



Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom Summit

April 2019

Key Themes

Overview

Diverse participants at the **Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom (PBIC) 2019 Breakfast Summit** celebrated the achievements of PBIC funded schools and districts, shared challenges and best practices encountered during planning and implementation, and discussed the future of the breakfast in the classroom (BIC) model.

Funded by the Walmart Foundation, PBIC came together in 2010 in response to a shared passion for childhood nutrition and its potential for improving educational outcomes and child health. Members of the partnership are the Food Research & Action Center (FRAC), the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) Foundation, the National Education Association (NEA) Foundation, and the School Nutrition Foundation (SNF).

Since the beginning of PBIC's partnership, more than 70 school districts have received over \$12 million in grant funding, as well as technical assistance, to develop and implement breakfast programs. The grant makes breakfast accessible to an additional 130,000 students at more than 500 schools in 26 states.

Key Themes

Schools play a large and important role in addressing childhood hunger.

More than 17% of US children live in poverty, and more than 40 million children go hungry at some point each day. Schools can change that by offering universal free meals to students.

For students who don't know when or where they will eat their next meal, participating in breakfast and lunch at school ensures they are receiving reliable nutritious meals throughout the week.

Breakfast in the Classroom feeds both bodies and minds.

Eating a nutritious breakfast at school ensures that students have energy to focus on learning. Hungry kids are more likely to leave class to visit the school nurse with stomachaches and hunger headaches, and the principal's office for behavior related issues.

With BIC, more time is spent in class focused on learning, academic performance and test scores improve, attendance improves, and students come to school knowing they will be fed.

Relationships built during breakfast time teach social and emotional learning skills.

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to interact with themselves and the world around them. Teachers are finding that sharing breakfast with their classes gives them the chance to teach and model SEL skills.

Once included as part of in-school learning, as academic pressure has increased, the onus of teaching and modeling SEL has often been left out of classrooms and has fallen mainly to families. But some family situations are not set up to teach SEL for a variety of reasons. BIC is enabling schools to bring more SEL back to the classroom and fill in this significant learning gap.

Community eligibility allows all students to receive a free breakfast at school.

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) enables eligible districts to feed all students breakfast and lunch at no cost to the families, with a reduced administrative burden to school nutrition staff. Districts are reimbursed for these meals, and students are more likely to participate because all peers are receiving the same benefits; they are not being singled out.

When breakfast is convenient for students, they are more likely to participate in it.

Different models are used to get breakfasts to students, depending on the logistics of the building and/or district. Some schools still encourage students to come to the cafeteria, while others offer kiosks in high traffic areas. Bringing breakfast to students in their classrooms is common at the elementary school level. Some even provide breakfast in the school office for tardy students.

Schools should plan and pilot with different models to determine which breakfast delivery methods work best for their student population. Program tweaking and redesign are often necessary to increase participation rates.

Partnerships are a key ingredient of successful BIC programs.

PBIC has learned that partnership is essential to success. State agencies can help break down barriers with teachers, school nutrition staff, and even parents. They can provide marketing and informational materials that educate the community on the benefits of BIC.

Successful BIC programs also partner with school staff — teachers, administrators, school nutrition professionals, and custodians — as well as with students and parents. Educating all of these stakeholders, including them in program planning and design, and encouraging and responding to feedback can turn into the buy-in necessary to make BIC programs a success.

Session Summaries

Welcoming Remarks and Setting the Stage

Patti Montague, CEO, School Nutrition Foundation; **Sara Sneed**, President & CEO, The NEA Foundation; **Jim Weill**, President, Food Research and Action Center; **Mary Begalle**, Emcee and Moderator (M)

Overview

Opening the **Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom (PBIC) 2019 Breakfast Summit**, leaders from Partnering organizations shared the success of the PBIC program and the benefits school children have received from this program over the years.

Key Takeaways

- **Since 2010, PBIC has made breakfast accessible to more than 130,000 students.**
- Since its creation in 2010, the PBIC has worked with more than 70 school districts, providing more than \$12 million in grant money, as well as technical assistance **to help implement BIC programs in over 500 schools in 26 states. This has resulted in making school breakfasts accessible to more than 130,000 students today.**
- Funded by the Walmart Foundation, the PBIC program relies on the support of school staff members, educators, school nutrition professionals, principals, parents, and students.

“The result is not just less hunger, although that alone would be ample justification. The result is also helping kids learn.”

