



Alternative Methods of Serving School Breakfast

It may be difficult to serve a traditional cafeteria-style School Breakfast in your school due to bus schedules, staffing and space. Consider one of the following alternative methods of serving School Breakfast to ensure that your students are receiving a nutritious breakfast before beginning their school day and are ***Ready to Learn!***

Breakfast in the Classroom (BIC)- Breakfasts are transported to the classrooms by food service staff, custodians, student aides, student council members, classroom students and/or volunteers. The breakfasts may be pre-assembled, or delivered as separate items in baskets, plastic containers/tubs or insulated containers.

Grab ‘n Go Breakfast - Food service staff prepares and packages complete breakfasts that are easy to eat on the go in bags, boxes, or another convenient unit. The non-perishable breakfast items can be pre-assembled the day before. Students can grab a pre-assembled breakfast from a cart or kiosk on their way to the classroom, dining room, or other designated area. The carts or kiosks are located in strategic places throughout the school building and may serve breakfast during breaks, class changes or before school.

Breakfast After 1st Period - Breakfast is served after the first class period or during a mid-morning break (or both). Students have 10-15 minutes to buy breakfast in the cafeteria or to pick-up a bagged breakfast from a kiosk or other location during class changes.

Benefits of School Breakfast Programs

- Studies show that School Breakfast reduces problems such as tardiness, suspensions, absences, stomach aches, head aches.
- School Breakfast is also correlated with higher test scores, improved attention span and behavior and fewer visits to the nurse.
- Many schools provide breakfast to all students during test week, but the benefits of School Breakfast are important to students all year.

Breakfast in the Classroom

Breakfast in the Classroom (BIC) may increase breakfast participation significantly. In some cases, participation rates can be as high as 90 or 95 percent.

Students enjoy a nutritious meal in the comfort of familiar surroundings. Teachers report that students who participate are more attentive and “ready to learn”. Moreover, student attendance improves and tardiness and disciplinary problems decrease when students participate in BIC.

Benefits of BIC

- Eliminates long lines in the cafeteria.
- Reduces tardiness.
- Ideal for middle and high school students who may not eat breakfast at home.
- Allows students who ride the bus or arrive late to school the opportunity to eat a School Breakfast.
- Participation is relatively consistent, so it is easy to anticipate the number of breakfast meals needed each morning.

How Breakfast in the Classroom works:

- Breakfasts are transported to the classrooms by food service staff, custodians, student aides, student council members, classroom students and/or volunteers. The breakfasts may be pre-assembled, or delivered as separate items in baskets, plastic containers/tubs or insulated containers.
- Teachers or other trained staff members are to record the breakfasts as they are served to the students and may also collect money to give to the cafeteria.

Things to Consider with Breakfast in the Classroom:

- Place trash cans in the hallways to allow for trash pick-up immediately after breakfast to eliminate messes.
- Provide teachers with moist towelettes and other cleaning supplies so the students may clean up spills and sticky fingers after breakfast.
- BIC takes approximately 20 minutes. Students must be supervised in the classroom during breakfast time.
- Ask the principal to mail an introductory letter to parents to explain the nutritional and academic benefits of eating breakfast and how Breakfast in the Classroom works.
- Give teachers and all school staff members a written set of instructions to help in the daily operation of BIC.

Follow-Up

- After beginning BIC, continue to communicate with parents, teachers and other school staff about successes and/or concerns about the program. Be flexible and willing to make changes if requested.
- Write periodic “Thank You” notes to staff to let them know about the positive benefits of the program. You could also include a redeemable coupon to be used in the cafeteria.

Linking BIC with other classroom activities

- Post menus in the class and review them with students.
- Promote reading – ask the principal to select students to read menus on the public address system.
- Promote healthy eating – ask the students to match the breakfast items to the Food Guide Pyramid.
- Promote math – ask the students to count the number of food groups in each day, week, month, etc.
- Provide a “before” and “after” questionnaire to the teachers and include items from research, such as behavior, tardiness, etc.
- Chart “before” and “after” breakfast participation rates.

