



DISTRICT: Pueblo School District No. 60, Pueblo, Colo.
DIRECTOR OF NUTRITION SERVICES: Jill Kidd, M.S., R.D.
ALTERNATE BREAKFAST SERVICE: Free Breakfast; Breakfast in the Classroom

★ **BACKGROUND**

Pueblo's cafeteria breakfast participation had topped out at 33% of the Average Daily Attendance (ADA). Realizing its impact on learning and the potential for increasing profit, Jill Kidd was not satisfied. From a Meeting the Challenge workshop, and the Expanding Breakfast video, she received direction to structure serving Breakfast in the Classroom, at no charge. Kidd left the meeting saying, "It's so simple, we can do that!"

★ **IMPLEMENTATION**

Kidd developed a presentation, using tools that convinced her of the importance of breakfast. Qualifying schools had over 70% free/reduced status. In February 1997, she presented key facts from the Maryland Meals for Achievement and Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning studies, and showed the Expanding Breakfast video to 10 principals. Two were interested and pilots started in the fall.

Food, delivered from a central kitchen, was assembled on site. Milk, juice and items like muffins, burritos, yogurt and breakfast pizza were placed into milk crates. Mostly cold breakfasts were served, with a hot meal given once a week. Foodservice staff loaded crates onto carts and delivered to classrooms. Teachers were given free breakfasts so they had a healthy start to their day and were good role models. Only two hours of labor was added per site and many employees wanted extra hours. During the pilot Kidd determined the program worked when food and labor totaled about 68 cents per meal.

★ **IMPACT**

The pilot schools experienced excellent results with participation going from 38% to 81% of ADA. Each spring Kidd presents to principals and teachers in qualifying schools and begins the program in the fall. Now, five schools enjoy free Breakfast in the Classroom, with a participation rate of 76% of the ADA. Increased participation yields increased reimbursement, which is used to fund free lunch at classroom breakfast schools.

Teachers and principals affirm students are more focused and productive with fewer complaints of tiredness and illness. Teachers "like how breakfast starts the day and helps set the tone by letting children get organized, socialize and then settle down to work."

★ **WORDS OF ADVICE**

Kidd is emphatic that the program only works when teachers and principals commit to do it, with teachers, in particular, making or breaking the program. Her advice is to make the extra effort to get them on board. "There's an incredible amount of reliable evidence on the learning, nutrition and behavior benefits that a good breakfast has on children, and easy-to-follow directions on setting up Breakfast in the Classroom," says Kidd. "Use these tools and the experiences of others. Take a first-hand look at programs, or log onto an ASFSA Online Expanding Breakfast chat. Foodservice people are the kind that are willing to help someone work through an issue and succeed."