



# School Food Service



School food service directors and personnel are very important to the educational process. Their work completes the cycle of providing a healthy learning environment through serving school meals. The National School Lunch Program offers an opportunity for students in school to have a nutritious meal during the day. This not only helps to take the focus away from hunger but also improves a student's academic performance.

Providing a nourishing breakfast every day allows your staff to be a part of the educational team. Breakfast is another way to improve the education of students in school. Some of your concerns with having the School Breakfast Program will be addressed in this section. Cited studies prove the impact of breakfast on learning. Ideas are included for menu and meal planning.

## Food service staff may have concerns about...

### FOOD SERVICE ROLE

Food service operates as part of the educational team in schools; therefore, you do more than just serve food to children. You help to support a healthy learning environment for students. By making breakfast an option, you provide parents a choice to feed their children at school. You are making a contribution to the success of students in your school by making breakfast available.

### WORKLOAD

Operating the School Breakfast Program does not necessarily mean more work for food service personnel. When compared to lunch, breakfast can be simpler to prepare. Depending on the breakfast service method you choose, it can be set up to work with your current operation with very little change. It may even increase your revenue enough to employ more people for longer hours, allowing you to offer benefits for your employees. Also, prepackaged breakfast foods keep labor to a minimum.

### MONEY

Your school can provide breakfast without financially burdening the school food service program. USDA provides reimbursement for every breakfast served that meet nutritional guidelines. Schools with high numbers of free and reduced priced applications may find it is possible to offer free breakfast to every student.

# Studies show...

**“Students who ate school breakfast often had math grades that averaged almost a letter grade higher than students who ate school breakfast rarely.”**

-- *Pediatrics*, Vol. 101 No.1, January 1998

**School breakfast resulted in significant:**

- **Increases in math grades**
- **Decreases in student absences**
- **Decreases in student tardiness**
- **Decreases in ratings of psychosocial problems**

Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School

“The Relationship of School Breakfast to Psychosocial and Academic Functioning”

<http://archpedi.ama-assn.org> (search “past issues” for 1998 vol. 152 no. 9)

[http://www.findarticles.com/cf\\_0/m2250/n2\\_v37/20576437/p1/article.jhtml?term=psychosocial+functioning](http://www.findarticles.com/cf_0/m2250/n2_v37/20576437/p1/article.jhtml?term=psychosocial+functioning)

**“School districts have discovered that adding a breakfast program actually expands their revenue base and offsets some of the overhead costs of the lunch program. The breakfast program helps the bottom line.”**

-- Food Research and Action Center

**School breakfast resulted in:**

- **Increased math and reading scores**
- **Fewer nurse’s office visits**
- **Improved classroom behavior**
- **Improved attentiveness reported by teachers**
- **Improved performance reported by parents**

Minnesota Dept. of Children, Families and Learning & University of Minnesota

“School Breakfast Programs/Energizing the Classroom”

<http://cfl.state.mn.us/energize.pdf>

**“The majority of students who start their day with breakfast say they feel good, happy, and alert throughout their school day. The majority of students who don’t eat breakfast say they feel bad, angry, tired, sick and bored throughout the school day.”**

-- Dept. of Nutrition Sciences, University of Connecticut, February 1991

**Students eating school breakfast resulted in:**

- **Higher scores on assessment tests**
- **Findings that support previous research**
- **Positive effects from eating breakfast in the classroom vs. the cafeteria**

Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School

“Maryland Meals for Achievement”

[www.msde.state.md.us/programs/foodandnutrition/mmfa.pdf](http://www.msde.state.md.us/programs/foodandnutrition/mmfa.pdf)

**“The benefits [of the School Breakfast Program] include higher performance on standardized tests, better school attendance, lowered incidence of anemia, reduced need for costly special education.”**

