FRAC
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The Reach of School Breakfast and Lunch
During the 2021–2022 School Year

MARCH 2023 | WWW.FRAC.ORG

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Acknowledgments

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This report was written by FRAC's Clarissa Hayes and Crystal FitzSimons. The findings and conclusions presented in this report are those of FRAC alone.

About FRAC

The Food Research & Action Center improves the nutrition, health, and well-being of people struggling against poverty-related hunger in the United States through advocacy, partnerships, and by advancing bold and equitable policy solutions. For more information about FRAC, or to sign up for FRAC's e-newsletters, go to www.frac.org.

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Breakfast and Lunch Participation 2021–2022

JUST OVER 15.5 million

children received a breakfast on an average day during the 2021–2022 school year — an increase of nearly **1.6 million** children (11.2 percent).

JUST OVER 29.9 million

children received a lunch on an average day during the 2021–2022 school year — an increase of **10.1 million** (51.1 percent).

ALMOST 2.4 billion

breakfasts were served through SSO and SBP combined, an increase of **237.8 million** meals.

JUST OVER 4.5 billion

lunches were served through SSO and NSLP combined, an increase of **1.5 billion** meals.

Executive Summary

The 2021–2022 school year marked the return for nearly all students to in-person learning after schools across the country had moved to virtual and hybrid learning models in response to the pandemic. As students transitioned back, the nutritious breakfasts and lunches served during the school day continued to be a critical support for millions of families. This reliable source of nutrition was especially important at a time when food insecurity rates remained high, and inflation was at historic levels, even as the height of the COVID-19 pandemic passed.[1]

An extension of the nationwide waivers issued in response to the pandemic allowed schools to serve meals to all students at no charge through the Seamless Summer Option (SSO), while receiving the higher Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) reimbursement for each meal served. This gave students access to much-needed school breakfasts and lunches to help ensure that they were in class well-nourished and ready to learn. It also significantly reduced the administrative burden on school nutrition departments, eliminated school meal debt, and better supported school nutrition departments in the face of rising food costs and ongoing supply chain disruptions.

With most children back in school, this combination of providing meals at no cost to all students (Healthy School Meals for All), alongside investments to combat increased costs and supply chain shortages, and expanded flexibilities in the event of school closures or students quarantining due to COVID-19, resulted in more children receiving a school breakfast and lunch when compared to the previous year.

KEY FINDINGS

- Just over 15.5 million children received a breakfast, and 29.9 million children received a lunch on an average day during the 2021–2022 school year — an increase of nearly 1.6 million children (11.2 percent) in breakfast, and 10.1 million (51.1 percent) in lunch when compared to the 2020–2021 school year.
- During the 2021–2022 school year, almost 2.4 billion breakfasts were served through SSO and School Breakfast Program (SBP) combined, an increase of 237.8 million meals when compared to the 2020–2021 school year.
- Lunch saw an even more dramatic increase: During the 2021–2022 school year, just over 4.5 billion lunches were served through SSO and National School Lunch Program (NSLP) combined, an increase of 1.5 billion meals when compared to the 2020–2021 school year.
- Breakfast and lunch participation in 2021–2022 was slightly higher than that of pre-pandemic levels. Just over 867,000 additional children participated in breakfast when compared to 2018–2019 (the last full year before the pandemic), and 1.4 million additional children participated in school lunch.

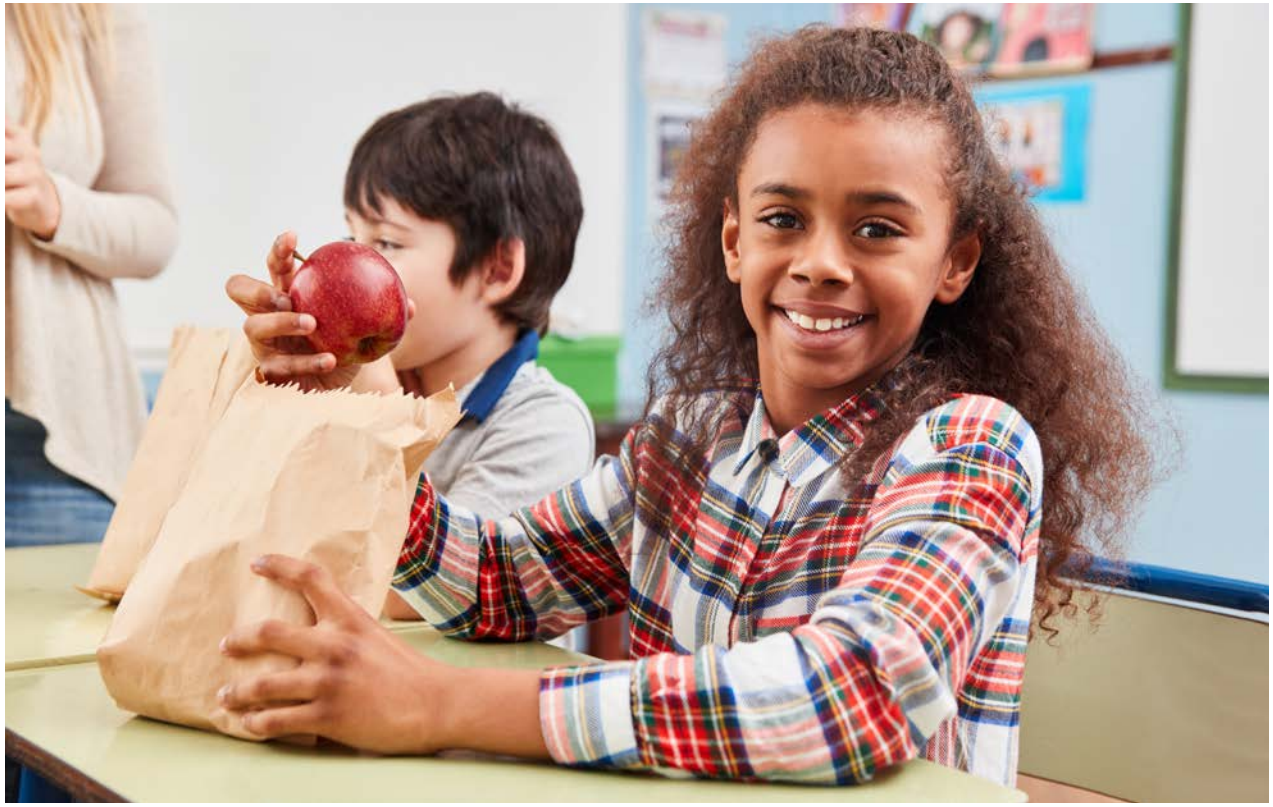
This dramatic growth in participation shows just what is possible when meals are available to all students at no cost, and students are back in school. Despite a strong call for the nationwide waivers to be extended through the 2022–2023 school year, as well as public support for Healthy School Meals for All, the option to provide meals at no charge to all students has expired, forcing schools to return to the tiered system of certifying children for free, reduced-price, or paid meals. The result of this decision is already being seen across the country: preliminary data show that fewer lunches and breakfasts were served in October and November 2022 when compared to the same months in 2021.

