

Breakfast in the Classroom

A Case Study

Memphis City Schools

Memphis, TN



June 2013

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Acknowledgments	3
Memphis City Schools: Combining the Ingredients for BIC Success	4
District Leaders Recognized the Need and Supported the Process.....	4
Pilot School Success: Role Model and Advocate for BIC.....	5
Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom: The BIC Expansion Challenge.....	6
Next Step: Enhanced BIC Marketing and Strategic Outreach to Principals	9
Continual Quality Improvement: Menu, Equipment and Procedures.....	11
Results: Win-Win for MCS Students and Nutrition Services Division	11
Appendix.....	13

Introduction

This case study details the implementation of the universal breakfast in the classroom pilot in fourteen elementary and middle schools in the Memphis, Tennessee City School District (MCS) during SY 2010-2011.

This pilot was funded by the Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom (PBIC), a partnership of four national organizations, Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), National Association of Elementary School Principals Foundation (NAESPF), National Education Association Health Information Network (NEA HIN) and the School Nutrition Foundation (SNF), funded by the Walmart Foundation. The primary metric of success for the pilot program, implemented in five (5) districts nationwide, was the additional number of students eating breakfast.

PBIC worked with MCS to engage all the local stakeholders needed for successful implementation of the program: teachers, principals, paraeducators, custodial staff, school nutrition staff, school administrators, parents and anti-hunger advocates. Convening the local stakeholders at the beginning of the implementation assured a successful roll out of the program that ultimately resulted in a large scale the district-wide implementation of breakfast in the classroom.

To assist food service operators in determining whether universal breakfast in the classroom is a financially viable option, the appendix of this case study has a spreadsheet study of revenue vs. expenses at the site level. This spreadsheet is meant as a starting point for calculating the cost associated with breakfast in the classroom as each individual school district operates under different parameters.

Acknowledgments

Funding for this case study was provided by the National Dairy Council.

This case study was written by Mary Jo Tuckwell, RD, MPH, Technical Director, Consulting Services, InTEAM Associates, Santa Monica, CA.

Thank you to Anthony Geraci, Executive Director, MCS Nutrition Services; Alexis Caston, NET Coordinator; Calvin Johnson, School Operations Coordinator; Hitesh Haria, Deputy Superintendent for Business Operations as well as the staff and leadership team of Memphis City Schools for their time and sharing the success of the MCS breakfast in the classroom program.

School Nutrition Foundation
120 Waterfront Street
Suite 300
National Harbor, MD 20745
snf@schoolnutrition.org
www.schoolnutrition.org/snf
www.beyondbreakfast.org

Memphis City Schools: Combining the Ingredients for BIC Success

How was Memphis City Schools able to expand from two Breakfast in the Classroom (BIC) pilot schools in the fall of 2010 to 79 schools serving BIC in September 2012? BIC success in Memphis City Schools (MCS) can be attributed to the interaction of several essential ingredients including:

- Support of district leaders who value student health as well as academic achievement and program financial goals.
- External sources of funding to jump-start the process and reduce financial barriers.
- Involvement of district and building stakeholders in a defined needs assessment, action planning and problem-solving process.
- Development of standard BIC delivery models, including following a cycle menu, types of equipment needed and accountability procedures to be used.
- Identification of Building Principal Champions for BIC expansion within the district.
- Implementation of a strategic marketing and outreach process to grow BIC within the district.

This case study illustrates how each of these ingredients contributed to the district's ability to rapidly grow BIC. The expansion of BIC has produced win-win results for MCS students and the Division of Nutrition Services (DNS). Let's take a closer look at their story.

District Leaders Recognized the Need and Supported the Process

Memphis City Schools is the 21st largest district in the nation serving 106,262 students in 203 schools grades K-12. Approximately 84% percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced price meals. In 2010, school breakfast was offered in all school locations however the average daily participation (ADP) at individual school sites ranged from 24% to 60% of those students in attendance. The usual list of barriers to eating school breakfast in the cafeteria had been identified, including the bus schedule, students who walked to school arriving late, lack of staff for early morning supervision, and limited time available before the start of the instructional day. The question was how best to reduce those barriers in order to ensure that all students had access to a healthy breakfast and could start their instructional day ready to learn.