—JIM WEILL

- Children who eat breakfast can spend more time in class focused on learning. There are fewer trips to the school nurse because of hunger, and less disciplinary time spent out of class because of behavioral problems.

Through the Years: The Impact of Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom: A Discussion with School Nutrition Operators

Debi Rowley, Director of Operations, Dallas Independent School District, TX; **Julia Bauscher**, Director, School and Community Nutrition, Jefferson County Schools, KY; **Sommer Purvis**, Administrator of Special Programs for Child Nutrition, Livingston Parish School District, LA; **Ryan Cengel**, Dietitian, Austin Independent School District, TX; **Sandy Ford**, Chair, School Nutrition Foundation (M)

Overview

Beginning with the first round of funding in 2010 through the fourth and latest round in 2017, PBIC grant recipients have experienced the benefits of offering breakfast in the classroom. The PBIC program has been such a success for many districts that they are looking at ways to improve their breakfast programs and increase reach, even to their non-BIC schools.

Panelists from each funding cycle discussed their breakfast programs and what they are doing to grow and improve them.

Key Takeaways

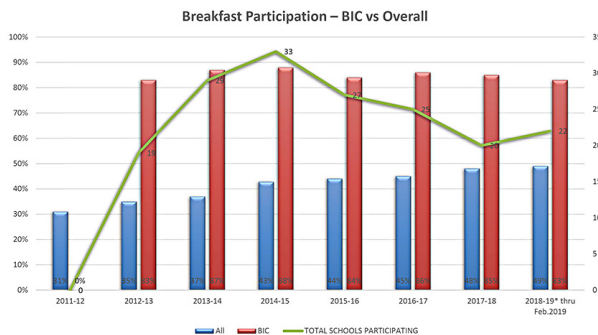
Cycle 1 (2010-2011): Nearly a decade later, Dallas ISD continues to grow its BIC program

- As one of the five PBIC pilot districts in 2010, Dallas Independent School District (ISD), encourages both students and staff to participate in BIC.
- Two years after the initial success of the PBIC grant, Dallas ISD expanded breakfast-in-the-classroom to all students, district-wide.
- Dallas ISD now offers a tardy breakfast program, so students who are late can get food in the office when they check in. The district also engages students with contests focusing on marketing the BIC program at the high school level.
- The district is currently looking at ways to simplify the model. Some schools are replacing delivery to the classroom with kiosk and grab-and-go models in an effort to reduce cost, waste, and program complexity.

Cycle 2 (2012-2013): Participation in breakfast has increased at Jefferson County's PBIC schools

- Since its initial PBIC implementation in 2012-2013, Jefferson County Public Schools has seen a significant improvement in breakfast participation at its BIC schools compared to its non-BIC schools.
- Whether a school participates in the program is up to the administrators; this year, 22 schools are participating, while in the past, as many as 33 were part of the BIC program.

Breakfast participation in Jefferson County Public Schools



BIC allows Jefferson County to look at alternative breakfast models that may grow breakfast participation, including grab-and-go, second chance breakfast between first and second lunch, and breakfast items in vending machines.

Cycle 4 (2017-2019): BIC revenue is put back into the Livingston Parish general education funds

- Initially qualifying for CEP after a catastrophic flood in August 2016, Livingston Parish School District received PBIC grants in 2017 and 2018.

“The financial impact for breakfast in the classroom creates an additional \$900,000 in revenue per year which allows us to operate in the black.”

– SOMMER PURVIS

- At its nine BIC schools, the district has seen increased participation in the program and \$900,000 in additional breakfast revenue per year, which the school district is putting back into its general education funds.

Cycle 4 (2017-2019): Austin ISD is working on reducing waste in the BIC program

- Austin ISD was awarded a grant in 2017 to fund BIC for 39 schools. With a phased roll-out underway, 26 schools are currently participating.
- The focus has shifted from the startup activities of purchasing equipment and training staff to decreasing waste. Steps to decrease waste include:
 - **Pre-ordering** allows students to select menu items ahead of time so the cafeteria can prepare only the food they expect will be eaten.
 - **Scratch cooking** provides students with quality fresh food, making it more likely they will eat the food.
 - **Composting** is available in cafeterias and some classrooms.