Fortunately, states are stepping up to fill the gap left on the federal level. Realizing the positive impact providing meals at no cost had on their students and their families, states are advocating and advancing legislation to cover the cost of school meals for all children that want to participate, regardless of their eligibility status. California, Maine,

1 Food Research & Action Center. Food Insufficiency During COVID-19 (webpage). Available at: https://frac.org/foodinsufficiencycovid19. Accessed on February 3, 2023.

and Colorado have all passed legislation making Healthy School Meals for All a permanent reality in their states, and many others are not far behind. The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) provides another pathway to free school meals for high-need schools. The combination of state efforts and CEP offers an opportunity to ensure that all students can experience the education and health benefits linked to participation in school meals, in lieu of much-needed Congressional action to support children's nutritional needs in all states.

As anti-hunger and education champions advocate on the federal and state levels to make Healthy School Meals for All the new normal, school nutrition departments will need ongoing support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and policymakers to overcome the financial and operational challenges they continue to face. Proven best practices for increasing participation — such as implementing innovative breakfast models, increasing the length of the lunch period, and serving high-quality, appealing meals — remain at the forefront of efforts to maintain the momentum from the 2021–2022 school year moving forward.



About This Report

This report measures the reach of breakfast and lunch in the 2021–2022 school year from September through May — nationally and in each state — based on a variety of metrics and examines the impact of select trends and policies on program participation.

In response to the pandemic, the USDA issued waivers that allowed schools to serve meals to all students at no charge through the SFSP or the SSO available through the National School Lunch Program during the 2019–2020 school year beginning in March 2020 and for the entirety of the 2020–2021 school year. During the 2021–2022 school year, schools had the option to serve free meals to all students through SSO, but still received the higher SFSP reimbursement for the meals served. Ninety percent of school districts utilized this option in the 2021–2022 school year.[2] To accurately reflect access to breakfasts and lunches during these school years, the report includes participation in SFSP and SSO in addition to participation in the regular school year SBP and NSLP.

Meals served through the SFSP and SSO waivers in the 2020–2021 and 2021–2022 school years were provided at no charge to all children and were counted as "free meals" in the report. To account for this change, the report focuses primarily on total breakfast and lunch participation.

Finally, the Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) sets an ambitious but achievable goal of reaching 70 students with breakfast for every 100 participating in school lunch, and calculates the number of children not being served and the federal dollars lost in each state as a result of not meeting this goal.

2 U.S Department of Agriculture. (2022.) Results of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service-Administered School Food Authority Survey on Supply Chain Disruptions. Available at: https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/FNS-Survey-Supply-Chain-Disruptions.pdf. Accessed on March 3, 2023.

How School Nutrition Programs Worked During the 2021–2022 School Year

How Could Breakfasts and Lunches Be Served?

Any public school, nonprofit private school, or residential child care institution can participate in the SBP and NSLP and receive federal funds for each breakfast and lunch served. Additionally, for the 2021–2022 school year, these entities could operate the SSO to serve breakfasts and lunches in place of the regular school year SBP and NSLP. These programs are administered at the federal level by the USDA and in each state by a state child nutrition agency, typically located in the state department of education or agriculture.

Who Could Receive Breakfast and Lunch?

Any student attending a school that participated in the NSLP or SBP during the 2021–2022 school year could eat breakfast and lunch like any other year. Schools that participated in SSO during the 2021–2022 school year offered free meals to all children, regardless of family income and specific school enrollment.

For schools that did not participate in SSO and instead chose to operate under the school year rules for NSLP or SBP, what the federal government covered, and what a student paid, depended on family income.

- Children from families with incomes at or below 130 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) are eligible for free school meals.
- Children from families with incomes between 130 to 185 percent of the FPL qualify for reduced-price meals and can be charged no more than $0.30 per breakfast.
- Children from families with incomes above 185 percent of the FPL pay charges (referred to as "paid meals"), which are set by the school.

How Were Children Certified for Free or Reduced-Price Meals if Schools Operated SBP or NSLP?

Most children are certified for free or reduced-price meals via applications collected by the school district at the beginning of the school year or during the year. However, children in households participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, as well as children in foster care or from migrant families, children or youth without permanent housing, and Head Start participants, are "categorically eligible" (automatically eligible) for free school meals and can be certified without submitting a school meal application.

School districts are required to "directly certify" children in households participating in SNAP for free school meals through data matching of SNAP records with school enrollment lists. School districts have the option of directly certifying other categorically eligible children as well. A growing number of states also use income information from Medicaid to directly certify students as eligible for free or reduced-price school meals.

(continued on next page)

Schools also should use data from the state to certify categorically eligible students. Schools can coordinate with other personnel, such as the school district's homeless and migrant education liaisons, to obtain documentation to certify children for free school meals. Some categorically eligible children may be missed in this process, requiring the household to submit a school meal application. However, these households are not required to complete the income information section of the application.

How Were School Districts Reimbursed?

All the meals served through the SSO during the 2021–2022 school year were reimbursed at the SFSP rates listed below. Schools received the higher rural or self-prep reimbursement rate for every meal served, regardless of location.

- Through December 31, 2021:
  - » $2.46 for rural or self-prep breakfasts and $2.42 for vended breakfasts
  - » $4.32 for rural or self-prep lunches and $4.25 for vended lunches
- January 1, 2022, through the end of the 2021–2022 school year:
  - » $2.61 for rural or self-prep breakfasts and $2.56 for vended breakfasts
  - » $4.56 for rural or self-prep lunches and $4.49 for vended lunches

If schools chose to continue operating the SBP and NSLP during the 2021–2022 school year, the federal reimbursement rate schools received for each meal served depended on whether a student was receiving free, reduced-price, or paid meals.

For the 2021–2022 school year, schools received reimbursements at the following rates:

- $1.97 per free breakfast and $3.75 per free lunch
- $1.67 per reduced-price breakfast and $3.35 per reduced-price lunch
- $0.33 per "paid" breakfast and $0.44 per "paid" lunch

"Severe-need" schools received an additional $0.38 for each free or reduced-price breakfast served. Schools are considered severe need if at least 40 percent of the lunches served during the second preceding school year were free or reduced-price.