When Dr. Kriner Cash became MCS Superintendent in 2008, improving the health of students was one of the tenants of his educational reform efforts. Dr. Cash recognized that healthy children make better students. Thus his vision for the school system started with the goal of fostering healthy minds and bodies which he believed would produce happy, satisfied and productive adults. Improving breakfast choices and offering breakfast in the classroom were viewed as activities supporting his overall goal of fostering student health.

Another administrative champion of BIC was Mr. Hitesh Haria, Deputy Superintendent for Business Operations, who had witnessed the success of Breakfast 2 Go in his previous school district, St. Paul, MN. Mr. Haria was not only passionate about feeding children as a humanitarian cause, but also recognized that the CNC, a department for which he had administrative oversight, could gain substantial

federal reimbursement revenue from increasing student participation in the School Breakfast Program (SBP). Thus, in December 2010, Mr. Haria eagerly lent his support to the opportunity for MCS to apply for BIC grant initiative funded by the Walmart Foundation.

However, it was Dr. Vista Suarez Fletcher, Director of CNC from 2008 - 2010, who pursued a \$10,000 Silent Hero Grant from the *Got Breakfast?* Foundation that provided the catalyst for starting a BIC pilot at Hawkins Mill Elementary School. The grant funded Hawkins Mill BIC pilot provided the opportunity for MCS stakeholders to learn what works for them and their successful experience created a school team of BIC advocates. The advocacy roles of the Hawkins Mill educators in “selling BIC” to colleagues will be discussed later in this case study.

With Dr. Fletcher’s departure from MCS in August 2010, it was Interim Director Calvin Johnson, who accepted the challenge of guiding the Nutrition Services staff to work as a team, developing an action plan, budget and an outreach process for rapid expansion of BIC under a much larger Walmart Foundation supported Breakfast in the Classroom grant. The grant funding resulted in transition from serving traditional breakfast in the cafeteria to offering BIC in 20 additional schools within 3 months. That was an amazing achievement!

In October 2011 Anthony Geraci became the Executive Director of Nutrition Services. Tony, as he is fondly referred to, identified his Nutrition Services philosophy as “food on tray is a by-product, and putting healthy kids in front of educators ready to learn is the product we produce.” Clearly with this goal in mind, his focus has been to encourage Nutrition Service Area Supervisors to continue recruiting additional schools to join the BIC movement. Strategies used by Area Supervisors to increase the number of schools utilizing BIC models will be examined in more depth.

As you can see, the educational vision and goals of the Superintendent fostered an organizational climate that encouraged pursuit of student health related initiatives such as BIC. Nutrition Services leaders were empowered to seek out opportunities to facilitate program changes that supported district goals.

Pilot School Success: Role Model and Advocate for BIC

In the winter of school year 2009-2010 more than 90% of the 405 students at Hawkins Mill Elementary School were eligible to receive free school breakfast, but only an average of 198 students were eating school breakfast in the cafeteria each morning. Principal Carla Franklin knew the most commonly identified barriers were also keeping many of her students from eating school breakfast. As a result, classroom teachers as well as the school nurse frequently dealt with hungry students unable to focus on learning.

The *Got Breakfast?* Foundation’s Silent Hero grant, secured by Nutrition Services Director Dr. Suarez Fletcher, made it possible for Ms. Franklin and her building stakeholder team to collaborate with Nutrition Services Area Supervisor, Spencer Bradshaw, to identify the menu options, equipment needs and accountability procedures required to successfully implemented BIC at Hawkins Mill. Nutrition Services menu planners, Kim Stewart and Liz Purnell, developed a cycle menu offering two entree choices including 1 hot choice, as well as milk and juice. For students in the lower grades, breakfast

items were packed in two insulated bags per classroom and placed on a wire cart along with a student roster for distribution to classrooms by the foodservice staff. A Grab N Go breakfast distribution model, with students entering PIN numbers at the point of service, was used for students in the upper grades. Letters were sent to parents and teachers explaining the reasons behind piloting the concept of serving breakfast in the classroom. Prior to launching the program, Dr. Suarez Fletcher attended a PTA meeting to introduce the plans for implementing a Universal Free BIC program to the parents and staff. Nutrition Services staff drafted procedures for BIC meal service, accountability, handling left over items and clean-up were developed. With some collaborative planning and a little creative problem-solving in the initial start-up phase, eating breakfast in the classroom soon became routine at Hawkins Mill.