Where PBIC Grant Money Is Used

When starting up a BIC program, PBIC grant money is often used to purchase equipment, train and hire staff, and market the program to students, teachers, and parents. Spending typically includes:

- **Equipment**, such as new food kiosks and carts, insulated delivery bags, coolers, over-wrap machines to wrap food, reach-in refrigerators, walk-in freezers, warming cabinets, trashcans, and additional cleaning supplies.
- **Training and hiring**, including hiring new school nutrition staff and training teachers on how to implement BIC and how the program can help them.
- **Marketing** to internal and external stakeholders, which can include promotional materials for home and school, monthly menus, branded programs like The Breakfast Club at Livingston Parish School District, and district or state-wide breakfast participation contests.

Social Emotional Learning Starts with School Breakfast

Billie Hunter, Cafeteria Manager, Livingston Parish School District, LA; **Trina Barrell**, Director of Instruction, Logan-Hocking School District, OH; **Sam York**, Teacher, Center School District, MO; **Brandon Stratford**, Deputy Director Education Research, Child Trends (M)

Overview

Breakfast in the classroom does more than just feed students so they have energy to learn; it also offers the opportunity to teach social and emotional learning (SEL). Panelists discussed how BIC programs are benefiting student-teacher and peer relationships, and how children are learning SEL skills.

Key Takeaways

Social and emotional learning develops skills to interact with ourselves and the world around us.

SEL is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to interact with the world around us. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) sees this learning happening across environments, including schools, classrooms, at home, and in the community.

The Wheel of Social and Emotional Learning



Learning SEL knowledge, attitudes, and skills is necessary to:

- Understand and manage **emotions**
- Set and achieve **positive goals**
- Feel and show **empathy** for others
- Establish and maintain **positive relationships**
- Make **responsible decisions**

BIC helps schools create a nurturing environment to learn and practice SEL.

- In conjunction with PBIC, Child Trends conducted a study on Breakfast in the Classroom and how it impacted social and emotional learning in the classroom.
- The study found that BIC created a nurturing and empathic environment and gave teachers a chance to learn more about their students.
- The study of BIC school districts in five states — Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, and Texas — found that the breakfast program solves more than just the basic need of providing students with food that may not be available at home.
- Teachers and staff said it also fills a social need for students to spend time relating to peers and teachers. BIC also gives teachers the opportunity to learn more about what is happening in students' lives.

Teachers and staff see how BIC positively impacts student relationships.

A panel of teachers and staff shared SEL-related benefits they have seen in their schools and districts, which they attribute to BIC.

Family-style classroom breakfasts give students the opportunity to learn more about one another. These breakfasts also allow teachers to gain insight into which students have insecurities with food; they are able to see signs that a student may not know where their next meal is going to come from.

“You don’t realize that the kids are getting themselves up, dressed, and on the bus. But they know they can come to school [and have breakfast].”

– BILLIE HUNTER

Students are also **practicing empathy** by sharing food with their classmates. Some schools have implemented share tables, where students can place uneaten fruits or non-perishables for their peers. These foods may be eaten in class or can also be taken home.

Some districts have used BIC to give **students responsibilities**. In several PBIC-funded districts, student ambassadors bring the breakfasts to the classroom and/or play a role in supporting the program.

Students also see **teamwork in action**. Through BIC, teachers, cafeteria workers, custodians, nutritionists, and administrators all work together to make breakfast happen.

The Lived Experience of Poverty and Hunger: What is the Impact and the Role of Schools?

Sheri Nott, Teacher, Logan Hocking School District, OH; **Dorothy D. Clowers**, Principal, Prince George's County Public Schools, MD; **Virginia Miller**, Teacher, Prince George's County Public Schools, MD; **Lauryn Palgut**, Food Service Consultant, Garfield Heights Schools District, OH; **Cathy Koehler**, President, Arkansas Education Association (M)

Overview

More than 17% of children in the United States live in poverty, and 40 million children go hungry at some point each day. For many of these children, their only guaranteed meals come from school. Panelists who have experienced hunger and poverty firsthand shared their stories and those of their students.

Key Takeaways

Schools need to do more than instruct; they must ensure students' basic needs are met.

Dorothy Clowers is the principal at a school with 574 students, many of whom are immigrants from Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq, as well as from Central American and African countries. Coming from poverty herself, she recognizes the importance of providing more than just an education to her students.

Ms. Clowers grew up the second of eight children in a rural town in Mississippi, where she often missed school days to work in the fields, picking cotton with her family. She was the first in her family to graduate from high school and college.

