



Classroom Breakfast Basics

How Does Classroom Breakfast Work?

Classroom Breakfast dramatically increases school breakfast participation, often to nearly 100% of students. Typically, school food services staff pack meals into insulated containers for each classroom. Designated students bring the containers to their classrooms just before the first bell. Students distribute meals to their classmates and everyone eats as the school day begins. Breakfast is served, eaten, and cleared within 10-15 minutes. When breakfast is over, students dispose of their trash and move garbage cans outside of the classroom for custodial staff to empty.

Is Classroom Breakfast right for your school? Consider these issues:

The income-level of your student population - Schools that use Provision 2 most easily adopt Classroom Breakfast. Generally, Provision 2 schools have at least 80% of students who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Provision 2 schools are well suited for Classroom Breakfast because after the Provision 2 base year, all students eat free of charge. However, higher-income schools can successfully operate Classroom Breakfast programs. These schools can, for example, have students who receive full- and reduced-price meals pay in advance for breakfast.

Buy-in from teachers, principals, food services, school board members, custodians, and parents - These stakeholders are important to the success of Classroom Breakfast. To increase buy-in, emphasize the benefits of school breakfast – better health, increased academic achievement, improved behavior, reduced absenteeism and tardiness, and additional federal meal reimbursements. Highlight the successes experienced by districts in California (and nationwide) that have implemented Classroom Breakfast. Arranging Classroom Breakfast tours can be very effective. Seeing is believing!

Your students' schedules - Classroom Breakfast generally, but not exclusively, works best in schools where students are with the same teacher each morning. Older students, who may not be hungry first thing in the morning or who don't have a consistent "homeroom," may not be a good match for Classroom Breakfast. Second Chance or Grab-N-Go Breakfast may be a better model for mainstream secondary schools.

Myths & Facts

Myth: *Classroom Breakfast disrupts the school day.*

Facts: Once operational, Classroom Breakfast typically runs smoothly with minimal disruption. Teachers are able to conduct lessons or complete administrative activities during Classroom Breakfast. State Superintendent Jack O'Connell and State Controller John Chiang recently confirmed that time spent serving and eating Classroom Breakfast can count toward instructional minutes for audit purposes.

Myth: *Teachers and custodians oppose Classroom Breakfast.*

Facts: Many teachers and custodians have successfully partnered with school food services to implement Classroom Breakfast programs that meet the needs of faculty, staff, and students. Custodians appreciate not having to clean the cafeteria after breakfast before preparing for lunch. Teachers appreciate that all of their students are well nourished and ready to learn.

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