Figure 1 Cart, Insulated Bag and Roster



Figure 2 Breakfast Menu Choices

By May 2010, BIC participation at the school had jumped to an average of 361 students each day. Students were enjoying eating breakfast in their classrooms, tardiness had declined and so had morning visits to the school nurse. Nutrition Services Manager, Kathleen Fowler, and the Hawkins Mill staff, seeing the benefits to students as well as the hassle free meal delivery process, became enthusiastic supporters of BIC. Carla Franklin became the first “Principal Champion” for the BIC initiative for Memphis City Schools. To promote the health and academic value of offering BIC, Dr. Suarez Fletcher utilized grant funds to produce a video documenting the Hawkins Mill success story.

Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom: The BIC Expansion Challenge

When the Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom contacted MCS in the fall of 2010, the timing could not have been more ideal for the district to consider applying for a Breakfast in the Classroom grant funded by the Walmart Foundation. With the Hawkins Mill pilot already showing positive results, Nutrition Services staff members were eager to plan for expansion of a Universal Free BIC within the district.

By late November 2010, the Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom, representing an alliance between Food Research and Action, National Association of Elementary School Principals Foundation, National Education Association Health Information Network, and School Nutrition Foundation, negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the MCS. The MOU established an achievement goal of a

7% increase in the district's average daily breakfast participation by May 31, 2011. This target percentage translated to serving, on average, an additional 2,160 breakfast meals per day in the schools selected to adopt BIC. So how did Nutrition Services determine which schools would be chosen and how many total sites would be recruited into the BIC initiative to reach the participation goal?

The alliance, Partners for BIC, was established as a collaborative model at the national level. Likewise, the Partners envisioned stakeholders at the district and site level to be actively engaged in planning and implementing BIC. Consultants from inTEAM Associates were hired to assist MCS staff in engaging district and community stakeholders, completing a needs assessment, and developing project action plans and corresponding budgets for each selected school as well as a district action plan and budget.

Target schools were those with greater than 80% of enrolled students eligible for free and reduced priced meals. Current breakfast participation statistics were compared to enrollment and daily attendance data to identify the schools with low rates of breakfast participation and thus capture the greatest gain in additional participation.

Onsite assessments of potential BIC schools were conducted by the consultants and Nutrition Services Area Supervisors. The site visits included meeting with the building principal and cafeteria manager to determine current barriers to breakfast participation, level of support for the BIC concept, and which breakfast delivery model might work best at the site. An assessment tool was used to gather data related to the school's enrollment, average daily attendance, current breakfast participation, number of first hour classrooms, adequacy of kitchen refrigeration and dry storage space, and building's physical layout including presence of portable classrooms, stairs and elevators. A list of equipment to be purchased with grant funds was developed with the assistance of Jim Cruthirds, Equipment and Facilities Supervisor.

A template site action plan was collaboratively developed with the Nutrition Services team. After the consultants left each Area Supervisor was charged with conducting follow up visits with principals in their supervisory region to gain or confirm their buy-in. The Hawkins Mill video was frequently shown as a lead-in to discussing the merits of BIC and how the program might work in their building. Principal Carla Franklin conducted a sharing session for principals and managers to discuss BIC concerns. Area Supervisors worked with each principal to develop an action plan for their school identifying what action steps to be completed, by whom, when and resources required. Target participation goals were set for each site and a total of 20 schools were selected to reach the goal of increasing breakfast average participation by 2,160 meals.

By January 2011, Alexis Caston, Coordinator, and Phyllis Glover, Area Supervisor, had completed the district wide action plan with emphasis on staff training, development of standard procedures for each delivery model, and a comprehensive marketing plan to create awareness and support for the project. A final project budget was prepared, including a cost benefit ranking for each proposed site to be funded. The cost per additional breakfast projected to be served at each select schools ranged from \$39.22 to \$118.22. The action plan and budget to support the adding 20 BIC schools was submitted to the national Partners for BIC for 20 sites and district level training and marketing activities. The plan, with a corresponding budget of \$248,448.98, was approved by the Partners for funding under the Walmart Foundation initiative.

