



Classroom Breakfast Basics: Serving Classroom Breakfast and Meeting Instructional Minute Requirements

In July 2010, California Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell & State Controller John Chiang confirmed that time spent eating & serving Classroom Breakfast can count towards instructional minutes.

By law, school districts must provide a set amount of "instructional time" for students. Instructional time is defined as classroom learning time plus explicitly permitted "non-instructional" activities, including certain administrative activities like taking roll. Teachers in schools with successful Classroom Breakfast programs generally perform these administrative activities or start the day's lesson as students are eating their breakfast. From service to clean up, Classroom Breakfast usually takes in 10-15 minutes.

Issues to Consider

Do students go to and stay in the same classroom every morning?

Classroom Breakfast is an especially good match for elementary schools as students consistently go to and stay in the same classroom each day. This format allows Classroom Breakfast to coincide with each morning's administrative activities and first lesson.

Do you have support from teachers, parents, staff, and administrators?

As the saying goes, where there's a will, there's a way. With support from key stakeholders, including teachers, parents, staff, and administrators, Classroom Breakfast is successful in schools throughout the state and nation.

Myths & Facts

Myth: Classroom Breakfast will not be counted as "instructional time" by the auditor.

Fact: While administrative activities "count" as instructional time and can therefore be paired with Classroom Breakfast, some districts that operate Classroom Breakfast make sure their teachers are providing instruction during the 10 minutes that students are eating. The instruction can focus on the regular curriculum or incorporate a nutrition education lesson. For example, instruction during Classroom Breakfast can include a health lesson about the importance of eating fruits and vegetables, a math lesson about the number of nutrients in the meal, or a geography lesson about where the meal was grown.

Myth: Teachers have to work "off contract" in order to make Classroom Breakfast a success.

Fact: Teachers are paid on the basis of instructional days and minutes. If instruction is provided during Classroom Breakfast, this time does count as allowable teaching time. In some districts, teacher contracts include rotating supervisory responsibilities at breakfast or lunch in the cafeteria. It may be possible to connect this practice to Classroom Breakfast.

Myth: Classroom Breakfast takes up too much time in this API-focused era.

Fact: Classroom Breakfast takes up little time. In the 10 to 15 minutes that children use to eat Classroom Breakfast, teachers can take roll, make announcements, collect homework, check in with students, read aloud, or begin the morning lesson. In fact, teachers who use Classroom Breakfast frequently assert that their students' productivity increases dramatically throughout the day, since time isn't lost to behavior problems or illnesses caused by hunger. Hungry children cannot reach their full potential; well-nourished children can make the most of each day.

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