Offering Breakfast and Lunch Free to All

In the 2021–2022 school year, the vast majority of meals — 99.9 percent of breakfasts and 99.8 percent of lunches — were offered to children at no charge. Offering free meals to all students removes the stigma often associated with means-tested school breakfast and school lunch, opens the program to children from families who would struggle to pay the reduced-price copayment or the paid breakfast and lunch charges, and streamlines the implementation of breakfast in the classroom and other alternative service models. Schools that participated in SSO offered meals to all children at no charge. Schools that operated the regular school year SBP and NSLP could offer free meals to all through the following options, which were available prior to and during the pandemic:

- **Community Eligibility Provision:** Community eligibility schools are high-poverty schools that offer free breakfast and lunch to all students and do not have to collect, process, or verify school meal applications, or keep track of meals by fee category, resulting in significant administrative savings and increased participation.
- **Provision 2:** Schools using Provision 2 (referring to a provision of the National School Lunch Act) do not need to collect, process, or verify school meal applications or keep track of meals by fee category for at least three out of every four years. Schools collect school meal applications and count and claim meals by fee category during year one of the multiyear cycle, called the "base year." Those data then determine the federal reimbursement and are used for future years in the cycle. Provision 2 schools have the option to serve only breakfast or lunch, or both breakfast and lunch, to all students at no charge, and use economies of scale from increased participation and significant administrative savings to offset the cost of offering free meals to all students.
- **Non-pricing:** No fees are collected from students while schools continue to receive federal reimbursements for the breakfasts[3] served under the three-tier federal fee categories (free, reduced-price, and paid).

Learn more about these options here.

3 Non-pricing is generally limited to breakfast due to school lunch equity, which requires school lunch fees to be equitable to the federal free reimbursement rate.

School Breakfast During the 2021–2022 School Year

While school breakfast participation grew during the 2021–2022 school year when compared to the 2020–2021 school year, it did not keep pace with the rate of increase seen in school lunch. The ratio of children participating in school breakfast to children participating in school lunch was 51.8 per 100 during the 2021–2022 school year, compared to the ratio of 70.5:100 seen during the 2020–2021 school year. As schools returned to normal operations, many of the barriers that kept children from participating in breakfast before the pandemic, e.g., bus schedules and timing of breakfast service, may be reemerging.

Moving forward, it will be essential that many of the proven best practices used before the pandemic to maximize breakfast participation — offering breakfast at no charge to all students and serving meals through breakfast after the bell service models — are revisited.

On an average school day during the 2021–2022 school year, just over **15.5 million children** received a breakfast — with 15,492,609 million children receiving a free breakfast.[4]

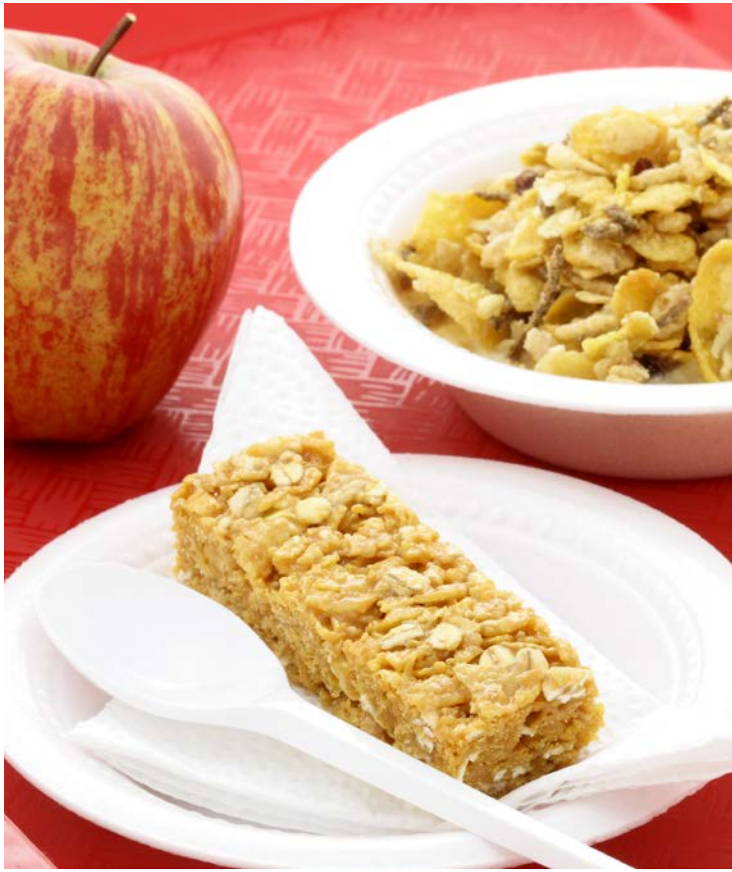
Even though every school had the option to provide meals to all children at no cost, some still provided breakfasts under the reduced-price and paid categories during the 2021–2022 school year. **2,564 children** received a reduced-price breakfast, and **17,320 children** received a paid breakfast on an average day in the 2021–2022 school year.

Breakfast participation in school year 2021–2022 was higher than participation in the 2020–2021 school year, with nearly **1.6 million additional children** being served.

The 2021–2022 school year was the second year in which nationwide waivers were available for the entire school year. Participation in free breakfast made up **99.9 percent** of total participation, compared to **99.4 percent** in the 2020–2021 school year.

Nearly **2.4 billion** total breakfasts were served through the SBP and SSO during the 2021–2022 school year — an **INCREASE** of **237,800 breakfasts** (11 percent) when compared to the 2020–2021 school year.

Forty-four states and the **District of Columbia** saw an **INCREASE** in the total number of breakfasts served in the 2021–2022 school year compared to the 2020–2021 school year. California, Illinois, Minnesota, New Jersey, Washington, and Wyoming were the only states that saw a decrease from one year to the next.



4 The free breakfasts include all the breakfasts served through the Seamless Summer Option and the free breakfasts served through the regular school-year School Breakfast Program. The reduced-price and paid breakfasts were served through the regular school-year School Breakfast Program.

School Lunch During the 2021–2022 School Year

School lunch participation increased dramatically during the 2021–2022 school year when compared to the 2020–2021 school year. This is likely due to the fact that most children were back in school and eating lunch regularly in the cafeteria. Lunch also was available at no cost for the second year in a row, which means that schools were better prepared to advertise and operate the program, and families were more familiar with the availability of free school meals for all students.

On an average school day during the 2021–2022 school year, just over **29.9 million children** received a school lunch — with **29,851,131 million children** receiving a free lunch.

Even though every school had the option to provide meals to all children at no cost, some still provided lunches under the reduced-price and paid categories during the 2021–2022 school year. **7,951 children** received a reduced-price lunch, and **57,707 children** received a paid lunch on an average day in the 2021–2022 school year.

Lunch participation in school year 2021–2022 was **HIGHER** than participation in the 2020–2021 school year, with just over **10.1 million additional children** participating.

The 2021–2022 school year was the second year in which nationwide waivers were available for the entire school year. Participation in free lunch made up **99.8 percent** of total participation, compared to **98.8 percent** in the 2020–2021 school year.