The project began in March 2011 with Nutrition Services team members working together to procure the equipment needed for each site (Figures 3 & 4), train site staff on delivery and accountability procedures, work with MCS Communications Department to develop BIC promotional materials, and assist in presenting BIC start up plans to teachers and parents at each location. A staggered start-up schedule was developed for the new BIC sites within an Area Supervisors territory. The Area Supervisors guided the start-up process of each new BIC site and worked collaboratively with the building principals to resolve any issues. Lessons learned from each start-up were shared among the CNC team so that support materials and procedures could be refined.

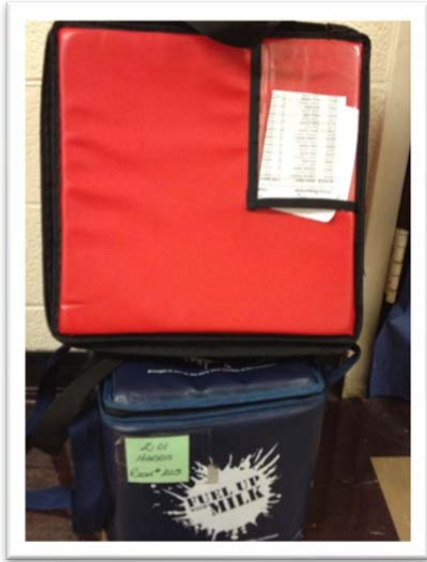


Figure 3 Insulated Hot and Cold Food Carriers



Figure 4 Grant Funded Refrigeration

The roll out of 20 BIC schools during spring of 2011 was a phenomenal success. Additional breakfast participation shattered the target goal of 2,160 with the 20 school total daily average participation increase reaching 3,791. Students were eating a nutritious breakfast and ready to learn. The Nutrition Services staff members were proud of their ability to meet the challenge of making a difference in the lives of so many MCS students. Participating building principals, teachers and parents were excited about the results in the classroom. District administration was appreciative of the positive impact on the educational environment as well as the foodservice financial bottom line. The frequently quoted saying, “success breeds success,” was about to become true for MCS as they reached the BIC “tipping point.”

Partners for BIC Expansion Pilot Schools

School Name	Oct. 2010 Breakfast ADP	May 2011 Breakfast ADP	Change in Breakfast ADP
A. Maceo Walker MS	222	238	16
Belleview MS	170	497	327
Crump	430	865	435
Double Tree	154	399	245
Germanshire	275	743	468
Goodlett	221	363	142
Grandview	298	375	77
Hamilton	198	224	26
Hickory Ridge	327	314	-13
Humes MS	150	247	97
Kingsbury	175	504	329
Lanier MS	89	219	130
Magnolia	207	311	104
Oak Forest	416	662	246
Raleigh Egypt MS	164	394	230
Rozelle	144	271	127
Sharpe	201	211	10
Sherwood	254	365	111
South Park	276	529	253
Wells Station	238	669	431
Total	4609	8400	3791

Source: MCS Participation Statistics

Next Step: Enhanced BIC Marketing and Strategic Outreach to Principals

The Nutrition Services staff members were proud of their ability to meet the challenge of making a difference in the lives of so many MCS students. Participating building principals, teachers and parents were excited about the results in the classroom. In fact, Alonzo Brown, Principal at Crump Elementary was so pleased with results at his school he took on the lead role of “BIC Principal Champion” for MCS. District administration was appreciative of the positive impact on the educational environment as well as thankful for the additional revenue to support the foodservice financial bottom line. The frequently quoted saying, “success breeds success,” was about to become true for MCS as well. The next step was for Nutrition Services to standardize the resources materials and Area Supervisor outreach process to grow the number of schools offering BIC.

During the summer of 2011 MCS Communications Department and Claudia Jones, Network Specialist, completed the grant funded actives of developing attractive student breakfast placements and colorful promotional BIC flyers in English as well as Spanish (See Figure 5). Their marketing efforts to increase community awareness included addition of a highly visible BIC banner to one of the CNC delivery trucks (See Figure 6).