-- Tufts University Center on Hunger, Poverty and Nutrition Policy, 1994

## Some of the nutritious foods you can serve at school:

| <b>Meat/Meat Alternate</b> | <b>Grains/Breads</b> | <b>Fruit/Vegetable</b> | <b>Mixed Dishes</b>       |
|----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Hard-boiled eggs           | Dry cereal           | Apple wedges           | Toasted cheese sandwich   |
| Sausage links or patty     | Pita bread           | Banana                 | Cheese and egg omelet     |
| Ham slice                  | Hot cereal           | Grapes                 | Peanut butter on toast    |
| Cottage cheese             | Biscuits             | Orange wedges          | Breakfast pizza           |
| Turkey sausage             | Muffins              | Applesauce             | Cheese and egg casserole  |
| Canadian bacon             | Bagels               | Peaches                | Breakfast burrito         |
| String cheese              | Raisin toast         | Fruit cocktail         | Egg and bagel sandwich    |
| Peanut butter              | Waffles              | Pineapple              | Peanut butter and apples  |
| Yogurt                     | French toast         | Pears                  | Pancake and sausage kabob |
| Scrambled eggs             | Pancakes             | Fruit cup              |                           |
| Cheese cubes               | French toast sticks  | Melon                  |                           |
|                            | Granola              | Raisins                |                           |
|                            | Coffee cake          | Strawberries           |                           |
|                            | Quick breads         | Vegetable juice        |                           |
|                            | Graham crackers      | 100% fruit juice       |                           |
|                            | Sweet rolls          | Hashbrowns             |                           |

# Sample Menus:

## Cold:

| <b>Monday</b>                  | <b>Tuesday</b>                         | <b>Wednesday</b>                  | <b>Thursday</b>                 | <b>Friday</b>                   |
|--------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Assorted cereal<br>Granola bar | Assorted cereal<br>Fruit and grain bar | Assorted cereal<br>Toaster pastry | Assorted cereal<br>Banana bread | Assorted cereal<br>Muffin       |
| Orange smiles<br>or 100% juice | Apple<br>or 100% juice                 | Banana<br>or 100% juice           | Melon<br>or 100% juice          | Assorted fruit<br>or 100% juice |
| Milk                           | Milk                                   | Milk                              | Milk                            | Milk                            |

## Hot:

| <b>Monday</b>            | <b>Tuesday</b>                        | <b>Wednesday</b>                     | <b>Thursday</b>               | <b>Friday</b>                   |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Oatmeal w/ toast         | Canadian bacon,<br>cheese and biscuit | French toast sticks<br>sausage patty | Bagel w/ egg<br>and cheese    | Pancakes<br>Sausage             |
| Raisins<br>or 100% juice | Apple<br>or 100% juice                | Banana<br>or 100% juice              | Melon medley<br>or 100% juice | Assorted fruit<br>or 100% juice |
| Milk                     | Milk                                  | Milk                                 | Milk                          | Milk                            |

# Meal Patterns for Breakfast

School food service have the choice of planning their meals based on a traditional or enhanced menu, where minimum requirements are based on age/grade group. Another method of menu planning is the nutrient standard or assisted nutrient standard method. These methods require a minimum of three menu items are offered to students. Milk and at least two side dishes must be offered. The differences between the methods are described below.

|  | <b>Traditional</b>   | <b>Enhanced</b>  | <b>NSMP or Assisted NSMP</b>  |
|--|--|--|---|
| Meat/Meat Alternate and/or Grains/Breads | Grades K-12: Two servings of Meat/Meat Alternate (1 ounce per serving or 1/2 egg) or two servings of Grains/Bread (1 slice of bread, roll or similar product or 1/2 cup cooked rice, pasta or cereal grains or 3/4 cup cold breakfast cereal) or one serving of Meat/Meat Alternate and one serving of Grains/Breads | Same as traditional<br>Optional (recommended)<br>Grades 7-12: Same as Grades K-12 plus one additional serving of Grains/Breads | At least two menu items: may be in any food items except a condiment or a food of minimal nutritional value that is not part of a menu item |
| 100% Juice/Fruit/Vegetable               | Grades K-12: 1/2 cup   | Same as traditional  |   |
| Milk                                     | Grades K-12: 8 oz. fluid milk as a beverage or on cereal or both   | Same as traditional  | Fluid milk as a beverage or cereal or both  |
| Offer versus Serve                       | Optional for senior high schools<br>Optional for lower grades<br>Students may decline one food item from any food component  | Same as traditional  | Optional for all grade levels<br>Students may decline a maximum of one menu item out of the three or more required menu items offered       |