

## Action Plan for Food Service Concerns

When schools in North Dakota were surveyed about starting the School Breakfast Program, concerns were expressed about support from food service personnel, food service time and energy, and adequate space and facilities. This action plan addresses these concerns with possible solutions.

**CONCERN:** Why should we start a breakfast program?

**SOLUTION:** Mornings can be really crazy! School breakfast is an option when family schedules are rushed or a child is unable to eat early in the morning. Children ride the bus more than 30 minutes and get up as early as 5:30 a.m. Recent studies show a link between nutrition and learning. A nutritious breakfast helps students be more alert so they can actively participate in class. Providing a nourishing breakfast every day allows your staff to be a part of the educational team. It also provides you with a great opportunity to interact with your students in a more relaxed setting so you can get to know them better. When asked about supervision of the breakfast service, Dixie Schultz, Food Service Director for the Mandan Public Schools, stated that food service indicates there are no behavior problems as students are just waking up and are happy to sit with friends or siblings. She also pointed out that adding breakfast provides additional revenue to the program, with costs that can be easily controlled with careful planning.

**CONCERN:** Food service staff members wonder how they will have the time and energy to also prepare and serve breakfast.

**SOLUTION:** When compared to lunch, breakfast can be a simpler meal to prepare. Pre-packaged items can be used to keep labor costs at a minimum. Children serve themselves, and paper products are used to eliminate dishwashing. Just as with lunch, cycle menus can be utilized. Dixie Schultz, Food Service Director for the Mandan Public Schools, serves cereal, toast, juice and milk every day except Wednesdays when she varies the menu slightly by adding a cheese slice or a hot item.

**CONCERN:** Our cooler space may not be large enough to refrigerate enough milk and juice for both breakfast and lunch.

**SOLUTION #1:** If possible, modify the delivery schedule for milk and juices so that milk cooler space is adequate for quantities for both breakfast and lunch.

**SOLUTION #2:** Purchase a 12-case milk cooler to store the additional milk and juice needed for the program. Schools that need additional refrigerated storage can usually find a used unit. North Dakota has a State Surplus Department where schools can purchase surplus items for little or no cost.

**SOLUTION #3:** If the shelves are taken out of a home-type refrigerator, several milk crates can be stacked in the unit.