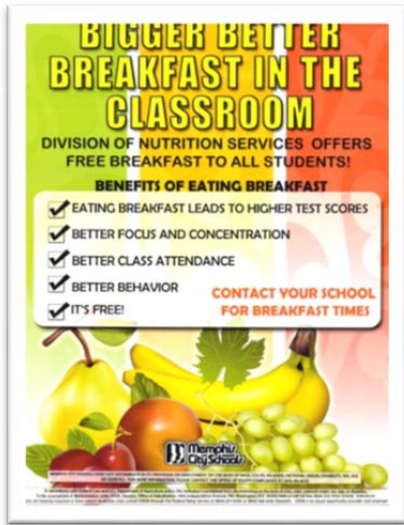


Figure 5 BIC Promotional Flyer



Figure 6 BIC Banner on Truck Creates Community Awareness

The Area Supervisors reviewed lessons learned from working with building stakeholders during the grant projects. As a result they developed “Best Practices” action steps and resource materials for promoting the expansion of BIC. Nutrition Services standardize their BIC outreach materials and approach to encourage each Area Supervisor to:

- 1) Develop a positive, can-do relationship with building principals in their service area
- 2) Determine the building’s readiness to consider BIC
- 3) Introduce the BIC alternative by sharing the Hawkins Mill video with the principal
- 4) Request “Principal Champion” discuss BIC option with principal colleague
- 5) Match with a “buddy school” for a tour of BIC in action to see the calm morning routine
- 6) Provide a packet of BIC information including best practices, procedures and BIC flyer
- 7) Assess potential equipment and staffing needs for BIC
- 8) Schedule follow up visit to discuss start-up plan with principal and other building stakeholders

During school year 2011-2012, Nutrition Services effectively used this outreach model to implement BIC in an additional 51 schools. Five additional schools implemented BIC when school began in August 2012 and BIC ADP at the end of August was 27,872. Two more schools transitioned to BIC in September, bringing the total to 79 BIC sites. In addition, Area Supervisors had already scheduled several more sites to join the program during the first semester. Clearly, the Nutrition Services approach to building outreach, assessment of needs and guided assistance during site implementation of a standardized BIC delivery model has contributed to their ability to gain principal acceptance and grow the program.

Continual Quality Improvement: Menu, Equipment and Procedures

From the outset the Division of Nutrition Services desired to offer two main breakfast choices, including a hot breakfast item, on the BIC menu to ensure a high level of student participation and satisfaction. Initially a 3 week cycle menu was developed which has been modified to a 4 week cycle based on student feedback and menu planning goals. The BIC menus have been planned following Traditional Food Based Menu guidelines. The new Breakfast Meal Pattern requirements will be implemented at the start of the 2013 school year.

Nutrition Services menu planners continually test new products and recipes to identify products that meet the requirements and lend themselves to packaging, holding and classroom consumption. They hold a student food show each January to get feedback on products for the next school year. This year, Executive Director Anthony Geraci led an initiative to incorporate more “homemade” products on district menus prepared in the Child Nutrition Center’s central kitchen. Joe King, Coordinator for the Central Kitchen, has worked with staff to develop several bakery items for BIC. In addition, Mr. King has been testing the use of Central Kitchen packaging equipment to combine breakfast items such as juice and cereal in a single container for shipment to BIC schools (See figure 7). Site kitchen employees have also been perfecting the assembly and distribution of BIC insulated food bags to the classrooms (See figures 8 and 9)



Figure 7 Centralized Pre-Packaging



Figure 8 Establish Efficient Work Methods



Figure 9 Select Bag Size and Carts for Efficiency

Results: Win-Win for MCS Students and Nutrition Services Division

When school year 2011-2012 ended in May, 72 sites were participating in BIC, with a total average daily participation (ADP) of 24,271 and a district-wide total breakfast ADP of 46,205. In just two years, the

average daily breakfast participation had increased by almost 7,000 students. There were numerous anecdotal stories from BIC schools of improved student attentiveness as well as reduced morning visits to the school nurse. It is evident to many stakeholders that BIC has demonstrated positive effect on reducing student hunger and increasing learning readiness. More recently MCS administration has even begun to track correlations between schools participating in BIC and improvement in student test scores.

So what impact has BIC had on the Division of Nutrition Services? Nutrition Services has experienced a significant amount of positive recognition within the district and community as a result of BIC. In addition, the tremendous increase in breakfast participation has added substantial revenue to the Division. The growth in breakfast participation during the past two years has allowed Nutrition Services to capture almost \$3.5 million more dollars in federal breakfast reimbursement.