Almost **4.5 billion** total lunches were served through the SSO and NSLP during the 2021–2022 school year — an **INCREASE** of just over **1.5 million** (50 percent) lunches when compared to the 2020–2021 school year.

All 50 states and the District of Columbia saw an **INCREASE** in the total number of lunches served in the 2021–2022 school year compared to the 2020–2021 school year.

The Cost of Low Participation

Low participation in school breakfast is costly on many levels. Students miss out on the educational and health benefits associated with eating school breakfast, while states miss out on substantial federal funding. This missed opportunity was especially apparent during the 2021–2022 school year, when the gap between participation in breakfast and lunch began to widen to pre-pandemic levels. **Only one state (West Virginia) and the District of Columbia** were able to reach at least 70 children with breakfast for every 100 children receiving a school lunch; 26 states were meeting that same ratio (70:100) during the 2020–2021 school year. FRAC calculated that more than **5.4 million** additional children would have participated in school breakfast if the ratio had been met, and almost **$2.2 billion** was left on the table in the 2021–2022 school year by not meeting the ratio.

Maintaining Momentum

The 2021–2022 school year saw one of the largest increases in school breakfast and lunch participation since the pandemic disrupted the school day and strained school nutrition departments. This growth is despite the fact that those same school nutrition departments were still experiencing supply chain concerns, staffing shortages, and COVID-19 pandemic disruptions.

There is considerable evidence of the important role that school meals play in alleviating poverty and food insecurity, supporting good nutrition, boosting learning, and improving health outcomes. During the 2021–2022 school year, more children were able to reap those benefits. Unfortunately, states are already reporting a drop in the number of meals being served during the 2022–2023 school year as the nationwide waivers expired.

Bold and strategic action on the state and federal levels in making Healthy School Meals for All a reality is needed to ensure we don't lose the progress made to date. This, combined with the implementation of proven best practices, would ensure all students — regardless of income — have access to the nutritious breakfasts and lunches needed to learn and thrive.

How Community Eligibility Currently Works

The CEP allows high-poverty schools to offer breakfast and lunch free of charge to all students. Any district, group of schools in a district, or school with 40 percent or more "identified students" — children who are eligible for free school meals who already are identified by means other than an individual household application — can choose to participate.

"Identified students" include those who are in two categories:

- children who are directly certified for free school meals through data matching because their households receive SNAP, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations benefits, or, in some states, Medicaid benefits; and
- children who are certified for free meals without an application because they are homeless, migrant, enrolled in Head Start, or in foster care.

Community eligibility schools are reimbursed for meals served, based on a formula. Because of evidence that the ratio of all eligible children to children in these identified categories would be 1.6 to 1, Congress built that into the formula. Reimbursements to the school are calculated by multiplying the percentage of identified students by 1.6 to determine the percentage of meals that will be reimbursed at the federal free rate. For example, a school with 50 percent identified students would be reimbursed at the free rate for 80 percent of the meals eaten (50 multiplied by 1.6 is 80), and at the paid rate for 20 percent.

School districts also may choose to participate districtwide or group schools however they choose if the district or group has an overall identified student percentage of 40 percent or higher. Find out which schools in your state or community are participating or eligible for the CEP in FRAC's database.

Healthy School Meals for All

Prior to the pandemic, one in three schools participating in the School Nutrition Programs was offering meals at no charge to all students through the CEP. From March 2020 through the 2021–2022 school year, the nation was able to expand upon its CEP progress with all schools being able to offer meals at no cost through the SSO or the SFSP.

The critical role that school meals play was acknowledged during the September 2022 White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health and in its landmark National Strategy, which sets an ambitious but achievable goal of ending hunger by 2030. A key part of this strategy is advancing a pathway to Healthy School Meals for All, which recognizes that school meals are just as important to students' academic success as textbooks or transportation. While setting Healthy School Meals for All as a nationwide goal is an important first step, bringing school meals to millions of additional children should not take several years.

There are many pathways to Healthy School Meals for All, and the following strategies should be pursued simultaneously to ensure all students have access to the nutrition they need:

- **Federal legislation.** Enacting legislation — such as the Universal School Meals Program Act of 2021 or one that extends the pandemic era waiver that allows schools to offer free meals to all students — is the best way to make free school meals accessible to all students

throughout the country, and is the best way to move forward. Legislation that expands the CEP, such as increasing the multiplier from 1.6 to 2.5, would increase federal funding and allow more schools to adopt community eligibility, ensuring incremental steps in the right direction.

- **State legislation.** State momentum for Healthy School Meals for All is growing, in large part because students, families, and schools have experienced its many benefits. Several states have already acted to make free school meals a permanent part of the school day, including California, Maine, and Colorado. Additional states have established free school meals for the 2022–2023 school year, including Vermont, Massachusetts, and Nevada. Over 20 states have active campaigns. To learn more, check out FRAC's current list of state Healthy School Meals for All bills.

- **Expanding CEP through administrative action.** Providing a statewide CEP pilot to increase the number of high-poverty schools that can participate is a key strategy for expanding this already effective program. In fall 2022, USDA's Food and Nutrition Service announced that they would be issuing a proposed rule to lower the minimum participation threshold for CEP elections. Currently, to elect CEP, a school district, group of schools, or individual school must meet a minimum identified student percentage threshold of 40 percent. The proposed rule would lower the minimum participation threshold, meaning more schools could participate.

- **Improving and expanding certification processes.** Increasing the number of children from households with low incomes who are directly certified to receive free school meals without an application would ensure more eligible children would not fall through the cracks. At this time, 39 states are now participating in Medicaid Direct Certification, and all remaining states should apply to participate if USDA issues another request for proposals to implement Medicaid Direct Certification.

Building and Maintaining Robust Breakfast After the Bell Programs

Implementing a breakfast after the bell service model has the potential to greatly increase participation and reduce any stigma associated with eating breakfast at school. As school meals operations return to normal, expanding access under the normal program rules may help to offset drops in participation. There are three primary options for serving breakfast after the bell:

- **Breakfast in the classroom:** Meals are delivered to and eaten in the classroom at the start of the school day.
- **"Grab and go":** Children (particularly older students) can quickly grab their breakfast from carts or kiosks in the hallway or the cafeteria line to eat in their classroom or in common areas.
- **Second chance breakfast:** Students are offered a second chance to eat breakfast after the school day starts. Many middle and high school students are not hungry first thing in the morning but are ready to eat breakfast after their first class of the day, helping them to focus on their classes until lunch time.

FRAC and the Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom have developed a number of resources to help school breakfast champions navigate the stakeholder engagement and implementation process that is required to build strong programs, including assessment tools, financial calculators, and toolkits created for specific stakeholders, e.g., educators and administrators.