"We have to do more when it comes to instructing students. We have to make sure they have what they need."

– DOROTHY CLOWERS

Teachers can make a big difference in the lives of impoverished students.

Virginia Miller remembers the warmth of her first-grade teacher's greeting on the first day of class after moving to a new school. Ms. Miller's teacher made a big difference in her life and was one of the reasons she chose to become a teacher.

"My story of poverty was more than just the painful experience of being hungry, but the warmth of a teacher who made a difference."

– VIRGINIA MILLER

BIC allows Ms. Miller to spend time with her class and teach social skills, like table manners, which her students may not learn in their homes, where meals and family mealtime don't always occur.

Breakfast in the Classroom takes away some of the stigma associated with free meals.

In kindergarten, Sheri Nott felt as though she'd won the lottery when she started getting a free, warm meal at lunch. But as she grew older, the stigma of being seen with a special lunch ticket often caused her to skip lunch. Ms. Nott has seen her school's BIC program remove some of that stigma, since all students are offered a free meal at breakfast. Ms. Nott has also seen the morning meal improve attendance and decrease her students' trips to the nurse because of stomachaches due to morning hunger.

"Kids that had a lot of attendance problems are now coming to school because they know they're going to be fed when they get here."

– SHERI NOTT

Schools play a big role in addressing hunger and poverty.

For students living in poverty, school meals may be the only ways they get the nutrition they need to grow physically and mentally.

Growing up in a low-income household, Lauren Palgut did not eat a school lunch, but ate a lunch packed by her mother. Her peers often ate food from the school vending machines, either because the school was not serving lunch due to budget constraints, or because of the stigma associated with the free and reduced meal cards.

“Hunger and poverty is a public health issue that we need to solve, and that we hope we can fix through school nutrition programs.”

– LAUREN PALGUT

Offering Free Breakfast: Utilizing Community Eligibility and Other Strategies

Alison Maurice, Policy Analyst, Food Research & Action Center; **Amanda Miller**, Director, Des Moines Public Schools, IA

Overview

Students who can benefit from free breakfast and lunch at school are not always easy to identify. Family or student participation in government programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Medicaid can help schools determine some students in need. But those who are not using or have no access to these programs are likely to be missed.

Alison Maurice shared how the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) helps all students in high-poverty areas access free meals. Amanda Miller discussed how Des Moines Public Schools (DMPS) is using both CEP and Breakfast in the Classroom (BIC).

Key Takeaways

Community eligibility allows high-poverty schools to offer universal free breakfast and lunch to all students.

CEP allows high-poverty schools to provide all enrolled students with breakfast and lunch at no cost. Eligibility, as well as the reimbursement rate for meals, is determined by the percentage of the enrolled identified student percentage (ISP).

Identified students include children who:

- Participate in SNAP, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash assistance program, or the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR).
- Are homeless, runaway, migrant, or in foster care.
- Receive Medicaid benefits and pass income tests in some states.

Schools are eligible for CEP if their ISP is at least 40%. Multiplying the ISP percentage by 1.6 determines the percent of meals reimbursed to the school at a higher federal free rate; the remainder are at a lower federal paid rate.

CEP reimbursement rate chart based on ISP

ISP	Free	Paid
40%	64%	36%
45%	72%	28%
50%	80%	20%
55%	88%	12%
60%	96%	4%
62.5%	100%	0%

“CEP targets eligibility to the neediest schools and extends those benefits to the other students that may not be easily identified as low income.”

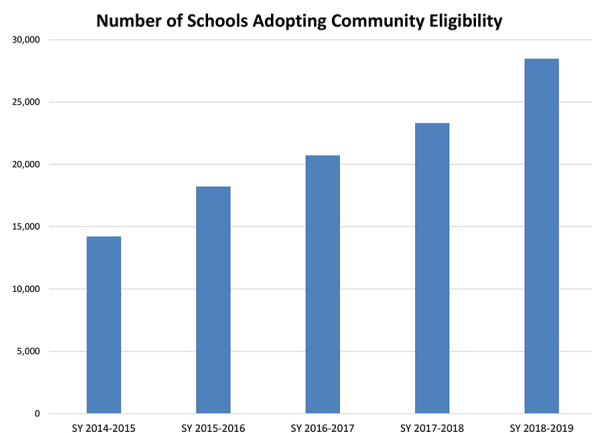
– ALISON MAURICE

Participation in CEP has increased over the last five years, and this trend is expected to continue.

