



**DISTRICT:** Bucyrus City Schools, Bucyrus, Ohio  
**FOODSERVICE DIRECTOR:** Sid Szydlyk  
**ALTERNATE BREAKFAST SERVICE:** Provision 2; Breakfast in the Classroom

## ★ **BACKGROUND**

Arriving to school foodservice from a business environment Sid Szydlyk was struck with the standard outlook that school feeding programs should be non-profit. "There are always unforeseen costs," states Szydlyk. "So, your numbers need to accommodate this and you have to be ahead." Bucyrus' traditional breakfast program was losing significant money as labor was in place, with few breakfasts being served. Szydlyk knew increasing volume could make the program solvent, but had to determine the participation level needed. He didn't think Provision 2 could work, with only a 53% free/reduced rate.

## ★ **IMPLEMENTATION**

Maximizing the eagerness of one school's principal, Szydlyk began a Breakfast in the Classroom test. Participation soared from 10% to 86% of enrollment. Food and trash bags, transported in laundry baskets, were picked up and delivered by students. After breakfast, students brought garbage to the cafeteria or placed it in the hallway for custodians to pick up. Using a seven-week menu cycle, three days per week were cold breakfasts, with items like cereal and Pop Tarts®, and two days a week were hot breakfasts (packaged in insulated bags), with items like breakfast pizzas and hot pockets.

Concurrently, the Ohio Hunger Task Force and American Dairy Association & Dairy Council Mid East provided a computer model that analyzed "what if" scenarios to determine breakfast and lunch Provision 2 viability. Szydlyk was able to show the administration how successful Breakfast in the Classroom could be and that it enabled them to qualify for Provision 2 (it showed they did not qualify for Provision 2 lunch.)

## ★ **IMPACT**

Breakfast in the Classroom is now in all five elementary schools and participation has jumped from an average of 85 breakfasts per day to 648–76% of enrollment.

Initially, teacher reaction to the pilot was mixed, but by the end no teachers were negative. When implemented at other schools there was teacher resistance, but with positive positioning by the superintendent, the Board of Education and teachers involved in the test, the expansion was successful. Parents have expressed "peace of mind," many commenting that when their children leave in the morning, they aren't hungry yet. When they come in off the playground to start school they are ready to eat and "now a nutritious meal is waiting for them."

## ★ **WORDS OF ADVICE**

Szydlyk advises, "The more planning done before starting the Provision 2 process and Breakfast in the Classroom, the better off you are. Send separate letters to all involved parties—parents, teachers and custodial staff—addressing their concerns. Realize that the program only works when there is teacher buy-in. Be prepared to be flexible and make modifications based on teacher requests."