How to get teachers involved

- Encourage teachers to talk to other teachers who have had success with BIC.
- Emphasize the positive behavior and academic benefits of breakfast.
- Offer promotional free breakfasts to teachers who eat breakfast with their students.
- Pilot a program with a few motivated teachers.
- While students eat breakfast, remind teachers that they can review the daily agenda, read a book or complete administrative functions.

Success of Breakfast in the Classroom

Bucyrus City Schools implemented BIC at all five elementary schools in school year 2001-2002. Participation increased from 85 to 648 breakfasts per day, which is 76 percent of enrollment. At first, teacher reaction was mixed, but by the end of the year, all teachers supported BIC. Parents expressed “peace of mind” knowing that their children had a nutritious meal waiting for them at school.

Grab ‘n Go Breakfast

The Grab ‘n Go Breakfast is a convenient way to offer breakfast to students. Grab ‘n Go Breakfast may require less time to prepare than traditional breakfast because there is little to no cooking.

Benefits of the Grab ‘n Go Breakfast

- Eliminates long lines in the cafeteria.
- Reduces tardiness.
- Students enjoy hand-held breakfasts.
- Ideal for middle and high school students who may not eat breakfast at home.
- Allows students who ride the bus or arrive late to school the opportunity to eat a School Breakfast.
- Participation is relatively consistent, so it is easy to anticipate the number of breakfast meals needed each morning.
- A small prize randomly tucked into several colorful theme bags is a fun way to begin the day with School Breakfast.

How Grab ‘n Go Breakfast works:

- Food service staff prepares and packages complete breakfasts that are easy to eat on the go in bags, boxes, or another convenient unit. The non-perishable breakfast items can be pre-assembled the day before.
- Students can grab a pre-assembled breakfast from a cart or kiosk on their way to the classroom, dining room, or other designated area. The carts or kiosks are located in strategic places throughout the school building and may serve breakfast during breaks, class changes or before school.

NOTE: If breakfasts are assembled the day before, do not forget to also offer the milk at the cart or kiosk!

Success of Grab ‘n Go Breakfast

An elementary school at Springfield Local Schools implemented physical activity before school followed by breakfast. Students start the day with 10 minutes of activity, then pick-up a bagged breakfast from the cafeteria to eat in the classroom. Within two years, nurse visits declined by 52 percent and discipline referrals dropped 19 percent. Fourth-grade proficiency increased from two to all five indicators for writing, reading, mathematics, citizenship and science.

Breakfast After 1st Period

Breakfast After 1st Period benefits students that need a nutrition “boost” later in the morning. Breakfast After 1st Period works well for high school students who may snack on non-nutritious foods from vending machines because they have missed breakfast. This option gives students the opportunity to start their day with a nutritious meal.

Benefits of Breakfast After 1st Period:

- Quick and easy, so tardiness is not an issue.
- No long waiting lines.
- Hand-held, “mobile” breakfast.
- Ideal for middle and high school students who may not eat breakfast at home.
- Allows students who ride the bus or arrive late to school the opportunity to eat a school breakfast.
- Participation is relatively consistent, so it is easy to anticipate the number of breakfast meals needed each morning.

How Breakfast After 1st Period works:

Breakfast is served after the first class period or during a mid-morning break (or both). Students have 10-15 minutes to buy breakfast in the cafeteria or to pick-up a bagged breakfast from a kiosk or other location during class changes.

Success of Breakfast After 1st Period:

Wisconsin boosted School Breakfast participation rates for middle, junior high and senior high schools by scheduling a 10-minute nutrition break in the morning between class periods. This allowed students the time to purchase and consume a reimbursable breakfast during the instructional day.

How did they do this? Sherman Middle School teachers were concerned about what their students were eating in the morning. When the focus of the family/consumer education class was nutrition, the teacher and the students found a way to replace a snack break with a more nutritious breakfast. The class simulated the distribution of Breakfast After 1st Period to demonstrate that the breakfast would “fit in” with the instructional schedule. Because of their research, the principal scheduled a 10-minute nutrition break between the first and second periods.