Participation has increased over the last five years and is expected to continue to increase as schools on the lower end of eligibility implement CEP. Schools are recognizing the benefits of these no-cost meals to their student population, even if they only meet minimum requirements.

As of the 2018-2019 school year, 28,841 schools in 4,741 districts were participating in CEP, allowing more than 12 million students to access breakfast and lunch at no charge.

CEP Participation Growth over the Last Five Years



Des Moines Public Schools expects to use CEP district-wide within the next four years.

DMPS has been increasing the number of schools and early learning centers using CEP, beginning with 35 in school year (SY) 2014-2015, which has grown to 48 in SY 2018-2019. Within the next four years, the district plans to roll out CEP to all 64 schools.

As of SY 2017-2018, all DMPS elementary school students received a free breakfast using a BIC model. The district was able to gain administrative and community support for its free breakfast program by sharing its positive experiences with BIC and responding to stakeholder questions during planning.

Making Non-Universal BIC Successful

Jason Carter, Child Nutrition Director, Siloam Springs School District, AR; **Rebecca Evans**, 4th Grade Teacher, Siloam Springs School District, AR; **Meredith Potter**, Director of School Nutrition Programs, Houston County Schools, GA; **Lauren Koff**, Dietitian, Houston County Schools, GA; **Gay Anderson**, Child Nutrition Director, Brandon Valley School District, SD (M)

Overview

With additional funding from the Walmart Foundation, the School Nutrition Foundation helped two school districts pilot non-universal BIC programs. Directors found that even with families paying for breakfast, schools saw increased school breakfast participation when using a grab and go or direct delivery model.

Key Takeaways

Communicating with parents was central to Siloam Springs' BIC program success.

Recognizing that parents were likely to respond to a non-universal (paid) BIC program with confusion and complaints if they didn't understand it, Siloam Springs spent significant time communicating plans and benefits with parents before launching the program at two pilot elementary schools.

"We drove home that BIC is going to improve the learning environment for every student in our district."

—JASON CARTER

Not only was most of the feedback positive, but the participating schools have seen growth in their breakfast programs.

Breakfast participation improvements with BIC

	Participation before BIC	Participation after BIC
All students	30% - 40%	50% - 60%
Free & reduced meal students	40% - 50%	60% - 70%

New branding contributed to the success of Houston County's breakfast program.

Houston County school nutrition staff realized that to make the district's non-universal BIC program a success, marketing would be key to reach parents and students. In addition to piloting some new menu items, Houston County Schools developed a new "revved" brand, which is used on menus, staff uniforms, and carts.

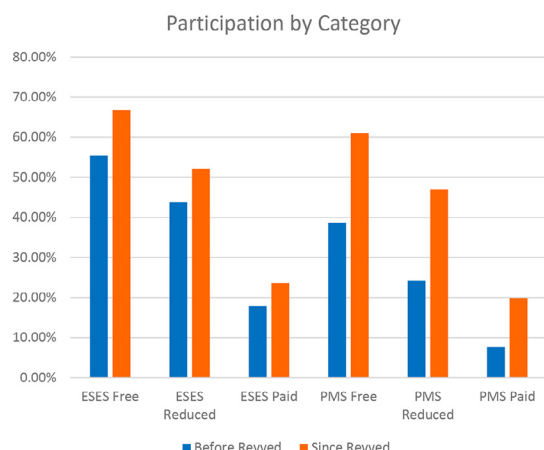
Use of branding on BIC materials



Before the branding and the implementation, Houston County Schools focused on winning support for the non-universal BIC program. They conducted research and created an intentional and specific strategy to gain top-down support from the superintendent down to the principals. They also allowed school administrators and managers to have decision-making power in the program.

Houston County Schools has seen an increase in breakfast participation from both the elementary school and middle school selected to take part in the pilot.

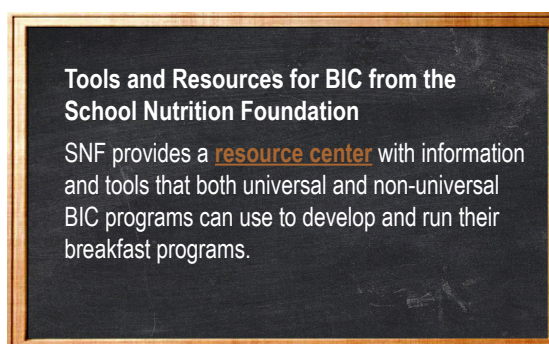
Breakfast Participation Increase at Houston County Schools



Brandon Valley School District has seen significant increase in breakfast participation.