Fiscal Year	Total Breakfast Meals Served	Breakfast ADP (180 days)	Federal Breakfast Reimbursement
2011-2012	8,247,613	45,820	\$13,736,312
2010-2011	7,016,964	38,983	\$11,426,523
2009-2010	6,320,412	35,113	\$10,268,350

What, if any, additional costs were incurred by Nutrition Services to implement BIC as an alternative to feeding students in the cafeteria? The capital outlay by Nutrition Services for BIC related equipment, staff training and marketing for the initial 21 sites was minimal since these costs were supported by grant funds. Subsequently, the average amount budgeted by Nutrition Services to equip a school to start BIC has been \$4,300 for insulated food and milk transport bags, garbage cans with dollies, and wire transport carts. If the school's BIC needs assessment reveals kitchen refrigeration capacity will be exceeded, than another \$4,300 is budgeted for adding a reach-in milk case and refrigerator. Additional labor costs have been nominal since Area Supervisor used data from their site assessments to collaboratively plan with site Managers the most effective ways to incorporate BIC tasks into daily staff work schedules. When needed additional labor time has been added to the beginning or ending of existing employee work schedules instead of adding new employees to the payroll.

As the federal reimbursement chart above reveals, increased student participation in BIC has resulted in a substantial financial gain for Nutrition Services. Thus, when thoughtfully implemented, BIC is clearly a winning combination for students, school administration and school foodservice operations.

School Nutrition Foundation Case study worksheet for breakfast in the classroom implementation

Riverview Elementary

Enrollment	415	Free	345	83%
ADA	398	Reduced	19	5%
Number of classrooms	20	Paid	51	12%

	# of students	% participation
Current participation	146	37% (current overall participation/ADA)
Goal participation	360	90% (goal participation/ADA)

October

Daily Revenue

Current	Meal Price	Reimbursement	Number of students	Total
Free	\$ -	\$ 1.85	125	\$ 231.25
Reduced	\$ 0.30	\$ 1.55	7	\$ 12.95
Paid	\$ 0.80	\$ 0.27	14	\$ 14.98
			146	\$ 259.18
Universal BIC				
Free	\$ -	\$ 1.85	320	\$ 592.00
Reduced	\$ -	\$ 1.55	15	\$ 23.25
Paid	\$ -	\$ 0.27	25	\$ 6.75
			360	\$ 622.00

Daily Expenses

	Current (146 meals)	Total
Food cost	\$ 124.10 (Meal cost = \$.85)	\$ 124.10
Labor cost	\$ 59.50 (3.5 hours at \$17/hour)	\$ 59.50
		\$ 183.60
Universal BIC (360 meals)		
Food cost	\$ 306.00 (Meal cost = \$.85)	\$ 306.00
Labor cost	\$ 102.00 (6 hours at \$17/hour)	\$ 102.00
Consumables	\$ 21.60 (\$.06 per meal)	\$ 21.60
Expense amortization	\$ 10.98 (\$9,880/900*)	\$ 10.98
		\$ 440.58



Education, Research and Scholarship

www.schoolnutrition.org/bic

This spreadsheet is intended as a guide. Each school site has different needs. Those needs should be taken into account as final determination is made to implement breakfast in the classroom. All rights reserved 2013.

Start up expenses Year 1

Storage containers	\$ 1,900.00
Milk cooler	\$ 2,000.00
Insulated bags	\$ 1,080.00 (2 per classroom for hot and cold items)
Waste containers	\$ 240.00 (20 classrooms at \$12 each)
Supplies	\$ 900.00
Total	\$ 6,120.00

Total 5 year expenses **\$9,880.00** (replacement and misc. additional supplies)

Assumption : 5 year amortization period
180 serving days per year x 5 = 900 days*

Analysis

Monthly	Daily	# of serving days	
Current			
Revenue less expenses	\$ 75.58	20	\$ 1,511.60
Universal BIC			
Revenue less expenses	\$ 181.42	20	\$ 3,628.44
Annually			
Current	\$ 75.58	180	\$ 13,604.40
Universal BIC	\$ 181.42	180	\$ 32,656.00