

# Surefire Strategies for Improving School Breakfast Programs

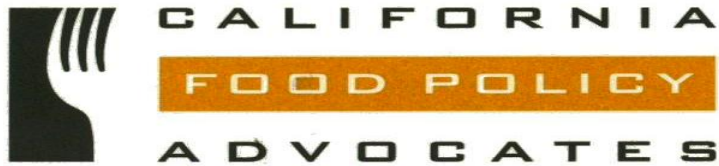
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The BreakfastFirst Campaign  
Healthy Food for Hungry Minds

CA School Nutrition Association Conference  
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  - **Robert Shram**, Campus Catering Director, Clovis Unified (Second Chance, Grab 'N Go Breakfast Models)  
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- Three-year initiative to strengthen school breakfast
  - California Food Policy Advocates (CFPA) coordinates
- Goals
  - Improve access, participation, and nutrition quality through effective school breakfast models
- Sponsors and Partners
  - CSNA , CDE, CSBA, ACSA, CA PTA, CSNO, CTA, USDA-WRO, CAFHK, Junior League, California ProjectLEAN



[www.BreakfastFirst.org](http://www.BreakfastFirst.org)



# Hungry Minds

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## High Need, Low Participation in CA

- **2.3 million** F/RP-eligible students **(70%)** do not participate in the School Breakfast Program.
- **56%** of F/RP-eligible students who benefit from school lunches **miss out** on the benefits of school breakfast.



# Lost Dollars

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## Statewide

**IF** school breakfast participation equaled school lunch participation among low-income students

**THEN** California's public schools would receive an additional **\$350 million** in federal meal reimbursements and **additional** state meal reimbursement dollars

# School Breakfast Benefits

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## The School Breakfast Trifecta



Nutrition &  
Health (Obesity  
Prevention)



Academic  
Achievement



District  
Funding

# School Breakfast Benefits

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## Nutrition & Health

- **School breakfast is often healthier than breakfast from home**
  - Less sugar, more fruit, more milk
- **School breakfast participants**
  - Healthier body weight and BMI
  - Healthier overall diets (vitamins, micronutrients)

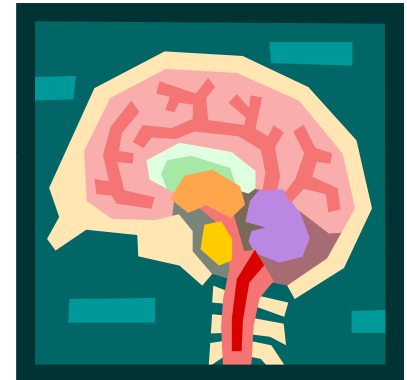


# School Breakfast Benefits

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## Academic Achievement *Breakfast & Brain Power*

- Higher API scores
- Improved math & reading grades
- Improved cognitive performance
- Better visual perception, spatial memory, short-term memory



For complete references see the *Benefits of Breakfast: Health and Academics* fact sheet @ [www.BreakfastFirst.org](http://www.BreakfastFirst.org)



# School Breakfast Benefits

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## *Breakfast & Learning Environment*

- Decreased tardiness and absenteeism
- Decreased disciplinary problems
- Less visits to school nurses
- Increased motivation
- Improved peer-to-peer interactions



For complete references see *Benefits of Breakfast: Health and Academics* fact sheet @ [www.BreakfastFirst.org](http://www.BreakfastFirst.org)

# Fiscal Benefits of School Breakfast

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Increase participation, decrease absenteeism, and reduce tardiness with effective models



- Maximize federal and state meal reimbursements
- Increase ADA-related funding
- Increase “indirect” dollars into the General Fund



Support district budgets and robust nutrition programs

# Local Data

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## Anonymous District in California

- **56% of students** who ate F/RP school lunch did not eat school breakfast
- **\$5.5 million** in missed federal plus additional “lost” state meal reimbursements
- **\$248,000** in missed indirect funds  
*(based on 4.44% cost rate for meal revenues)*



# Current Reality

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The majority of schools that offer breakfast only do so at one time and in one place . . .



.... in the cafeteria before the school day begins.

# Current Reality

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- School breakfast works best if served when and where students are able to eat.
- Efficient, fiscally-sound service models are known to dramatically increase school breakfast participation.



# Meeting Food Services' Challenges

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- **Start-up funding**
  - State breakfast grants
  - Title I \$\$
  - Education Technology Plan/Funding
- **Professional development needs**
- **Nutritional quality and appeal**
- **Other Support to Districts & Partnerships**

# North Monterey County Unified School District

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- Enrollment = 4,495
- 4 Elementary Schools, 1 Middle School, 1 High School, 1 Continuation High School
- Breakfast is offered at all sites
- 76% Free & Reduced District -Wide
- Universally Free Classroom Breakfast offered at all Elementary Schools since August 2005



# Classroom Breakfast in All Elementary Schools

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- *Prior to Classroom Breakfast*, school breakfast participation was 24% district-wide
- Current school breakfast participation is **73.5%**
- 176% – 450% increase in breakfast participation per elementary school site