Conclusion

There have been many lessons learned throughout the pandemic when it comes to connecting families to nutrition, but one stands above the rest: the critical importance of providing healthy school meals to all students. The education and health benefits of participating in school meals are numerous, and more children participate when breakfasts and lunches are available to them at no cost.

Participation in school breakfast and lunch increased dramatically in the 2021–2022 school year, the second year in which nationwide waivers allowed all meals to be served at no cost. As more students returned to their desk, school meals were available, at no cost, alongside their books and bus ride to school. The ripple effect as the nationwide waivers end is already being seen across the country.

Now is not the time to turn back. While state legislation is filling a critical gap and should be considered in every state, that cannot replace bold action on the federal level. Healthy School Meals for All, combined with the implementation of proven best practices, is the path forward to ensure all children have access to the nutritious school meals they need to learn and thrive.

Technical Notes

The data in this report are collected from the USDA and an annual survey of state child nutrition officials conducted by FRAC. This report does not include data for students or schools that participate in school meals programs in Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, or Department of Defense schools. Due to rounding, totals in the tables may not add up to 100 percent.

Student participation data for the **2020–2021 school year** is based on daily averages of the number of breakfasts and lunches served through the SBP, the NSLP, the SSO, and the SFSP on school days during the nine months from September through May. FRAC calculated the number of children reached in each state during this school year by dividing the total number of free, reduced-price, and paid breakfasts and lunches served, and all breakfasts and lunches served through SFSP by each state's average number of serving days in NSLP and SBP during the 2018–2019 school year. While FRAC would normally use the service days from the corresponding year (in this case, it would be 2020–2021) to determine the number of children served, disruptions to the number of traditional service days — and the transition to SFSP in many states — in those years would not provide a fair comparison. Using the 2018–2019 service days assumes that school schedules were consistent with pre-COVID-19 pandemic schedules.

Student participation data for the **2021–2022 school year** is based on daily averages of the number of breakfasts and lunches served through the SBP, NSLP, and SSO on school days during the nine months from September through May. FRAC calculated the number of children reached in each state during this school year by dividing the total number of free, reduced-price, and paid breakfasts and lunches served and all breakfasts and lunches served through SSO by each state's average number of serving days in NSLP and SBP during the 2018–2019 school year. While FRAC would normally use the service days from the corresponding year (in this case, it would be 2021–2022) to determine the number of children served, disruptions to the number of traditional service days — and the high take-up rate of SSO — in those years would not provide a fair comparison. Using the 2018–2019 service days assumes that school schedules were consistent with pre-COVID-19 pandemic schedules.

For consistency, all USDA data used in this report are from the states' 90-day revisions of the monthly reports. The 90-day revisions are the final required reports from the states, but states have the option to change numbers at any time after that point.

Based on information from USDA, FRAC applies a formula (divide average daily participation by an attendance factor) to adjust numbers upwards to account for children who were absent from school on a particular day. FRAC uses an attendance factor of 0.927 to adjust the average daily participation numbers in breakfast and lunch for the 2020–2021 and 2021–2022 school years.

Based on the top states' performance, FRAC has set an attainable benchmark of every state reaching a ratio of 70 children receiving school breakfast for every 100 receiving school lunch. FRAC multiplied this unserved population by the 2021 SFSP breakfast reimbursement rate (2.46 for self-prep and rural meals), as nearly all schools were receiving this reimbursement rate through December 31, 2021. Although the reimbursement rate increased by 15 cents on January 1, 2022, FRAC did not apply this increased rate to the meals served after January 1, 2022, because schools do not typically see an increase in reimbursement halfway through the year.

Table 1: Total Average Daily Participation in Breakfast and Lunch, School Years 2020–2021[1] and 2021–2022[2]

State	School Year 2020–2021			School Year 2021–2022			% Change: SY 2020–2021 to 2021–2022	
	Average Daily Participation in Breakfast	Average Daily Participation in Lunch	Breakfast to Lunch Participation Ratio	Average Daily Participation in Breakfast	Average Daily Participation in Lunch	Breakfast to Lunch Participation Ratio	% Change in Lunch Average Daily Participation	% Change in Breakfast Average Daily Participation
Alabama	275,056	397,480	69.2	307,178	519,430	59.1	30.7%	11.7%
Alaska	23,961	31,700	75.6	25,749	50,558	50.9	59.5%	7.5%
Arizona	293,592	448,082	65.5	319,881	670,509	47.7	49.6%	9.0%
Arkansas	184,209	250,341	73.6	203,368	311,720	65.2	24.5%	10.4%
California	1,670,281	1,774,518	94.1	1,550,113	3,075,214	50.4	73.3%	-7.2%
Colorado	160,939	260,699	61.7	202,962	433,471	46.8	66.3%	26.1%
Connecticut	103,383	162,407	63.7	149,143	314,868	47.4	93.9%	44.3%
Delaware	48,050	53,655	89.6	53,860	92,204	58.4	71.8%	12.1%
District of Columbia	11,064	11,578	95.6	55,803	68,070	82.0	488.0%	404.4%
Florida	732,926	1,272,556	57.6	820,733	1,761,802	46.6	38.4%	12.0%
Georgia	595,524	837,617	71.1	676,407	1,170,408	57.8	39.7%	13.6%
Hawaii	22,510	39,493	57.0	27,721	92,718	29.9	134.8%	23.1%
Idaho	59,151	125,189	47.2	74,438	167,776	44.4	34.0%	25.8%
Illinois	480,880	618,009	77.8	448,908	998,884	44.9	61.6%	-6.6%
Indiana	266,622	531,015	50.2	308,304	724,756	42.5	36.5%	15.6%
Iowa	120,194	308,710	38.9	148,484	383,960	38.7	24.4%	23.5%
Kansas	140,294	268,099	52.3	162,237	353,501	45.9	31.9%	15.6%
Kentucky	297,934	350,483	85.0	306,105	470,212	65.1	34.2%	2.7%
Louisiana	271,285	413,199	65.7	278,163	479,662	58.0	16.1%	2.5%
Maine	46,850	65,822	71.2	61,985	105,178	58.9	59.8%	32.3%
Maryland	153,495	153,448	100.0	265,028	477,460	55.5	211.2%	72.7%
Massachusetts	224,790	307,519	73.1	237,991	571,647	41.6	85.9%	5.9%
Michigan	453,227	590,191	76.8	465,727	857,327	54.3	45.3%	2.8%
Minnesota	419,912	563,803	74.5	326,653	684,765	47.7	21.5%	-22.2%
Mississippi	183,588	259,841	70.7	201,884	330,269	61.1	27.1%	10.0%
Missouri	345,514	508,832	67.9	355,324	606,152	58.6	19.1%	2.8%
Montana	43,140	70,388	61.3	49,539	86,425	57.3	22.8%	14.8%
Nebraska	73,749	208,051	35.4	94,912	255,619	37.1	22.9%	28.7%
Nevada	94,860	110,291	86.0	139,605	250,434	55.7	127.1%	47.2%
New Hampshire	27,322	48,361	56.5	45,192	95,337	47.4	97.1%	65.4%
New Jersey	527,404	589,658	89.4	394,451	813,439	48.5	38.0%	-25.2%
New Mexico	110,033	116,624	94.3	135,044	193,086	69.9	65.6%	22.7%
New York	790,279	1,021,054	77.4	904,662	1,649,711	54.8	61.6%	14.5%
North Carolina	374,848	452,135	82.9	428,917	732,698	58.5	62.1%	14.4%
North Dakota	36,853	83,640	44.1	42,373	96,617	43.9	15.5%	15.0%
Ohio	447,201	727,251	61.5	568,939	1,077,387	52.8	48.1%	27.2%
Oklahoma	200,394	369,791	54.2	228,006	408,666	55.8	10.5%	13.8%
Oregon	139,290	148,387	93.9	142,196	271,018	52.5	82.6%	2.1%
Pennsylvania	367,851	573,948	64.1	477,694	1,010,571	47.3	76.1%	29.9%
Rhode Island	29,355	38,653	75.9	39,459	78,123	50.5	102.1%	34.4%
South Carolina	236,974	329,864	71.8	287,352	475,780	60.4	44.2%	21.3%
South Dakota	35,107	96,620	36.3	43,558	110,064	39.6	13.9%	24.1%
Tennessee	335,297	480,445	69.8	391,776	654,500	59.9	36.2%	16.8%
Texas	1,402,804	2,172,268	64.6	1,786,340	3,366,772	53.1	55.0%	27.3%
Utah	83,746	281,760	29.7	115,304	358,233	32.2	27.1%	37.7%
Vermont	29,272	38,541	76.0	32,779	51,267	63.9	33.0%	12.0%
Virginia	355,870	402,012	88.5	447,639	784,591	57.1	95.2%	25.8%
Washington	279,636	306,376	91.3	240,813	567,425	42.4	85.2%	-13.9%
West Virginia	121,850	139,172	87.6	142,217	174,232	81.6	25.2%	16.7%
Wisconsin	198,878	345,590	57.5	273,773	530,315	51.6	53.5%	37.7%
Wyoming	25,834	50,344	51.3	25,791	51,597	50.0	2.5%	-0.2%
TOTAL	**13,953,079**	**19,805,506**	**70.5**	**15,512,481**	**29,916,428**	**51.9**	**51.1%**	**11.2%**

