 99 percent in those schools. Kidd experienced financial benefits from the increased participation and now offers free lunch in qualified schools with the profits from breakfast reimbursement. The district also experienced significant increases in test scores and reading proficiency.

Gail Wilkerson, School Food Service Manager in Pinedale, Wyoming, provides morning milk breaks. Students anticipate the break because they're ready for a snack. Teachers find the students more attentive and better behaved.

EXPANDING BREAKFAST

Consider implementing these alternative breakfast service options and reap the positive results of better learning, enhanced nutrition and improved participation.

- **Breakfast in the classroom** — food is delivered to each classroom and is often combined with attendance-taking and announcements; participation can reach as high as 98 percent of enrollment
- **Breakfast after 1st period** — food is served mid-morning either in the classroom or cafeteria; participation can increase to 50 percent or more of enrollment
- **Grab 'n' Go** — bagged food is served from a variety of locations throughout the morning; participation can increase when offered in addition to traditional cafeteria service

To learn more about alternative breakfast service options, check out the *Expanding Breakfast Manual* and *Video Kit*. It is available from the American School Food Service Association by calling (800) 728-0728 or via: www.asfsa.org/marketplace.

GOING A STEP FURTHER

Some districts may take their breakfast and lunch programs a step further and apply for USDA's Provision 2 option. Schools with a high percentage of participation of free- and reduced-price meals would benefit the most. Contact your state department of education for assistance.



RESOURCES:

- *Maryland Meals for Achievement Classroom Breakfast Pilot Program, December 2001*, Maryland State Department of Education; 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201; (410) 767-0199
- *Minnesota School Breakfast Programs: Energizing the Classroom 1994-1997 & Fast Break to Learning 1999-2000 Executive Summary*, Minnesota Department of Children, Families & Learning; 1500 Highway 36 West, Roseville, MN 55113; (651) 582-8526
- *Western Dairy Council*; 12000 N. Washington, #200; Thornton, CO 80241; (303) 451-7711