

Why It's Needed

- Breakfast is the most important meal of the day and many students are not eating it.
- Breakfast offered before school requires children to eat in the cafeteria, 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. When the bus is late or the carpool's caught in traffic, breakfast is often missed.
- The result? Hungry kids and lost federal funding at the schools that need it most.

“We know how important breakfast is...

Making sure children eat and get to school on time can be a challenge. If we can find a way for students to eat breakfast in their first class of the day, it will go a long way toward encouraging more students to eat breakfast and start school ready to learn.”

- Superintendent Carranza

“One student was chronically late because her mother took her to McDonald's for breakfast. I let her mother know we have breakfast in the classroom and now she is on time daily.”

-3rd Grade Teacher,
Bryant Elementary
School

How does it work?

- Children eat together in the classroom, usually at the start of the day.
- Breakfasts are prepackaged with a milk to be added.
- It counts as instructional time so teachers are encouraged to review homework or teach a mini-lesson while students eat quietly.
- Student Nutrition and Custodial Services work closely together to ensure the classrooms remain clean.

What are the benefits?

- SFUSD teachers that serve Breakfast in the Classroom reported a calmer, more attentive learning environment and a resulting positive sense of community.
- Nationally, school nurses have reported fewer visits with complaints of headaches and stomachaches due to lack of eating.
- Since all students eat breakfast for free, Breakfast in the Classroom removes any stigma associated with eating a free or reduced cost meal.

More Information

- Contact Student Nutrition to find out more. SchoolLunch@SFUSD.edu or 749-3604
- Find breakfast resources at SFUSD.edu/en/nutrition-school-meals/breakfast.html

What is Breakfast in the Classroom?

- SFUSD is focused on Breakfast in the Classroom for schools with high percentages of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch.
- Each student begins the day with a healthy breakfast in the first 10-15 minutes of class.
- The meal is free for every student in the school.

How does Breakfast in the Classroom impact instructional time?

- Breakfast time counts as instructional time so teachers are encouraged to review homework or teach a mini-lesson while students eat quietly: breakfast can be a great transitional activity to start the day.
- Many teachers report that they have actually gained instructional time as students' productivity and ability to focus increases dramatically, tardiness and absenteeism decrease, and less time is spent on distractions such as behavior problems caused by hunger. (from FRAC)

How much time does Breakfast in the Classroom take?

- Generally, Breakfast in the Classroom takes 10-15 minutes and can be done during morning activities such as announcements, turning in homework or individual reading time so that no instructional time is lost (FRAC).

What is the teacher's role?

- As necessary, the teacher will assist each student in receiving a compliant meal and will check off numbers or names as per directions from Student Nutrition Services.

How does the classroom stay clean?

- Student Nutrition and Custodial Services work closely together to manage any waste and ensure that classrooms remain clean.

What if a student ate breakfast at home?

- While every student has access to a breakfast in class, no child should ever be forced to eat. Any student can decline the breakfast.

Is there research that supports Breakfast in the Classroom?

- Yes, research on Breakfast in the Classroom shows that children who participate are less likely to be absent, have fewer visits to the school nurse, and are less likely to be overweight. They eat more fruit, drink more milk, and consume a wider variety of foods (FRAC).

“Having breakfast in the classroom brought more independent behavior from the students”

- 5th Grade Teacher, Bryant Elementary

“Breakfast brought a better sense of community in the classroom.”

- 5th Grade Teacher, Bryant Elementary

“The number of students who had not been eating breakfast became apparent after the program started”

- 4th Grade Teacher, Bryant Elementary

“If my students do come in late, they immediately ask for breakfast. This shows it is needed.”

- 4th Grade Teacher, Bryant Elementary

“There is more independence and a positive attitude in my class.”

- 5th Grade Teacher, Bryant Elementary

“Environmental awareness was brought by having the bins in the classroom with breakfast.”

- 3rd Grade Teacher, Bryant Elementary

“Students are a lot less fidgety with breakfast, eating has calmed them down.”

- 5th Grade Teacher, Bryant Elementary

“One student was chronically late because her mother took her to McDonald’s for breakfast. I let her mother know we have breakfast in the classroom and now she is on time daily.”

- 3rd Grade Teacher, Bryant Elementary