1 Average daily participation during the 2020–2021 school year includes participation in the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program, Summer Food Service Program, and Seamless Summer Option.

2 Average daily participation during the 2021–2022 school year includes participation in the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program, and Seamless Summer Option.

Table 2: Average Daily Participation in Breakfast and Lunch by Fee Type, School Year 2021–2022[1]

State	Free[2]				Reduced-Price[3]				Paid			
	Breakfast	%	Lunch	%	Breakfast	%	Lunch	%	Breakfast	%	Lunch	%
Alabama	307,178	100.0%	519,430	100.0%	-	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%
Alaska	25,749	100.0%	50,558	100.0%	-	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%
Arizona	319,577	99.9%	669,650	99.9%	17	0.0%	103	0.0%	287	0.1%	755	0.1%
Arkansas	203,238	99.9%	310,917	99.7%	35	0.0%	107	0.0%	96	0.0%	696	0.2%
California	1,548,247	99.9%	3,069,653	99.8%	194	0.0%	528	0.0%	1,673	0.1%	5,032	0.2%
Colorado	202,914	100.0%	433,375	100.0%	8	0.0%	26	0.0%	39	0.0%	70	0.0%
Connecticut	149,139	100.0%	314,773	100.0%	1	0.0%	3	0.0%	3	0.0%	92	0.0%
Delaware	53,819	99.9%	92,150	99.9%	13	0.0%	18	0.0%	27	0.1%	35	0.0%
District of Columbia	55,514	99.5%	67,834	99.7%	19	0.0%	43	0.1%	269	0.5%	194	0.3%
Florida	814,773	99.3%	1,733,599	98.4%	934	0.1%	4,167	0.2%	5,026	0.6%	24,036	1.4%
Georgia	676,407	100.0%	1,170,408	100.0%	-	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%
Hawaii	27,721	100.0%	92,680	100.0%	-	0.0%	7	0.0%	-	0.0%	30	0.0%
Idaho	74,438	100.0%	167,776	100.0%	-	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%
Illinois	448,842	100.0%	998,171	99.9%	9	0.0%	44	0.0%	58	0.0%	670	0.1%
Indiana	308,266	100.0%	724,606	100.0%	-	0.0%	13	0.0%	38	0.0%	137	0.0%
Iowa	148,484	100.0%	383,960	100.0%	-	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	0.0%	0	0.0%
Kansas	162,237	100.0%	353,422	100.0%	-	0.0%	2	0.0%	-	0.0%	76	0.0%
Kentucky	306,105	100.0%	470,212	100.0%	-	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%
Louisiana	278,163	100.0%	479,662	100.0%	-	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%
Maine	61,985	100.0%	105,178	100.0%	-	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%
Maryland	264,941	100.0%	477,193	99.9%	8	0.0%	20	0.0%	78	0.0%	247	0.1%
Massachusetts	237,991	100.0%	571,647	100.0%	-	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%
Michigan	465,639	100.0%	856,553	99.9%	11	0.0%	30	0.0%	77	0.0%	743	0.1%
Minnesota	326,555	100.0%	684,347	99.9%	21	0.0%	74	0.0%	77	0.0%	344	0.1%
Mississippi	201,884	100.0%	330,269	100.0%	-	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%
Missouri	354,742	99.8%	603,327	99.5%	56	0.0%	153	0.0%	526	0.1%	2,672	0.4%
Montana	49,378	99.7%	85,912	99.4%	18	0.0%	47	0.1%	143	0.3%	466	0.5%
Nebraska	94,905	100.0%	255,512	100.0%	-	0.0%	2	0.0%	6	0.0%	105	0.0%
Nevada	139,605	100.0%	250,434	100.0%	-	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%
New Hampshire	45,061	99.7%	94,679	99.3%	2	0.0%	17	0.0%	130	0.3%	641	0.7%
New Jersey	394,419	100.0%	813,191	100.0%	10	0.0%	46	0.0%	22	0.0%	202	0.0%
New Mexico	135,006	100.0%	193,042	100.0%	1	0.0%	1	0.0%	37	0.0%	43	0.0%
New York	904,343	100.0%	1,648,571	99.9%	11	0.0%	21	0.0%	308	0.0%	1,119	0.1%
North Carolina	428,599	99.9%	732,202	99.9%	35	0.0%	59	0.0%	283	0.1%	437	0.1%
North Dakota	42,373	100.0%	96,617	100.0%	-	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%
Ohio	568,911	100.0%	1,075,461	99.8%	6	0.0%	87	0.0%	22	0.0%	1,839	0.2%
Oklahoma	228,006	100.0%	408,666	100.0%	-	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%
Oregon	142,196	100.0%	271,005	100.0%	-	0.0%	3	0.0%	-	0.0%	10	0.0%
Pennsylvania	477,631	100.0%	1,009,184	99.9%	5	0.0%	36	0.0%	51	0.0%	1,352	0.1%
Rhode Island	39,409	99.9%	78,038	99.9%	8	0.0%	16	0.0%	44	0.0%	68	0.1%
South Carolina	287,343	100.0%	475,774	100.0%	4	0.0%	3	0.0%	11	0.0%	2	0.0%
South Dakota	43,557	100.0%	109,993	99.9%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	0.0%	72	0.1%
Tennessee	391,735	100.0%	654,453	100.0%	1	0.0%	2	0.0%	34	0.0%	45	0.0%
Texas	1,778,349	99.6%	3,350,031	99.5%	863	0.0%	1,830	0.1%	6,081	0.3%	14,911	0.4%
Utah	114,327	98.2%	358,233	100.0%	258	0.2%	0	0.0%	1,786	1.5%	-	0.0%
Vermont	32,767	100.0%	51,236	99.9%	-	0.0%	1	0.0%	11	0.0%	31	0.1%
Virginia	447,638	100.0%	784,591	100.0%	-	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0.0%	-	0.0%
Washington	240,751	100.0%	566,871	99.9%	10	0.0%	78	0.0%	42	0.0%	476	0.1%
West Virginia	142,191	100.0%	174,170	100.0%	4	0.0%	3	0.0%	29	0.0%	59	0.0%
Wisconsin	273,770	100.0%	530,315	100.0%	-	0.0%	0	0.0%	5	0.0%	-	0.0%
Wyoming	25,791	100.0%	51,597	100.0%	-	0.0%	0	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%
TOTAL	**15,492,609**	**99.9%**	**29,851,131**	**99.8%**	**2,564**	**0.0%**	**7,591**	**0.0%**	**17,320**	**0.1%**	**57,707**	**0.2%**