Collection and Counting Procedures for School Breakfast

Count must be taken at the point of service:

1. The teacher or other staff member must count students *as they are served* a reimbursable breakfast; daily attendance counts and pre-counts are not acceptable.
 - a) Breakfasts in the Classroom must be counted at the point when the student is served the breakfast.
 - b) Grab 'n Go breakfasts must be counted at the point when the breakfast is picked up by the students.
 - c) Breakfast After 1st Period must be counted at the point where the students are served the breakfast, either at the cart or kiosk, or in the classroom.
2. The teacher or other staff member must ensure that breakfasts are reimbursable (the appropriate number of components is served) when counting the breakfast.
3. All students *must* have the opportunity to refuse a meal.
4. If students are not charged for breakfast, then no money is collected, but breakfasts must still be counted by each students' eligibility category (paid, free, reduced).
5. If students are charged for breakfast (except students eligible for free meals) then
 - a) money must be collected by trained staff;
 - b) the procedure must prevent overt identification of students' eligibility categories;
 - c) the cashier (trained staff) should be stationed where breakfasts are served and counted. This could be in a classroom, at a kiosk or in the cafeteria.
 - d) The maximum charge for a reduced-priced breakfast is \$0.30.
6. A prepayment system may be the most convenient method for all staff involved.

NOTE: Breakfast items delivered to a classroom in bulk are not considered 'served' or the 'point of service'; the point of service is where an individual student is served a meal and a teacher or staff member determines that the meal is reimbursable.

The school may use a variety of procedures to count each breakfast served according to the students' eligibility category, as long as eligibility categories remain confidential:

1. Checklist/Roster: the teacher or other staff member checks off each student's name or ID number as they are served a reimbursable breakfast. The Checklist/Roster may be coded according to eligibility category or compared later to a master list. Only the individual tallying the meals by eligibility category for the daily count need be aware of the coding system.

- A column for reimbursable breakfasts served may be added to the attendance roster to save teachers time and eliminate the need for another list!
2. Ticket/Token: the teacher or other staff member collects a coded Ticket/Token from each student as they are served a reimbursable breakfast. The Ticket/Token may be coded according to eligibility category or names/ID numbers on the Ticket/Token may be compared later to a master list. Only the individual tallying the meals by eligibility category for the daily count need be aware of the coding system.
 3. Computerized Point of Sale Systems (POS): the students may enter their name, PIN, or other information into a computerized system as they are served a reimbursable breakfast. The System records the breakfast by the student's eligibility category and tallies a final count by category. A teacher or staff member must still monitor the breakfasts to be sure that they are reimbursable.
 4. Students may also be counted in the classroom with a roster, and then the roster is sent to the cafeteria and added to the Computerized POS system by cafeteria staff at a later time that morning.
 5. Provision 2 schools in a non-base year are not required to count each breakfast served according to the students' eligibility category. The breakfasts must still be counted at the point of service, however, the school will simply claim the total number of complete breakfasts served each day..
 6. Other procedures as approved by the Office for Safety, Health and Nutrition.

Common mistakes in Collection and Counting Procedures for School Breakfast

- Using a pre-count as the final count
- Using the attendance count as the final count
- Counting breakfasts that do not contain the appropriate number of components/items.
- Taking a headcount after breakfast is served without counting whether each student received a reimbursable meal.
- Counting the number of entrée items that were served.
- Counting only free and reduced-price breakfasts served and “backing them out” of the total number to determine paid breakfasts served.
- Serving a component/item in a separate location and counting the breakfast before you are assured that it qualifies as a reimbursable meal.

For example, serving bagged breakfasts in the hallway and serving the milk in the classroom but counting the bagged breakfasts in the hallway as reimbursable before the student picks up the milk.

Traditional and Enhanced Menu Planning Options Breakfast

The daily planned School Breakfast menu **must** contain four food components. The components may be in one of the following combinations.

