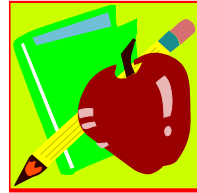




# Teachers



Teachers are important supporters in implementing a successful School Breakfast Program. Teachers have multiple roles within the school environment. They are not only educators of America's youth, but they also serve as role models for the students. Teachers support the School Breakfast Program because it helps them prepare their students to learn and succeed.

Cited studies show that eating a healthy breakfast improves attention span, academic performance and classroom behavior. In schools that have implemented the School Breakfast Program, teachers have found that concerns are easily addressed and the benefits far outweigh the costs.

## **A teacher may be concerned about...**

### **TEACHER WORKLOAD**

Teachers do many things besides teaching to support a successful learning environment. Studies show that school breakfast has a clear and direct impact on learning. Any additional work is handled by school food service staff, janitorial staff or the students themselves. Breakfast adds little or no work to the teaching day.

### **CLASSROOM ORDER**

When breakfast is served in the classroom, food service staff provide garbage bags, paper towels and other cleaning supplies for students to use. Students clean up themselves after eating their nutritious meal and are more ready to learn in the morning. The menu and methods of serving can limit both work and clean up for everyone.

### **TIME COMMITMENT**

Studies have shown that breakfast is consumed pretty quickly. No matter what the serving method, breakfast can take as little as 2 minutes (Grab 'n Go) or 10 minutes (Breakfast in the Classroom) or as long as the time available (Traditional Breakfast, Breakfast on the Bus).

### **CURRICULUM OPPORTUNITIES**

Some elementary, home economics, health education, and physical education teachers even choose to integrate school breakfast and nutrition education into their curriculum.

## Why School Breakfast?

- Because there is a link between breakfast and learning, students experience an improved learning environment.
- When breakfast is available at school, students have improved attendance, decreased tardiness and discipline referrals. The few minutes it takes to add breakfast to the school day are offset by students' active participation once their brains are fueled.
- Parents are pleased when breakfast is available at school for those mornings when their student is unable to eat when he or she first gets up or when breakfast at home is just not possible or convenient.
- School breakfast may reduce the need for you to keep snacks in the classroom for hungry students.

## There's More Than One Way to Serve Breakfast

Besides the traditional serving in the cafeteria, breakfast can be served in the classroom. This option (which takes approximately 10 minutes) allows students to eat breakfast while the teacher takes attendance or checks homework. Students serve and clean up themselves.

Another option is Breakfast After 1st Period. This option would replace the "milk break" which is not reimbursed by USDA.

Particularly popular in high schools is the Grab 'n Go breakfast. Bagged breakfasts can be placed in high traffic areas throughout school so students can pick them up and eat them between classes.

With Breakfast on the Bus, bagged breakfasts are handed to students as they step on the bus in the morning.

## What do teachers say about school breakfast?

- "It is a time to interact with the kids and to really know what is going on at home. It gives you a chance, if you had a problem with a child the day before to get him/her set on the right track for that day."
- "I felt I had enough to do with preparing for teaching that to have breakfast in my classroom would just be extra work and a big mess, but I found that I barely have to do any work at all, and the kids are so much better behaved that my lessons go much smoother. I would want to tell other teachers that it may seem like a hassle, but it really is minimal work with a lot of positive payoffs...I would be upset now if they took the breakfast program away."

# 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

**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/mmfafa.pdf](http://www.msde.state.md.us/programs/foodandnutrition/mmfafa.pdf)

**“Children in the School Breakfast Program were shown to have significantly higher standardized achievement test scores than eligible non-participants.”**

-- Tufts University School of Nutrition Science and Policy, 1998

**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>

**“Children who ate breakfast at school scored notably higher on most of the tests than children who ate breakfast at home and children who did not eat breakfast.”**

-- Archives of Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine, October, 1996

