

BREAKFAST AFTER THE BELL



A TOOLKIT FOR SCHOOLS

Under Maine law, a school administrative unit with a public school in which at least 50% of students qualified for a free or reduced-price school meal during the preceding school year is required to serve breakfast after the start of the school day and qualifies for state funding.

Learn more at:

<https://www.maine.gov/doe/schools/nutrition/programs/breakfast>

Any school not eligible for state funding to support breakfast after the bell is encouraged to apply for a Full Plates Breakfast Grant.

Learn more at:

<https://www.fullplates.org/grants/school-breakfast-grant-program/>

BREAKFAST AFTER THE BELL

Parents



WHAT?

School Nutrition Programs must follow strict nutritional guidelines when preparing breakfast and lunch for your children. They also work very hard to serve food that kids like.



WHEN?

The nutrition staff, the teachers, and the principal will decide what works best for kids to choose their breakfast. They will then start their school day, after the morning bell, eating at their desk while the teacher starts the day.

1

WHY?

Children are ready to learn if their bodies are nourished with a healthy breakfast to start their school day.



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WHERE?

"Breakfast After the Bell" aims to let all kids eat their breakfast right at their desk in their classroom with all their classmates and their teacher.

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WHO?

Breakfast is provided for ALL students!

BREAKFAST AFTER THE BELL

Parents

WHY?

Whether your family has a tight budget, are too busy in the morning, or your child has a poor appetite in the morning, not all children receive the energy and nutrients to get a healthy start to the school day. Many studies have shown that students who eat a healthy breakfast have improved academic outcomes and attendance, have decreased school nurse visits, and fewer behavior disruptions. We all want the best for our kids. Breakfast after the bell will allow students to socialize with their friends before the bell rings and to avoid the stigma of eating breakfast in the cafeteria before school starts.

WHAT?

It's important to your school Nutrition Program that children are offered foods that are healthy and taste great. While there are strict nutritional guidelines that must be followed by all schools, there are also many breakfast foods that meet these guidelines that kids love. They include varieties of cereal, juices, fruits, muffins, eggs, pancakes, yogurt, breakfast bars, and lots more. A study of Breakfast in the Classroom was not associated with an increase in calorie intake at breakfast time or throughout the day. (*) Rather, kids that eat breakfast at school are more likely to consume diets that are adequate or exceed standards for important vitamins and minerals, and have better overall diet quality than those who eat breakfast elsewhere or skip breakfast. (*) There will likely be a breakfast menu for you to look at with your children.

WHERE?

Students often miss out on the morning meal at school because of being dropped off too late, not knowing about school breakfast, or choosing not to eat in the cafeteria when other kids are socializing. Breakfast after the Bell is a solution to this. Your school's Nutrition Program, teachers, and principal will work together to find the best way to get breakfast to the classroom so all kids can eat together in their classroom, with their teacher, to start their school day. Breakfast will be a part of the school day!

WHEN?

While there are different school breakfast models that each school will look at, the meal will be enjoyed after the start of school, and as part of the school day.

WHO?

The National School Breakfast Program is a federal school nutrition program, just like school lunch. All students can participate in the breakfasts that schools serve. Meals are made affordable for all students through subsidies and reimbursements provided by the federal government. If a child gets free or reduced meals they will get free breakfast. If a child pays full price for meals they will pay full price (usually around \$1.75) for breakfast which will come out of their school meal account. Students will either enter their PIN like they do at lunch, or be checked off. Typically no money passes at breakfast except perhaps at the high school level and there is no outward identification of who is free, reduced or paid. This is why it is so important to fill out the Meal Application that your children bring home at the beginning of the school year. They are also available at any time during the school year. Help us do everything we can to assure healthy meals for kids when they are at school.

HOW CAN I HELP?

- Go over the monthly breakfast menu with the kids. Talk about the menu items and help them make their choices.
- Talk about the importance of good nutrition and how it can help them do well in school.
- Be sure to submit an application to receive free and reduced meals at the beginning of the school year.

TESTIMONIAL

“Personally, this has been a Godsend to my family and others like us. I also don’t have to worry about making sure Liam gets to school early in order to take advantage of him eating breakfast at school. Most importantly, having breakfast in the classroom has ensured that my son and other students receive the nutritious food they need to grow and develop.”

--Heather, Parent from Portland

For more information and assistance with your program contact:

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