## \$ Dollars \$

- **255% Increase** in Federal Reimbursements



# Classroom Breakfast

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## Equipment

- Wagons for delivery
- Insulated bags for transporting food



## Funds for Start Up Costs

- CDE's Breakfast Start Up & Expansion Grants
- Private sponsors (e.g. Rotary Clubs, Dairy Council)
- Fundraising (e.g. PTA)
- *Start-up costs are typically recouped through higher participation and increased revenue.*

# Classroom Breakfast Sample Menu



| Monday   | Tuesday  | Wednesday   | Thursday   | Friday   |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| Whole Grain Cereal<br>Whole Grain Crackers<br>Fresh Fruit<br>1% Low Fat Milk | Whole Wheat Banana Muffin<br>String Cheese<br>100% Orange Juice<br>1% Low Fat Milk | Low Fat Yogurt<br>Granola<br>Fresh Fruit<br>1% Low Fat Milk | Whole Wheat Bagel<br>Cream Cheese<br>100% Apple Juice<br>1% Low Fat Milk | Smucker's Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwich<br>Fresh Fruit<br>1% Low Fat Milk |

# Classroom Breakfast

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## Benefits:

- ❖ All students offered a nourishing morning meal
- ❖ Students are more attentive to learning
- ❖ Appreciative Parents and Teachers

## Challenges:

- ❖ Classroom/Desk Sanitation
- ❖ Custodial Duties

***Is it worth the effort? Yes!!!!***

# Second Chance Breakfast

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- Offered during recess or mid-morning brunch/nutrition break
- Effectively serves students who aren't hungry early in the morning or aren't able to eat before school begins
- Increases participation, bringing the benefits of breakfast to more students (and financial benefits to the district)



# Grab n' Go

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- Meals are bagged or items are laid out on carts
- Bags /carts are located in high traffic areas
- Students are processed quickly as they walk by (PINs, swipe cards, or tickets)
- Students eat on the way to class
- Effective for schools with limited cafeteria seating capacity
- Works before school , on the bus, or during passing periods/breaks

# Central Unified School District

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- District enrollment = 14,500
- 13 Elementary schools, 2 junior highs, 2 high schools, 2 continuation high schools
- 64% Free & Reduced District-Wide
- Prior breakfast model: in the cafeteria, before school = low participation, mostly F/RP kids
- Vision: make it universally free & take the food to the students

# Universally Free Grab 'N Go

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- In Central Unified: since 2009 – 2010 SY
- Carts at the entrances of every school
- Widespread promotion campaign
- Shifted labor hours, only needed to add two labor hrs. district-wide
- Start up costs – covered by CDE-NS breakfast grant (milk chests, freezers, carts, signage)
- Participation increased at every school

# Some of the Benefits Experienced

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- **High school participation has soared:**
  - Before: 155 breakfasts served per day
  - Now: 830 – 1,000+ breakfasts served per day
- **\$454,000 increase** in federal reimbursements
- **10 of 13 elementary schools and both junior high schools saw double-digit growth in API scores**
- Significant decrease in nurse visits
- Principals really like the welcoming environment
- Parents appreciate the program

# Dealing with Challenges

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- Students can eat in various places
- Trash could be a problem
- Central Unified: Local vender provided free barrels  
Maintenance Dept. cut off the tops  
Placed barrels in more areas of campus
- Lessons learned:  
engage campus partners early  
anticipate problems & have a plan
- *Debi Pollock, Central Unified's recently retired food services director, is available at [mimifulltime@hotmail.com](mailto:mimifulltime@hotmail.com) to answer questions regarding Central Unified's "universally free" Grab 'N Go breakfast program*

# Tools You Can Use

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[www.BreakfastFirst.org](http://www.BreakfastFirst.org)

- **Breakfast data** for your district
- **Fact sheets**
- **Research** on the benefits of breakfast
- **Best practices** for effective programs
- Links to **resources** from CDE and others
- **Funding** opportunities
- Breakfast **video links**

# Upcoming *BreakfastFirst* Webinar Series

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- **Six modules, 1 hr. each:** experienced panel, power points and resource guides
- **Every other Wednesday, 1:30 – 2:30 pm PST, starting 2/16/11**
- **Topics:** SPB Basics: Classroom Breakfast: Second Chance, Grab 'N Go; Nutritious/Appealing/Affordable; Promotion & Sustainability; School Board/Administrative Policy Support

[For more information or to register, go to:](#)

[www.breakfastfirst.org](http://www.breakfastfirst.org) or

<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/383083464>

# ***Next Steps for CSNA members:***

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- **Engage other stakeholders** in efforts to improve breakfast access, participation, and nutritional quality
- **Develop school breakfast solutions** with district & community stakeholders:

Superintendent

School Board

District Financial Officer

School Nurses

Food Services personnel

Nutrition Advocates

Parent Associations

Custodians

Teachers

# Questions?



# Everybody Eats, Breakfast For Learning

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<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sKQAYb1gWgw>

# Thank You!

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