1 Average daily participation during the 2021–2022 school year includes participation in the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program, and Seamless Summer Option.

2 Breakfasts and lunches served through the Seamless Summer Option during the 2021–2022 school year are included in the Free average daily participation.

3 States that have participation in the reduced-price and paid fee category are in districts that did not adopt the SSO waiver and missed out on the opportunity to offer free meals to all of their students.

Table 3: Breakfasts and Lunches Served by Type, School Year 2021–2022[1]

State	Free[2]		Reduced-Price		Paid		Total Meals Served: 2021–2022 SY	
	Breakfast	Lunch	Breakfast	Lunch	Breakfast	Lunch	Breakfast	Lunch
Alabama	45,257,868	76,431,641	-	-	-	-	45,257,868	76,431,641
Alaska	3,963,459	7,708,709	-	-	-	-	3,963,459	7,708,709
Arizona	46,938,809	97,391,452	2,541	14,935	42,126	109,863	46,983,476	97,516,250
Arkansas	30,892,411	47,195,287	5,261	16,253	14,627	105,615	30,912,299	47,317,155
California	236,306,766	467,935,301	29,536	80,537	255,296	767,065	236,591,598	468,782,903
Colorado	30,146,791	64,697,464	1,262	3,862	5,791	10,465	30,153,844	64,711,791
Connecticut	23,339,050	49,385,288	87	424	476	14,471	23,339,613	49,400,183
Delaware	8,053,381	13,810,214	2,012	2,720	4,104	5,267	8,059,497	13,818,201
District of Columbia	8,897,474	10,868,242	3,080	6,815	43,186	31,052	8,943,740	10,906,109
Florida	126,425,494	268,447,761	144,939	645,283	779,864	3,721,941	127,350,297	272,814,985
Georgia	98,600,509	170,309,948	-	-	-	-	98,600,509	170,309,948
Hawaii	4,153,966	13,823,752	-	1,087	-	4,490	4,153,966	13,829,329
Idaho	11,100,050	24,757,167	-	-	-	-	11,100,050	24,757,167
Illinois	69,679,807	152,980,377	1,329	6,767	8,936	102,609	69,690,072	153,089,753
Indiana	45,222,341	107,047,393	3	1,891	5,517	20,223	45,227,861	107,069,507
Iowa	23,122,783	59,824,872	-	-	-	34	23,122,783	59,824,906
Kansas	23,247,268	50,295,494	-	347	-	10,822	23,247,268	50,306,663
Kentucky	44,038,555	67,828,834	-	-	-	-	44,038,555	67,828,834
Louisiana	40,023,464	68,991,412	-	-	-	-	40,023,464	68,991,412
Maine	9,358,058	15,920,690	-	-	-	-	9,358,058	15,920,690
Maryland	41,265,525	74,871,054	1,193	3,133	12,222	38,768	41,278,940	74,912,955
Massachusetts	36,869,752	86,870,305	-	-	-	-	36,869,752	86,870,305
Michigan	69,239,351	124,557,132	1,634	4,373	11,450	108,101	69,252,435	124,669,606
Minnesota	49,387,291	103,796,470	3,198	11,264	11,636	52,145	49,402,125	103,859,879
Mississippi	30,137,141	49,219,764	-	-	-	-	30,137,141	49,219,764
Missouri	53,166,326	89,772,788	8,440	22,787	78,854	397,526	53,253,620	90,193,101
Montana	7,796,209	13,519,493	2,796	7,370	22,542	73,382	7,821,547	13,600,245
Nebraska	13,998,569	37,497,968	23	286	934	15,432	13,999,526	37,513,686
Nevada	21,080,565	37,848,556	-	-	-	-	21,080,565	37,848,556
New Hampshire	6,958,577	14,501,092	246	2,549	20,027	98,217	6,978,850	14,601,858
New Jersey	62,876,767	125,759,666	1,576	7,106	3,505	31,273	62,881,848	125,798,045
New Mexico	19,497,323	27,879,598	117	128	5,322	6,245	19,502,762	27,885,971
New York	138,791,418	246,067,487	1,763	3,088	47,310	167,078	138,840,491	246,237,653
North Carolina	65,602,963	112,682,722	5,365	9,146	43,263	67,197	65,651,591	112,759,065
North Dakota	6,666,912	15,306,378	-	-	-	-	6,666,912	15,306,378
Ohio	86,006,570	163,160,792	924	13,233	3,311	279,000	86,010,805	163,453,025
Oklahoma	31,769,284	57,190,937	-	-	-	-	31,769,284	57,190,937
Oregon	21,239,721	40,425,313	-	434	-	1,539	21,239,721	40,427,286
Pennsylvania	75,581,022	159,340,208	770	5,667	8,005	213,422	75,589,797	159,559,297
Rhode Island	6,192,983	12,197,234	1,198	2,564	6,875	10,677	6,201,056	12,210,475
South Carolina	44,421,986	73,225,862	659	513	1,650	322	44,424,295	73,226,697
South Dakota	6,361,652	16,408,910	115	6	44	10,673	6,361,811	16,419,589
Tennessee	57,352,921	95,573,434	218	296	4,944	6,531	57,358,083	95,580,261
Texas	278,773,800	520,035,833	135,301	284,028	953,216	2,314,692	279,862,317	522,634,553
Utah	17,687,228	55,153,631	39,932	-	276,261	-	18,003,421	55,153,631
Vermont	5,015,243	7,821,611	41	117	1,726	4,701	5,017,010	7,826,429
Virginia	66,885,339	117,721,845	14	-	300	-	66,885,653	117,721,845
Washington	36,303,422	85,336,655	1,485	11,796	6,396	71,625	36,311,303	85,420,076
West Virginia	21,123,913	25,823,816	618	448	4,366	8,728	21,128,897	25,832,992
Wisconsin	43,169,223	82,036,966	78	-	745	-	43,170,046	82,036,966
Wyoming	3,984,729	8,035,313	-	-	-	-	3,984,729	8,035,313
TOTAL	**2,353,972,029**	**4,515,290,131**	**397,754**	**1,171,253**	**2,684,827**	**8,881,191**	**2,357,054,610**	**4,525,342,575**

