

FRAC FACTS

The School Breakfast Program

The School Breakfast Program makes it possible for all school children in the United States to receive a nutritious breakfast every school day. The benefits of this program are many: decreased food insecurity; a lower probability of overweight and obesity; improved student behavior; fewer school absences and visits to the school nurse; and decreased emotional and behavioral problems. Since launching its national campaign, FRAC has tracked and supported efforts to improve participation. Today, more children are eating school breakfast and more schools are offering the program.



SCHOOL BREAKFAST TODAY

- 13.2 million children participated in the program on a typical day during the 2012 – 2013 school year.
- 10.8 million of these children received a free or reduced-price breakfast.
- 88,380 schools operated a school breakfast program.
- 90 percent of schools serving lunch also served breakfast.
- For every 100 children receiving free and reduced price lunch, 51.9 received free and reduced-price breakfast.
- The ratio varied in states from 34.3 per 100 to 70.0 per 100.
- The federal expenditures for fiscal year 2013 for the School Breakfast Program were \$3.5 billion.

BREAKFAST IMPROVES STUDENTS' HEALTH AND ABILITY TO LEARN

- Reimbursable meals must meet federal nutrition standards. National School Lunch Program lunches provide one third or more of the recommended levels for key nutrients.
- Reimbursable meals must provide no more than 30 percent of calories from fat and less than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat.
- USDA research indicates that children who participate in the National School Lunch Program have superior nutritional intakes compared to those who bring lunch from home or otherwise do not participate.

BREAKFAST HELPS STRUGGLING FAMILIES

- More than one in six Americans said in 2012 that there had been times over the past 12 months that they didn't have enough money to buy food that they or their families needed.
- One in five children lived in poverty in 2011, continuing to be one of the poorest age groups.
- Less than half of low-income children who eat school lunch also eat school breakfast.

SCHOOLS ARE FINDING SUCCESS WITH BREAKFAST IN THE CLASSROOM

- Making breakfast a part of the school day by moving breakfast service out of the cafeteria – serving it in the classroom, from “grab and go” carts, or other options – dramatically increases participation by making it convenient and accessible to all.
- Programs that offer free breakfast to all children, regardless of income, during the first part of the school day also see dramatic increases in school breakfast participation.

HOW IT WORKS

- The United States Department of Agriculture, through its Food and Nutrition Service, administers the School Breakfast Program at the federal level. At the state level the program typically is administered by state education agencies, which operate the program through agreements with school food authorities.
- The School Breakfast Program provides per meal cash reimbursements from the federal government to public and nonprofit private schools and residential childcare institutions.
- For the 2012-2013 school year, schools are reimbursed by the federal government \$1.55 per free breakfast served, \$1.25 per reduced priced breakfast, and \$0.27 per “paid” breakfast. Free students must not be charged any amount and reduced price students must not be charged more than 30 cents for breakfast.
- Schools where at least 40 percent of the lunches served are free or reduced price qualify for extra “severe need” reimbursements of \$0.30 per free or reduced price breakfast served.
- The federal expenditures for fiscal year 2012 for the School Breakfast Program were \$3.27 billion.

FRAC RESOURCES

- FRAC's School Breakfast Map: Want to see what breakfast looks like in your state? View our interactive map highlighting program participation and grant funding data.
- Expanding School Breakfast Participation: Learn more about school breakfast, ways to improve participation, and outreach strategies.
- School Breakfast Scorecard: See the nation and your state's performance in FRAC's annual report on school breakfast participation.
- School Breakfast: Making it Work in Large School Districts: Learn about successful strategies to improve participation.
- Breakfast for Learning and Breakfast for Health: Share these summaries of research on the benefits of school breakfast for education and health.
- Start the Day Ready to Learn with Breakfast in the Classroom: Principals Share What Works: Find out from principals how moving breakfast into the classroom is having a positive effect on classroom and school environments around the country.