

Alternative Breakfast & COMMUNITY ELIGIBILITY



PROVIDING BREAKFAST is one of the best ways to help a Kansas kid get a better education. Students who eat breakfast can concentrate better and retain more of the lessons they are taught. They are also less likely to suffer from anxiety and depression, require fewer visits to the school nurse, and have fewer tardies and absences. Teachers report seeing fewer behavior issues from students who have eaten breakfast.

In Kansas, many students from low-income families don't eat breakfast at school. For every 100 students who receive free or reduce-price lunches, only 47 eat breakfast at school. Without breakfast, over half of Kansas students are missing out on valuable nutrition which can help them arrive in class ready to learn.

Over the past few years, innovative breakfast models have helped increase participation by making breakfast more accessible to students at every level, allowing students more time to eat and reducing the stigma associated with eating breakfast in the cafeteria.



BREAKFAST IN THE CLASSROOM

- Breakfast is delivered to the classroom in carts or bags.
- Students eat breakfast at their desks after the school day has begun.
- Students can eat during announcements, regular instruction or while the teacher takes attendance.



BREAKFAST ON THE BUS

- Students eat breakfast on the bus on the way to school.
- This model works best on bus rides that are fifteen minutes or longer.



GRAB & GO BREAKFAST

- Students pick up breakfast from the cafeteria or at a kiosk, then eat in a classroom or during a break.
- The meals consist of simple bagged or pre-packaged foods.



SECOND CHANCE BREAKFAST

- Breakfast is served after first period.
- Students who arrive later or those who are not hungry first thing in the morning are still able to benefit from receiving a nutritious breakfast.

ALTERNATIVE BREAKFAST + CEP

The most successful programs combine alternative breakfast models with the Community Eligibility Provision—which allows high-poverty schools to provide free breakfasts and lunches to all students—to serve breakfast to all students outside the cafeteria or after the school day begins.

For schools that adopt the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), all students' meals are reimbursed by the USDA according to the number of children who have been identified as qualifying for free lunches based on their participation in other programs (including foster care, food assistance and TANF). The percentage of meals reimbursed at the free rate is determined by multiplying the number of direct-certified students by 1.6; if the percentage is less than 100, remaining meals are reimbursed at the paid rate. To qualify for CEP, 40% of students in a school or group of schools must have been directly certified as participating in one of the other programs.

Schools that have adopted CEP in Kansas have seen their lunch and breakfast participation increase significantly—by an average of 5% for lunch and an average of 11% for breakfast over participation levels a year earlier. The schools that adopted alternative breakfast models at the same time as CEP experienced the biggest increases. In Topeka, Meadows Elementary School saw a 79% increase in breakfast participation. In Kansas City, Stoney Point North Elementary saw a 113% increase, and Stoney Point South Elementary saw a 75% increase.

Many Kansas schools that qualify for Community Eligibility have not yet adopted the program. Only 24% of eligible schools are participating in CEP in the 2015–16 school year, and only 36% of the highest-poverty schools (those with more than 60% of their students directly certified as eligible for free lunches) are participating in CEP this year.



High-poverty qualifying schools have a unique opportunity to provide additional nutrition to their students at no additional cost to the school. Contact the Kansas State Department of Education to see if Community Eligibility is a good fit for your school. Schools have until August 31, 2016, to enroll in CEP for the 2016–17 school year.



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1535 W. 15th St. // Lawrence, KS 66045

kansasappleseed.org



720 SW Jackson St., Suite 201 // Topeka, KS 66603

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