Without grant funding, Brandon Valley School District piloted non-universal BIC in one school in January 2015 and saw a 92% increase in breakfast participation. The following school year (2015-2016) five of the district's seven schools offered BIC, increasing participation by 216%. The schools also offer breakfast for free to all students who receive free and reduced meals (19.25%), since the paid breakfast participation had increased enough to cover the costs of the reduced-price category.

In school year 2019-2020, the high school will join the program, offering both breakfast and lunch in the classroom. A new principal is open to the idea of trying a breakfast in the classroom at the secondary level.



District Data Update: The Numbers Behind Breakfast in the Classroom

Steven Hornyak, Coordinator of Accountability, Houston County Schools, GA

Overview

Houston County Schools in Georgia decided to go beyond anecdotal evidence about the success of its breakfast program. The district analyzed data from its schools to quantify the impact on students participating in the breakfast program, compared to peers not participating. The findings upheld the anecdotal evidence that the breakfast program was positively impacting participating students.

Key Takeaways

Data analytics helps districts understand the impact that programs like BIC have on students.

Houston County uses data analytics to understand the impact on students of programs the district has implemented, including BIC.

“We’re looking for a direct link between our practices as educators and outcomes for our students. That’s all that matters. Is what we’re doing working?”

—STEVEN HORNYAK

The district analyzes data collected by its schools using tools they’ve built within business intelligence (BI) products like Tableau and Microsoft Power BI.

Houston County saw a positive correlation in breakfast participation and school attendance.

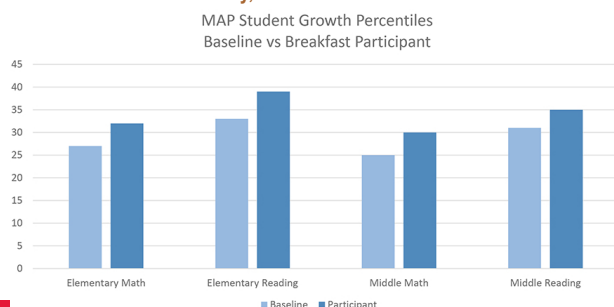
Houston County’s analysis of the data found that students who consistently participate in breakfast at school had attendance rates 14% higher than peers who did not participate. The positive effects of participation were particularly higher in CEP schools, where poverty, mobility, and stability status typically have significant impacts on student attendance and performance.

Tardy-to-school rates and behavior incidents also dropped at schools with higher breakfast participation rates than other schools in the district. Students who participated in the breakfast program were referred for discipline 21% less than peers who did not participate in the breakfast program.

Breakfast program participation positively impacts at-risk students.

Data analysis also showed a positive impact on the at-risk student population. Those who participated in the breakfast program were twice as likely to experience positive effects from participation as their peers. In addition to positive impacts on attendance and behavior, analysis of measures of academic progress (MAP) data showed that participating students experienced 18% overall growth in reading and math compared to students who didn’t participate in the breakfast program.

Results from Houston County, GA schools



The Value of State Partnerships

Brenda Lemon, President, Logan Education Association Logan, OH; **Sonja Powell**, Senior School and Summer Manager, Children’s Hunger Alliance, OH; **Stacey Bettis**, Past President, Ohio School Nutrition Association; **Etienne Melcher Philbin**, Senior Policy Analyst, Food Research & Action Center (M)

Overview

The success of breakfast in the classroom programs in Ohio is attributed to developing strong partnerships, both across allied organizations and at the district and school level.

Key Takeaways

Strong and collaborative relationships helped bring BIC to Ohio schools.

Relationships were the key to bringing PBIC grants to Ohio schools, and remain important in keeping the programs operating. A variety of allied organizations encouraged school districts to apply for PBIC grant funding.

Key organizations involved in bringing PBIC grants to Ohio schools included:

- Children’s Hunger Alliance of Ohio
- Ohio SNA
- Ohio Education Association (OEA)
- Ohio Principals Elementary Association
- Food Research and Action Center

The Ohio School Breakfast Challenge Gets the Information Out and Generates Excitement

The **Ohio School Breakfast Challenge** encourages all schools to start the day with a healthy breakfast for students. Sponsored by partners including the Children’s Hunger Alliance of Ohio and the Ohio SNA, the breakfast challenge serves to get information out to schools about breakfast programs, including BIC, as well as best practices. It also creates excitement by rewarding schools for their overall participation rates, as well as increased participation rates.