**Breakfast at school resulted in significant:**

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

Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School

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

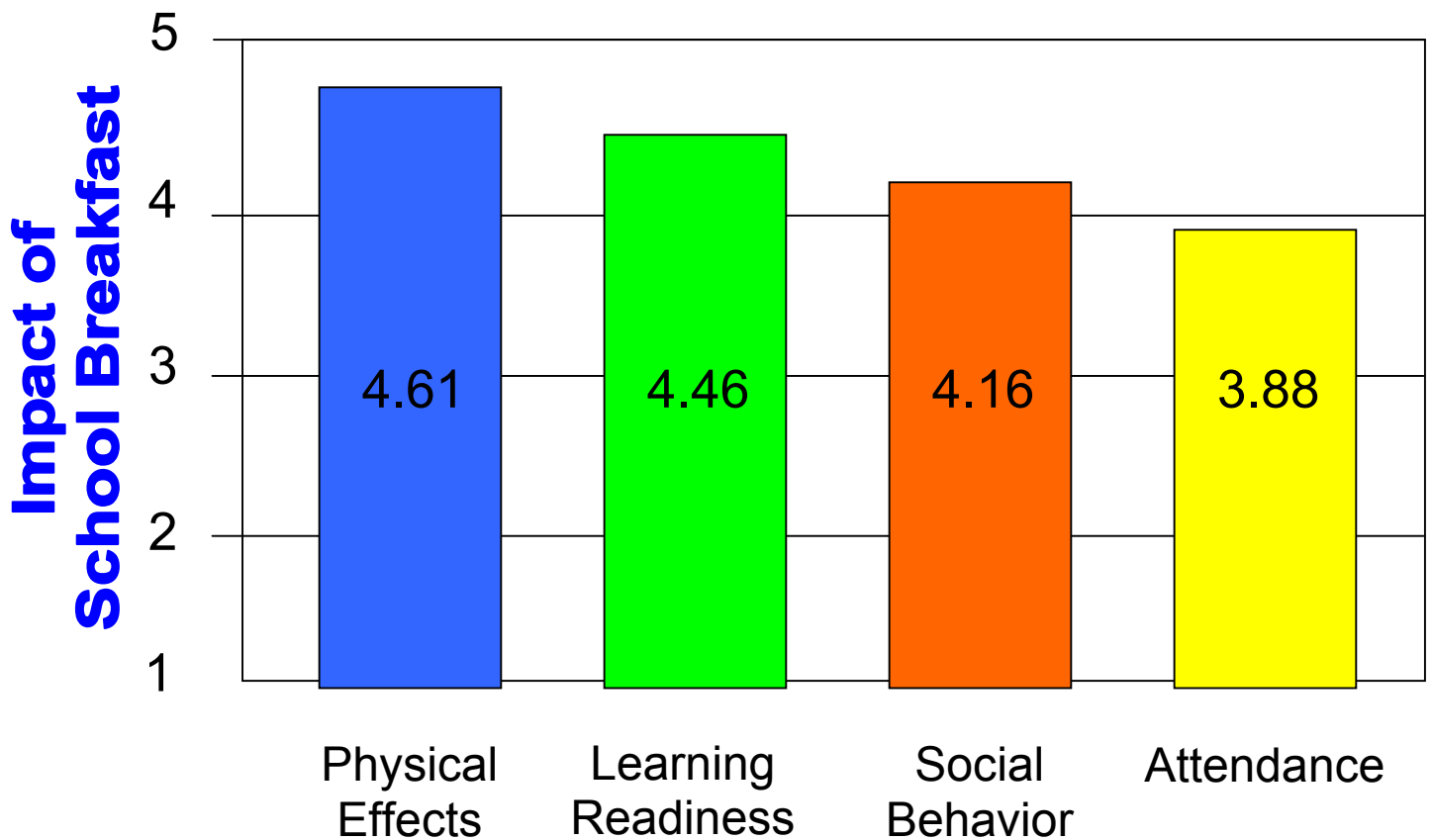
<http://archpedi.ama-assn.org> (search “past issues” for 1998 vol. 152 no. 9)

[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)

**“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

Teachers Agree with the Research that  
**Students who Participate  
in the School Breakfast Program  
do Better in School**



Note: Each effect was rated on a 1-5 scale, 1 being “impacts not at all” and 5 being “strongly impacts”.

*Minnesota Universal Breakfast Pilot Study: Year Three Report, 1996-1997,  
Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement, University of Minnesota.*