

# Mealtime Sampler

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## Expanding Breakfast: Your Wellness Policy's Morning Star

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Its critical role in helping to reduce obesity and increase student's nutritional intake positions breakfast at school and increasing participation as vital wellness policy components.

Typically, breakfast is simple to prepare, can be eaten quickly and offers a myriad of benefits directly impacting student health and well being. However, it is often skipped. Kids are busy being kids – sleeping till the last possible moment, playing on the playground – you know all the popular excuses.

## Reaching the “Usual Suspects”

If your traditional breakfast program has low participation, Expanding Breakfast outside of the cafeteria can work miracles on your numbers and provide record numbers of kids with the nutrients needed to start the day off right. Rather than getting students to breakfast think about getting breakfast to the students! Three well-tested approaches to make numbers soar and help create a healthier school environment are Breakfast in the Classroom, Grab 'n' Go Breakfast and Breakfast After 1st Period.

Schools serving Breakfast in the Classroom rave endlessly about the positive influence Expanding Breakfast has had on their students, teachers and foodservice programs. It is the most effective method, generating 80% to 100% participation levels, but the other approaches also yield excellent results.

## Advocating Expanding Breakfast

Show your wellness policy team how increasing breakfast participation fits into the key wellness policy areas:

**Nutrition Guidelines:** Breakfast helps children meet their daily nutritional needs

**Nutrition Education:** Teaches children what a nutritious breakfast looks like (reinforcing classroom learning) and helps establish healthy eating habits, to last a life time

**Physical Activity:** Breakfast gives children the energy needed to get the most out of activities

## Support, Support, Support!

Volumes of documentation on breakfast's health, learning and behavioral benefits support having an Expanding Breakfast program. Below are excellent resources.

Contact your local Dairy Council® to assist you in setting up an Expanding Breakfast program – ask for the new tool available to calculate at what point you can offer breakfast free to all students.

Go to [www.schoolnutrition.org](http://www.schoolnutrition.org) > Emporium > Training Materials, to order the Expanding Breakfast Manual and Video.

Visit [www.NutritionExplorations.org](http://www.NutritionExplorations.org) > School Foodservice > Expanding Breakfast, for Breakfast Champion stories and background information.

