

# About Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom

The Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom developed this initiative in response to their shared passion for childhood nutrition and its potential for improving educational outcomes and child health. Partners include the [Food Research and Action Center](#), the [National Association of Elementary School Principals Foundation](#), the [National Education Association Health Information Network](#), and the [School Nutrition Foundation](#). Breakfast in the Classroom is funded by the [Walmart Foundation](#). Funds are used to help cover the up-front costs associated with start-up and implementation such as: equipment, outreach efforts to parents, program promotion, and other expenses. The Partners provide technical assistance and support as well as bring in allies from the anti-hunger, health, nutrition, and education communities to help support the effort.

## Why It's Needed

There are more than 25 million children in our nation's elementary and middle schools, many of whom come to school hungry. What happens next is heartbreaking. Their attention spans shorten. Their energy levels plummet. Their productivity wanes. Learning suffers. Lives suffer.

It's time to start a movement to change that. The solution? Breakfast in the Classroom.

It's a fact: eating breakfast at school helps children learn. Studies show that children who eat breakfast at the start of their school day have higher math and reading scores. They have sharper memory and show faster speed on cognitive tests. They have broader vocabularies. They do better on standardized tests. They focus better and behave better.

Eating breakfast at school has health benefits too. Children are less likely to be absent. They're less likely to see the school nurse and less likely to be overweight. They eat more fruit, drink more milk and consume a wider variety of foods. Many school districts participate in the federally-funded School Breakfast Program, but its performance in eliminating hunger has fallen short of its potential. Less than half of children who are eligible for the free or reduced-cost breakfast are eating it.

It's not hard to see why. School breakfast programs typically require children to eat in the cafeteria before school, apart from their peers. As a result, some children feel singled out and self-conscious of being labeled as "low income." Timing is another deterrent. Many school breakfast programs take place prior to the start of the school day. When the bus is late or the carpool's caught in traffic, the opportunity for breakfast is missed.

The result? Hungry kids and lost federal funding at the schools that need it most.

## How It Works

The Breakfast in the Classroom initiative takes the traditional school breakfast approach and improves it with one key ingredient: the classroom. Breakfast becomes available to everyone – no matter their income level – and it's served after the opening bell. This makes it easier for all children to easily participate.

The approach is simple. Children eat together in the classroom, usually the homeroom, at the start of the school day. They enjoy nutritionally well-balanced foods like breakfast wraps, yogurt, or fruit served directly in their classroom or grabbed from a cart in the hallway. Students then eat breakfast while the teacher takes attendance, collects homework or teaches a short lesson plan. In about 10 minutes, the meal is over and the school day continues. And so do the benefits of the breakfast in the classroom. To learn simple ways for bringing Breakfast in the Classroom to your school, [click here](#). [Click here](#) for background materials.