

Ohio's Food Service Suggestions for Breakfast Programs

The results of a 2002 survey sent to Ohio's Food Service Directors from the Ohio Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Services provided suggestions to make the flow of school breakfast a positive experience for teachers and students. Here are some solutions schools offered:

- Many bus drivers let students who eat breakfast off the bus first.
- Some Food Service Directors/Supervisors worked together with their school's administration and bus supervisor to come up with a schedule to allow students time to eat breakfast before school.
- Several schools allow students to eat in the classroom if the buses are running late.
- Schedules were rearranged so walking students arrive at school prior to bussed students. Walking students eat breakfast first, and then bussed students arrive and eat breakfast.
- Students "check in" before they go to breakfast to save class time.

Promotions to Increase School Breakfast Participation

Here are some ideas from Ohio's School Food Service Directors:

- Offer a free breakfast to one of the following groups each day during National School Breakfast Week - teachers, parents, bus drivers, secretaries.
- Ask students to help write the breakfast menus.
- Survey students to pick their top breakfast choices and offer those on the menu.
- Sponsor poster contests for the best nutritious breakfast ideas.
- Advertise the menu each morning on the PA system or before dismissal the afternoon before.
- Give Breakfast Club Cards- every time students eat breakfast they get a stamp; get five stamps and receive a free treat.
- Offer a "Grab and Go Breakfast" - place a prize in one of the bags.
- Provide a Breakfast Bar - students select items from a Breakfast Bar (according to meal requirements) - offer two times a year.
- Play popular music while breakfast is being served - "Wake up to Music in the Cafeteria."
- Offer special treats like stickers, pencils or bookmarkers as breakfast promotions in place of cookies or cakes.

Sponsor a Theme Day

- Lucky Tray Day - the person with the star on the bottom of their tray liner receives a treat

- Treasure Chest Tuesday -eat breakfast and draw a surprise toy from the treasure chest
- Bring a Friend Day and get a treat
- Bring a Parent Day - invite parents to eat breakfast with students
- Special Guest Day - invite local celebrities to breakfast
- Tony the Tiger Day - invite a well-known mascot to support breakfast
- Fire Department Day - Invite Sparky the Dog and firefighters to eat breakfast with the students
- National School Breakfast Week theme days - stuffed animal day, pajama day, inside-out day, hat day, school color day, mixed-up day (stripes with prints, etc.)

Most Food Service Directors agreed that good communication and marketing are the best ways to build good relationships between the building principal and school staff.