

10 Reasons to try Breakfast in the Classroom

1 No child should start the school day hungry. Studies show that children who skip breakfast have slower memory recall, make more errors and are more likely to repeat a grade.

2 Not all children are able to eat at home. Whether their family has a tight budget, are too busy, or students have a poor appetite in the morning, not all children receive the energy and nutrients to get a healthy start to the morning.

3 Your school already has a breakfast program. Every day, meals that meet USDA guidelines are available to students. They provide $\frac{1}{4}$ of the recommended daily value of protein, calcium, iron, vitamin A and vitamin C for the day, and <30% of calories from fat.

4 Breakfast in the classroom increases student participation. Bus schedules, time restraints, and classrooms that are not located near the cafeteria are all barriers to participation in school breakfast. Having breakfast in the classroom eliminates many of these barriers and enables more students to participate in breakfast.

5 Breakfast in the classroom requires minimal work to run smoothly. The teacher's role can be as simple as checking names off a roster and placing trash outside the classroom. Custodians or cafeteria staff need only pick up bags when breakfast is over. School food service staff can prepare most meals the day before. Breakfast need only take 5-10 minutes and can be accomplished during routine activities.

6 Serving breakfast has rewarding benefits. Studies show that eating breakfast can help math, reading, and standardized test scores. Breakfast also helps students pay attention in class, perform problem-solving tasks, and improve their memory. Serving breakfast in the classroom can help reduce tiredness and absences, and improve behavior.

7 By making breakfast a daily routine, students learn healthy habits for life. Children who eat breakfast tend to have more adequate nutrient intake than those who don't. Some studies have also indicated that eating breakfast on a regular basis reduces the risk of being overweight.

8 Breakfast can be incorporated into lesson plans. For younger students, eating an apple sliced into four quarters might easily turn into a math lesson using fractions, a writing activity about the five senses, that same apple might spark a scientific inquiry about energy and calories.

9 Breakfast in the classroom allows teachers to spend time with students. Breakfast can provide the opportunity to personally interact with students before delving into the rest of the day's activities. Or, this time can be used to complete administrative tasks.

10 Students will thank you. Whether through smiling faces or increased focus in class, students' minds and bodies will be grateful. The goal of school breakfast is to ensure that every child gets the boost they need for physical and academic well-being.



Eat Smart, Be Smart