Everyone in the school, including the children, needs to be involved in developing the BIC program.

Everyone involved with the school — from the bus driver to the superintendent to the students themselves — needs to be part of developing the school's breakfast program. This includes sharing information about the BIC program, answering questions, and receiving and responding to feedback.

Upfront student involvement brings buy-in to the BIC program from the stakeholders who are benefitting the most from it. Students can be included in focus groups to gather their input and opinions, and can even participate in the same meetings as principals, teachers, and school staff. It can even double as a learning experience: as the program rolls out of the high school in the Logan-Hocking school district, students are involved in designing the carts and developing the process.

“Involve the kids as well. It makes them feel like they are just as valued as the janitors, the principals, and the teachers.”

—STACEY BETTIS

Lessons from the Leader: How WV Made It to #1 for School Breakfast Participation

Kristy Blower, Coordinator, West Virginia Office of Child Nutrition, West Virginia Department of Education; **Amanda McPherson**, Vice President, West Virginia School Nutrition Association; **Etienne Melcher Philbin**, Senior Policy Analyst, Food Research & Action Center (M)

Overview

Annually, the Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) releases its School Breakfast Scorecard, which looks at breakfast participation by state compared to the number of low-income children participating in breakfast. Since the 2013-2014 school year West Virginia has consistently taken the number one spot.

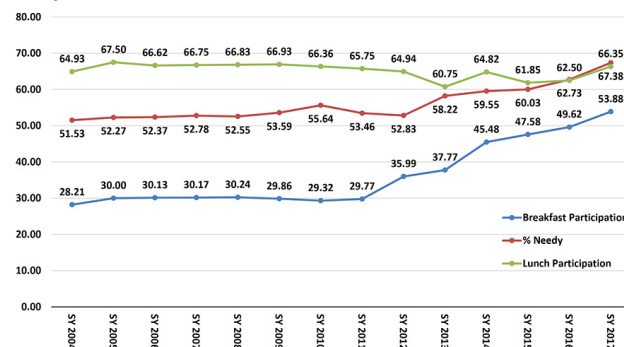
Key Takeaways

The Feed to Achieve law requires schools to adopt innovative breakfast strategies.

In 2013, the West Virginia legislature unanimously passed the “Feed to Achieve” law. This law requires all schools in the state to adopt an innovative breakfast strategy which must be approved by the West Virginia Office of Child Nutrition.

Initially hovering at around 30% participation, the law has significantly increased participation in school breakfast programs across the state.

WV Breakfast and Lunch Participation Rates compared to % of Needy Students



Effective strategies make breakfast convenient for students to access.

Schools are encouraged to find the breakfast strategy that works best for their student population. The goal is for breakfast to be available and easily accessible to students.

“If breakfast is convenient for the kids to get it in their school, then it’s going to be effective.”

—KRISTY BLOWER

There is no silver bullet breakfast strategy for all schools; what works at one school may fail at another. Finding the right breakfast strategy takes time, practice, and tweaks. Some of the successes Kristy Blower, coordinator of the West Virginia Office of Child Nutrition in the West Virginia Department of Education, has seen include:

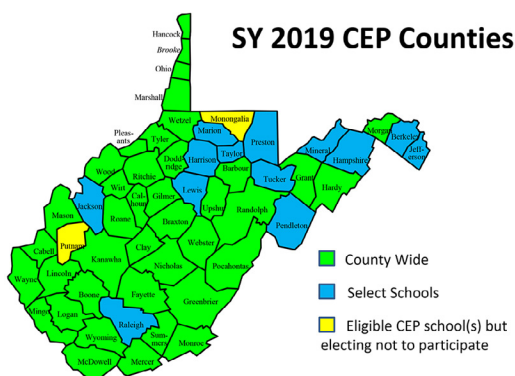
- Providing carts for students who hang out in the hallways before class.
- Offering grab-and-go for students who spend time in other areas of the building before class, such as in the gym.



- Bringing breakfast to the classroom, especially at the elementary school level for students who are getting settled in, so they are ready to eat and learn.
- Sending classes down to the cafeteria with work, like a worksheet or reading comprehension, so they can eat and work.