1 Breakfasts and lunches served during the 2021–2022 school year includes participation in the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program, and Seamless Summer Option.

2 Breakfasts and lunches served through the Seamless Summer Option are included in the Free category.

Table 4: Additional Participation and Funding if 70 Children Were Served Breakfast Per 100 Served Lunch, School Year 2021–2022[1]

State	Average Daily Participation in Breakfast	Breakfast to Lunch Participation Ratio	Average Daily Participation in Lunch	Total Average Daily Participation if 70:100 Reached	Additional Children Reached if 70:100 Reached	Additional Annual Funding if 70:100 Reached[2]
Alabama	307,178	59.1	519,430	363,601	56,423	$22,624,495
Alaska	25,749	50.9	50,558	35,391	9,642	$3,866,089
Arizona	319,881	47.7	670,509	469,356	149,475	$59,936,606
Arkansas	203,368	65.2	311,720	218,204	14,836	$5,948,939
California	1,550,113	50.4	3,075,214	2,152,650	602,537	$241,605,206
Colorado	202,962	46.8	433,471	303,430	100,468	$40,285,538
Connecticut	149,143	47.4	314,868	220,408	71,265	$28,575,679
Delaware	53,860	58.4	92,204	64,543	10,683	$4,283,589
District of Columbia	55,803	82.0	68,070	47,649	Met Goal	Met Goal
Florida	820,733	46.6	1,761,802	1,233,261	412,528	$165,415,638
Georgia	676,407	57.8	1,170,408	819,286	142,879	$57,291,461
Hawaii	27,721	29.9	92,718	64,903	37,182	$14,909,078
Idaho	74,438	44.4	167,776	117,443	43,005	$17,244,225
Illinois	448,908	44.9	998,884	699,219	250,311	$100,369,625
Indiana	308,304	42.5	724,756	507,329	199,025	$79,805,125
Iowa	148,484	38.7	383,960	268,772	120,288	$48,233,082
Kansas	162,237	45.9	353,501	247,451	85,214	$34,168,989
Kentucky	306,105	65.1	470,212	329,148	23,043	$9,239,943
Louisiana	278,163	58.0	479,662	335,763	57,600	$23,096,608
Maine	61,985	58.9	105,178	73,625	11,640	$4,667,247
Maryland	265,028	55.5	477,460	334,222	69,194	$27,745,410
Massachusetts	237,991	41.6	571,647	400,153	162,162	$65,023,679
Michigan	465,727	54.3	857,327	600,129	134,402	$53,892,474
Minnesota	326,653	47.7	684,765	479,336	152,683	$61,222,629
Mississippi	201,884	61.1	330,269	231,188	29,304	$11,750,438
Missouri	355,324	58.6	606,152	424,306	68,982	$27,660,563
Montana	49,539	57.3	86,425	60,498	10,959	$4,394,139
Nebraska	94,912	37.1	255,619	178,933	84,021	$33,690,861
Nevada	139,605	55.7	250,434	175,304	35,699	$14,314,505
New Hampshire	45,192	47.4	95,337	66,736	21,544	$8,638,673
New Jersey	394,451	48.5	813,439	569,407	174,956	$70,153,977
New Mexico	135,044	69.9	193,086	135,160	116	$46,594
New York	904,662	54.8	1,649,711	1,154,798	250,136	$100,299,413
North Carolina	428,917	58.5	732,698	512,889	83,972	$33,670,932
North Dakota	42,373	43.9	96,617	67,632	25,259	$10,128,314
Ohio	568,939	52.8	1,077,387	754,171	185,232	$74,274,287
Oklahoma	228,006	55.8	408,666	286,066	58,060	$23,280,820
Oregon	142,196	52.5	271,018	189,713	47,516	$19,053,074
Pennsylvania	477,694	47.3	1,010,571	707,400	229,706	$92,107,343
Rhode Island	39,459	50.5	78,123	54,686	15,227	$6,105,903
South Carolina	287,352	60.4	475,780	333,046	45,694	$18,322,225
South Dakota	43,558	39.6	110,064	77,045	33,487	$13,427,632
Tennessee	391,776	59.9	654,500	458,150	66,374	$26,614,777
Texas	1,786,340	53.1	3,366,772	2,356,740	570,400	$228,718,994
Utah	115,304	32.2	358,233	250,763	135,459	$54,316,305
Vermont	32,779	63.9	51,267	35,887	3,107	$1,246,021
Virginia	447,639	57.1	784,591	549,214	101,575	$40,729,405
Washington	240,813	42.4	567,425	397,198	156,384	$62,706,859
West Virginia	142,217	81.6	174,232	121,962	Met Goal	Met Goal
Wisconsin	273,773	51.6	530,315	371,221	97,448	$39,074,680
Wyoming	25,791	50.0	51,597	36,118	10,327	$4,140,936
TOTAL	**15,512,481**	**51.9**	**29,916,428**	**20,941,500**	**5,429,019**	**$2,176,927,842**

1 Breakfasts and lunches served during the 2021–2022 school year includes participation in the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program, and Seamless Summer Option.

2 Breakfasts and lunches served through the Seamless Summer Option are included in the Free category.

FRAC
Food Research & Action Center

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