



# Breakfast in the Classroom: Custodians As Partners

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# Why Is A Universal School Breakfast Program Important?

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Research reveals that as many as 22 % of all children in the United States, especially those from poverty, come to school with an empty stomach. Thus learning is affected negatively.



## Fact:

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- Almost one in four American children live in households where their families face a constant struggle against hunger.
- Because many American families are struggling financially, school meals become a reliable source of needed nutrition for their children.



## Fact:

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Children come from all types of home situations: families with tight budgets; busy schedules; dysfunctional families; and parents who lack awareness of the importance of a nutritional breakfast and the difference it can make in a student's academic success.



## Facts:

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- Many children who are on free and reduced programs skip breakfast at school because of bus schedules, stigma, social time before school starts, and lack of appealing food choices.
- Research states that breakfast is the **most important meal of the day** for academic performance.



# Why Breakfast in the Classroom?

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- Less than half of eligible low-income children receive breakfast at school each day.
- Schools must do more in order to reach eligible children and also assure that all children have access to a nutritious breakfast.



# Why Breakfast in the Classroom?

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- When everyone has breakfast provided, the stigma of being unable to afford breakfast is removed.
- Bus schedules and time constraints, which may prohibit eating breakfast, are removed.
- Barriers are removed and all students can eat breakfast regardless of their circumstances.

# Why Breakfast in the Classroom?

Further studies indicate that students who have more adequate nutrition and eat a nutritious breakfast on a regular basis are at a reduced risk of being overweight.

Food research and Action Center 2009





# Why Breakfast in the Classroom?

Research studies show that children who eat breakfast:

- perform better academically,
- pay better attention in class,
- have increased memory function,
- behave better in school,
- have fewer absences and tardy incidences.
- have fewer health problems





# What is Breakfast in the Classroom?

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Breakfast in the Classroom is just one universal breakfast option and is a different way of thinking that may require some changes to the custodial workers' schedule and routines.



# What is Breakfast in the Classroom?

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- All students eat a free breakfast
- After the school day begins
- Eliminates barriers associated with traditional cafeteria programs
- Increases participation
- Increases academic success linked to school breakfast consumption



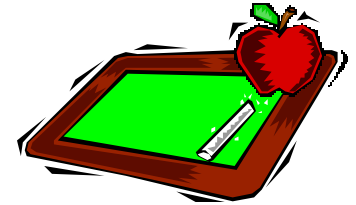
# Building a Successful Program

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- Breakfast in the classroom requires a systemic change that must fit the school's culture, style, and resources.
- When student health and learning become the school's priority school personnel will quickly cut through perceived barriers and implement the program.



# What can you do?



Develop procedures and training along with the administration, food service staff, teachers, para-educators and students as to how to deal with sanitation issues (pest control, trash removal, and cleanliness) as they relate to Breakfast in the Classroom.



## What Custodians do!

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Custodians make sure students' learning environments are safe and clean. This is no small task. This involves long hours and a willingness to be available for any cleaning issue that might arise during a school day.



## TIPS:

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Start clean to stay clean. Focus on prevention by working with teachers and para-educators to understand the cleaning strategies and materials needed for students to learn how to help keep the classroom clean before and after breakfast.

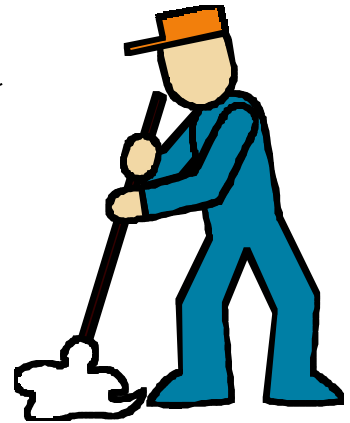
Example: Every classroom has alcohol based hand sanitizer or soap and water and paper towels for cleaning and drying desks followed by hand cleaning.



## Fact:

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Research findings clearly state that cleanliness is an attribute that supports student health and development, learning, and productivity.







## Fact:

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- The best way to control infections appears to be using procedures that promote good hand cleansing and decontamination of surfaces.
- Washing hands with soap and water is best but hand sanitizers are recommended when hand washing is not possible.

# Food in the classroom Issues:

- Trash removal from the classroom can be as simple as students clearing trash and placing in trash bags or bins to be returned to the cafeteria.
- Pest prevention/control can be managed by developing preventive procedures.
- Spills and crumbs can be kept to a minimum by menu choices and teaching students proper procedures/habits.





# Why Me?

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- The goal of universal breakfast programs is to see that every child, regardless of their circumstances, starts the day with a healthy breakfast. Student academic success is a win win for everyone!
- You can be a part of that success!