The potential for profit from breakfast under CEP drove counties to adopt both programs.

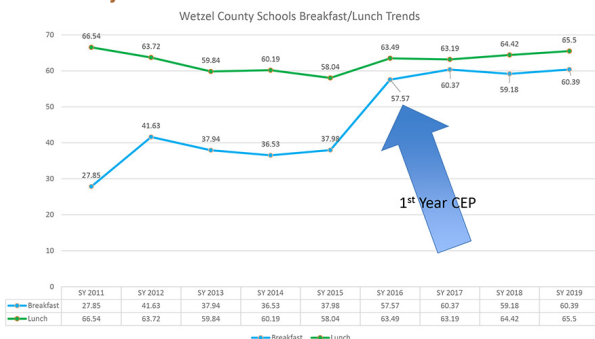
West Virginia is a state with high CEP eligibility, often county-wide. Ms. Blower was able to sell both CEP and innovations in breakfast service to schools and counties across the state by showing how the two programs together often generated a higher profit margin at breakfast than at lunch.



Wetzel County saw a dramatic increase in breakfast participation when CEP was tied to the program.

Participation in Wetzel County schools' breakfast programs increased in 2016 from 37.98% to 57.57% when CEP was tied into the program and free meals were made available to all students. The school system, which has 2,599 students in pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade, qualifies for 87.22% of its meals reimbursed at the free rate under CEP.

Wetzel County Schools Breakfast/Lunch Trends



Future of School Breakfast Work: A Facilitated Discussion Thinking Through Next Steps

Liz Dunning, Senior Vice President of Programs, The NEA Foundation;
Crystal FitzSimons, Director of School and Out-of-School Time Programs, Food Research & Action Center; **Kayla Jackson**, Project Director, American Association of School Administrators; **Patti Montague**, CEO, School Nutrition Foundation; **Mary Begalle**, Emcee and Moderator (M)

Overview

The final session of the summit focused on the future of breakfast in the classroom and beyond, considering how best to serve the needs of all students. Panelists and attendees were asked to share ideas on what schools, districts, and partner programs need to do to maximize participation in all school meal programs.

Key Takeaways

There is room for growth in school meal participation.

One in every three schools using CEP offers both breakfast and lunch, yet there are still many more schools that can adopt CEP and offer more free meals to their students.

“Community eligibility has really revolutionized the school breakfast and lunch programs.”

—CRYSTAL FITZSIMONS

Schools are encouraged to look beyond school breakfast and lunch to consider afterschool meals. Snacks and supper can generate revenue for districts, as well as feed hungry children.

Superintendents recognize that hungry students don't perform well.

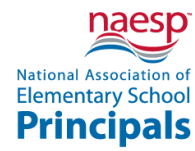
Superintendents are often seen as difficult stakeholders to get on board with the BIC program, yet most realize that hungry students don't perform well. Positioning breakfast programs as leadership initiatives can help bring school staff, teachers, and administration on board. This smooths implementation, allowing schools to make sure kids eat breakfast not just before standardized tests, but when learning and preparing for those tests.

Audience input: How to achieve full participation in the school meals program.

Summit attendees were asked the following question: “What is needed to achieve full participation by all students in the School Meals Program, especially school breakfast?”

After brainstorming in small groups, the following ideas were offered:

- Offer universal free meals, including breakfast
- Include breakfast as instructional time during the school day
- Eliminate the reduced-price meal category
- Give students more time to eat
- Focused marketing for target audiences
- Secure additional funding and resources for meals programs
- Get buy-in from all stakeholders, including teachers, staff, administrators, and parents
- Offer education on food deserts within a district so people understand there are many students who don't have access to food
- Provide second-chance breakfast
- Offer a variety of choices
- Have district-wide policies so that administrative turnover doesn't end the program
- Collect and analyze data to show the benefits of the program
- Develop a standardized program across the country so that the program can sell itself
- Simplify direct certification for all meal programs
- Think outside the cafeteria and recognize the need to reinvest and reinvent meals at the school level
- Develop advance ordering programs to cut down the amount of time spent in line getting food
- Invest in studies that support the nutritional and behavioral advantages of school-supplied breakfast and lunch
- Advertise to parents and use public service announcements
- Be willing to apply multiple food service models in one school to meet student needs
- Increase collaboration among and between communities
- Locate and solicit the support of a unique celebrity supporter to help with buy-in



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