

ST. JOSEPH'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Diocese of Bismarck
K-6 school, 105 students

Terry Buringrud, principal of St. Joseph's Elementary in Williston, is a strong supporter of the school breakfast program, and he finds that his community is as well.

"Now, since in many families both parents are working, it's harder to be sure that kids get breakfast at home in the morning. And, there are more single-parent families. If the kids don't have something to start the day, they can't do as well academically," Buringrud says.



Another selling point for the program at St. Joseph's is the quality of the food selection. This year's two new cooks prepare scrambled eggs, hash browns, and waffles among other things. "We really have a nice variety of food in the program, and the popularity of the program is a result of that." Participation rates range from 20 to 30 percent, depending on the time of year.

Another component that Buringrud believes has simplified the operation of the program greatly is the school's use of computerized tracking. Students have a programmable card that they scan for meals and library cards. They punch in their personal numbers as they go through the line.

"The meal tracker has really helped," Buringrud says. "It allows us to focus more on the need we're taking care of, instead of counting change."

"I'm a firm believer in the breakfast program," he concludes. "Once it's started, it becomes a part of the school day."

MOTT/REGENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

296 students, two schools
Regent: K-6 and 7-8, 68 students
Mott: K-6 and 9-12, 228 students

The Mott/Regent School District is a rural district in southwestern North Dakota. The new district is the result of a recent consolidation of the Mott School District and the Regent School District, which were made up of one school building each. Mott already had the breakfast program before the consolidation, and then Regent joined in.

According to district Superintendent Myron Schweitzer, the program is well-liked by parents and teachers. "These days, we have a lot of two-parents working families, so it really helps out in the mornings. Plus, because of bussing, some kids eat very early in the morning, so by the time lunchtime rolls around, they are pretty hungry."

In rural areas such as Regent and Mott, students can spend quite a bit of time on the bus. The district faces a slight challenge with scheduling, as some bus schedules would have to be altered for students wanting breakfast, but the situation only affects two or three students.



For more information on The School Breakfast Program or other school meals programs, contact your school or call or write:

Child Nutrition and
Food Distribution Programs
Department of Public Instruction
600 East Boulevard Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58505-0440
701-328-2294

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Ave, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Discover School Breakfast, North Dakota!

State Success Stories



DEVIL'S LAKE SCHOOL DISTRICT

1,976 students

5 schools – 1 HS, 1 MS, 3 Elementaries

All five schools in Devil's Lake School District offer school breakfast, and participation is solid in each one – including the high school. About 100 students out of 650 participate in the breakfast program at Devil's Lake High School, says district Superintendent Steve Swiontek.

Both Swiontek and Head Cook Carol Deplazes say it is the quality and variety of the food that attracts students at the high school. Four types of cereals, bagels, toast, juice and milk are available every day. Deplazes also offers two special meals each week, including combinations such as scrambled eggs and ham, pancakes and sausage, and waffles and sausage. And the main attractions of breakfast, they say, are the homemade caramel and sweet rolls. "The caramel roll is a very popular item – it's very good, and there's a big demand for it," Swiontek says.

Additionally, Swiontek says that keeping the serving time consistent over the last five years has increased participation.

Districtwide, school breakfast has been successful for several key reasons, Swiontek says:

- A positive, supportive attitude toward breakfast from cooks and the administration
- Families with one or two working parents appreciate the convenience
- Good communication exists with parents and students. They are informed about the program through school newsletters, the city's weekly newspaper, and verbal communication.

DePlazes says that although it took the community a few years to warm up to the idea of school breakfast, she now feels that people are very supportive and aware of the benefits that breakfast provides in the morning.

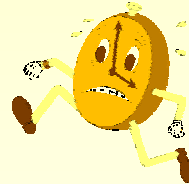
HURDSFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOL

Pleasant Valley Public School District #35

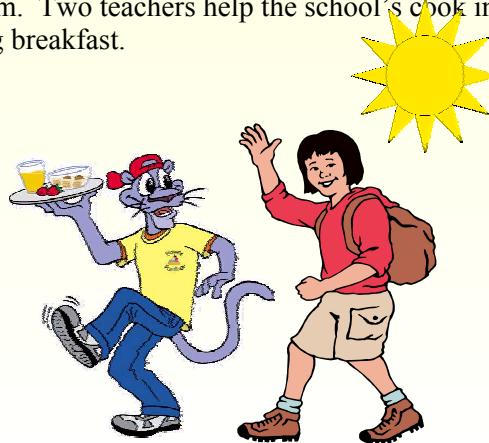
17 students, K-8

Julie Hartman, principal of Hurdsfield Public School, is extremely pleased with the school breakfast program at her school. With only 17 students, participation hasn't been a problem. But the school has made one unusual choice to make the program more effective, Hartman says. Originally, breakfast was served as soon as students arrived at school at 7:50. But the staff found students weren't really focusing on eating at that point – they were too busy catching up and getting ready for the day.

So, now the school serves breakfast at 8:45 a.m., after the first class. Hartman says they find that students are much calmer and benefit from the service more at that time. "The kids are too wound up after getting off the bus," she says. Breakfast is served for 15 minutes, and everyone eats together. All students participate, although one sometimes chooses not to eat.



Besides the schedule adjustment, Hartman says she has found no real barriers to offering school breakfast. Both parents and teachers support the program. Two teachers help the school's cook in serving breakfast.



MINOT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

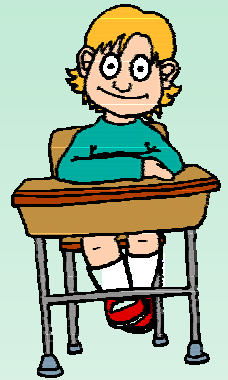
6,887 students

1 High School, 4 Middle Schools

13 Elementaries

In the Minot Public Schools, the small, intimate environment of school breakfast creates a special program, says Jill Bruce, Food Services Director. About 15 percent of all students eat school breakfast. Because it's a small group in each school, "It's a such a neat environment, and the staff really gets to know the kids," Bruce says.

Bruce said the program has been successful, and teachers clearly notice a difference in the children who eat breakfast. "We've seen a decrease in the number of kids going to the nurse with sick tummies, and the kids that participate are much more attentive in class and not as anxious for lunch," Bruce says.



The most difficult part of running the program, Bruce says, involves staffing. Because Minot is a larger district with many schools, not all schools have the equipment to prepare meals. Therefore, some meals are transported to elementary schools. At those schools, kitchen staff have nothing to do between serving breakfast and serving lunch, so they have to work a split shift. And Bruce says it is hard to find people who want to do that.

But aside from that, Bruce says there haven't been other barriers in running the program. Breakfast is served in 14 of the district's 18 schools. And one final tip in having a successful breakfast program: "The friendliness of the staff really makes a difference," Bruce says.