1. 8 oz. fluid Milk
½ cup Fruit/Vegetable
1 oz. Bread/Grain
1 oz. Bread/Grain
(example: milk, orange juice, toast, cereal)

2. 8 oz. fluid Milk
½ cup Fruit/Vegetable
1 oz. Bread/Grain
1 oz. Meat/Meat Alternate
(example: milk, apple juice, granola bar, peanut butter)

3. 8 oz. fluid Milk
1/2 cup Fruit/Vegetable
1 oz. Meat/Meat Alternate
1 oz. Meat/Meat Alternate
(example: milk, grapes, hard boiled egg, sausage link)

Examples of Breakfasts that meet the required Traditional and Enhanced Menu Planning Options:

- Cereal, graham crackers, fruit and milk
- Peanut Butter and Jelly Wafer Sandwich, 100% fruit juice and milk
- Muffin, string cheese, fruit and milk
- Whole bagel with margarine and jelly or jam, 100% fruit juice and milk

Offer vs. Serve in the School Breakfast Program (Traditional and Enhanced Menu Planning Options):

Schools may choose whether students will be served all food components in the breakfast meal pattern (Serve) or will be offered all components but allowed to decline up to one component from the breakfast meal pattern (Offer vs. Serve).

The breakfast menu must be planned to include all of the four required food components and all students must be offered all four required components - even if students have the option of declining one of the four required components (Offer vs. Serve).

Serve

The students are served all four required components of the breakfast meal pattern and are not allowed to decline any item. Only breakfasts served containing all four components may be claimed for reimbursement.

Offer vs. Serve

The students have the option of declining one of the four required food components of the breakfast meal pattern. Breakfasts containing all four food components or three of the four components may be claimed for reimbursement.

Leftovers

Left-over foods not served with Offer versus Serve may be retrieved by the food service staff. When appropriate, left-over, prepackaged food items that students do not choose may be placed on a “share” table. Other students may then take the food for themselves as “extras” or “seconds”. Perishable share table items must be properly handled and stored. Always check with your local health department for restrictions.

Components in the School Breakfast Program (Traditional and Enhanced Menu Planning Options):

Be aware that four components may not always equal four food items:

Example: milk, grape juice and pancake and sausage on a stick.

In this example, the menu contains all four components: Milk, Fruit/Vegetable, Bread/Grains and Meat/Meat Alternate, but only three items.

- A student refusing the milk is only refusing one component (milk). The grape juice and pancake and sausage on a stick constitute a breakfast and may be claimed.
- If the school allows students to refuse a component (Offer vs. Serve), a student refusing the pancake and sausage on a stick is refusing TWO components (Bread/Grain and Meat/Meat Alternate). The milk and grape juice that remain do not constitute a reimbursable breakfast and may not be claimed.

NOTE: If a student chooses not to select at least three of the food components, then the breakfast is not reimbursable and the student must pay according to a la carte pricing;

Teachers or other staff counting breakfasts and collecting payments must be familiar with the school's policy regarding whether Offer vs. Serve is available and must also be able to recognize a reimbursable breakfast.

Nutrient Standard Menu Planning (NSMP) and Assisted NSMP Options Breakfast

A minimum of three menu items must be offered: milk and at least two side dishes.

- Fluid milk as a beverage or on cereal or both
- At least two side dishes; may be any food items (except a condiment or a food of minimal nutritional value)

Examples of Breakfasts that meet the required NSMP and Assisted NSMP Menu Planning Options:

- Cereal, graham crackers and milk
- Peanut Butter and Jelly Wafer Sandwich, fresh orange, and milk
- Muffin, string cheese and milk
- Whole bagel with margarine and jelly or jam, hard boiled egg and milk

Offer vs. Serve in the School Breakfast Program (NSMP and Assisted NSMP Options):

Schools may choose whether students will be served all items in the breakfast meal pattern (Serve) or will be offered all items but allowed to decline up to one item from the breakfast meal pattern (Offer vs. Serve).

The breakfast menu must be planned to include all of the three required items and all students must be offered all three required items - even if students have the option of declining one of the three required items (Offer vs. Serve).

Serve

The students are served all three required items of the breakfast meal pattern and are not allowed to decline any item. Only breakfasts served containing all three items may be claimed for reimbursement.

Offer vs. Serve

The students have the option of declining one of the three required items of the breakfast meal pattern. Breakfasts containing all three items or two of the three items may be claimed for reimbursement.