

# School Breakfast 101



The School Breakfast Program is a federally assisted meal program that operates in many schools across the state. Many different types of schools serve breakfast, elementary through high school, rural and urban. The School Breakfast Program operates very similarly to the School Lunch Program. Both programs allow children to qualify for free or reduced priced meals, based on their family's income.

## Why School Breakfast?

- Not all students are able to eat breakfast at home. Reasons cited by students for not eating breakfast:
  - No time in the morning
  - Not hungry first thing in the morning
  - No food at home
  - No School Breakfast Program
  - Do not get to school in time to eat breakfast at school (bus schedules, etc.)
- Improves the quality of children's diets
- Increases students' performance in school
- Improves student behavior in class
- May decrease the prevalence of overweight in children

## Benefits

- Health
  - Children who eat breakfast are healthier overall
  - Children who eat breakfast visit the school nurse less often.
- Weight
  - Eating breakfast may decrease the risk of being overweight in children.

- Adolescents who eat breakfast regularly, at home or at schools, tend to weigh less, and be more active than teenagers who skip breakfast.
- Diet Quality
  - Research shows that eating breakfast improves the quality of a child's diet.
  - Research shows that low-income students who participate in the School Breakfast Programs have better overall diets.
  - Children who skip breakfast are less likely to meet recommended levels for important nutrients like folic acid, calcium, etc.
- Test Scores
  - Students who do NOT eat breakfast perform more poorly on tests of math, matching, memory and creativity.
  - Larger improvements on test scores were seen in children with poor diets who then ate breakfast consistently.
- Behavior
  - Children who do NOT eat breakfast show more behavioral problems—hyperactivity, school absence, tardiness.

In short, everyone benefits from breakfast—teachers, administrators, and parents all reap the benefits of having children who are ready to learn.

*Continued on next page*

## Participation

In the 2006/2007 school year:

- In Wisconsin, 60.6% of schools participated in the School Breakfast Program
- Nationally, 84.8% of schools participated in the School Breakfast Program
- In Wisconsin, 35.7% of low-income students participated in the School Breakfast Program
- Nationally, 45.3% of low-income students participated in the School Breakfast Program
- In Wisconsin, 1,628 public and private schools and 116,480 students participated in the School Breakfast Program

## Eligibility

- All children at participating schools are able to purchase a meal as part of the School Breakfast Program.
- A child from a household in which its income is less than 130% of the poverty level is eligible for free breakfasts.
- A child from a household in which its income is between 130% and 185% of the poverty level is eligible for reduced price breakfasts (<\$39,220 for a family of 4).

## Nutritional Requirements

- Breakfasts offered as part of the School Breakfast Program must meet current dietary guidelines.
- Breakfasts must contain ¼ of a child's daily requirement for calories, protein, calcium, iron, vitamin A and vitamin C.
- No more than 30% of calories can come from fat, with no more than 10% of calories as saturated fat.

- Generally, breakfasts contain
  - 8 oz. serving of milk, 1 fruit/vegetable (or 4 oz. of fruit/vegetable juice)
  - 2 servings from the grains or meat/meat alternate group (or 1 serving from each).

## Reimbursement and Funding

- The Food and Nutrition Service of the United States Department of Agriculture funds the program nationally. In Wisconsin, the School Breakfast Program is administered through the Department of Public Instruction.
- For the 2008-09 school year, each meal served as part of the School Breakfast Program will be reimbursed as follows:

Reimbursement Rates For Each Breakfast Served:		
	Non-severe Need	Severe Need
To students paying the full price	\$ .25	\$ .25
To students eligible for reduced price	\$1.10	\$1.38
To students eligible for free	\$1.40	\$1.68
	\$ .15	\$ .15

*Annual STATE breakfast aid based on the number of breakfasts served to students in the prior year to the extent funds are available*

- A school is eligible for severe need reimbursement if 40 percent or more of the student lunches served at the school in the second preceding school year (2006-2007) were served free or at a reduced price. Severe need payment is made on an individual school building basis.
- USDA regulations require that the reduced price *charge* to students not exceed 30 cents for breakfast.

