

# WHY INCREASE SCHOOL BREAKFAST PARTICIPATION:



**Studies show that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, especially for children. Eating school breakfast improves children's educational performance, behavior, and health.**

## **SCHOOL BREAKFAST IMPROVES CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE:**

- Children who eat a complete breakfast make fewer mistakes and work faster on math tests than children who eat a partial breakfast. <sup>1</sup>
- Children who eat breakfast at school, closer to class and test-taking time, perform better on standardized tests than those who skip breakfast or eat breakfast at home. <sup>2</sup>
- Children who eat breakfast show improved cognitive function, attention, and memory. <sup>3</sup>
- Participating in school breakfast is associated with improved math grades, attendance, and punctuality. <sup>4</sup>

## **SCHOOL BREAKFAST IMPROVES CHILDREN'S ATTENDANCE AND BEHAVIOR:**

- Schools that provide breakfast in the classroom to all students show decreases in tardiness and suspensions as well as improved student behavior and attentiveness. <sup>5</sup>
- Providing students with breakfast in the classroom is associated with fewer disciplinary measures. <sup>6</sup>
- Children who participate in school breakfast have lower rates of absenteeism. <sup>7</sup>

## **BREAKFAST IMPROVES CHILDREN'S DIETS AND OVERALL HEALTH:**

- Children who eat breakfast tend to have more adequate nutrient intake than children who do not. <sup>8</sup>
- Children and adolescents who eat breakfast are more likely to maintain a healthy body weight. <sup>9</sup>

**Research Demonstrates that School Breakfast Improves Children's Education, Health, and Well-Being**

For additional research on the benefits of the School Breakfast Program, see USDA "Discover School Breakfast Toolkit"

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/breakfast/toolkit/default.htm>

Adapted from The Food Research and Action Center's "Breakfast for Learning" Child Nutrition Factsheet.



<sup>1</sup>Wyon D, Abrahamsson L, Jartelius M, Fletcher R. "An Experimental Study of the effects of Energy Intake at Breakfast on the Test Performance of 10-Year Old Children in School." *International journal of Food Science and Nutrition* 1997;48(1):5-12.

<sup>2</sup>Vaisman N, Voet H, Akivis A, Vakil E. "Effects of Breakfast Timing on Cognitive Functions of Elementary School Students." *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine* 1996 150:1089-1092.

<sup>3</sup>Wesnes KA, Pincock C, Richardson D, Helm G, Hails S. "Breakfast Reduced declines in attention and memory over the morning in schoolchildren." *Appetite* 2003;41(3):329-31.

<sup>4</sup>Murphy JM, Pagano M, Nachmani J, Sperling P, Kane S, Kleinman R. "The Relationship of School Breakfast to Psychosocial and Academic Functioning: Cross-sectional and longitudinal observations in an inner-city sample." *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine* 1998; 152:889-907; Powell CA, Walker SP, Chang SM, Grantham-McGregor SM. "Nutrition and education: a randomized trial of the effects of breakfast in rural primary school children." *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 1998;78:873-9.

<sup>5</sup>Murphy JM, Pagano ME, Patton K, Hall S, Marinaccio J, Kleinman R. "The Boston Public Schools Universal Breakfast Program; Final Evaluation Report." Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, MA, 2000; Murphy JM et al. "Maryland Meals for Achievement Year III Final Report." Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, MA 2001.

<sup>6</sup>Murphy JM, Drake JE, Weineke KM. "Academic & Breakfast Connection Pilot: Final Report on New York's Classroom Breakfast Project." Nutrition Consortium of New York State. Albany, New York. July 2005.

<sup>7</sup>Cook JT, Ohri-Vachaspati P, Kelly GL. "Evaluation of a Universally-Free School Breakfast Program Demonstration Project, Central Falls, Rhode Island." Center on Hunger, Poverty and Nutrition Policy, Tufts University, Medford, MA, 1996; Murphy JM, Pagano M, Nachmani J, Sperling P, Kane S, Kleinman R. "The relationship of School Breakfast to Pyschosocial and Academic Functioning" 1998.

<sup>8</sup>Rampersaud GC, Pereira MA, Girard BL, Adams J, Metzler JD. "Breakfast Habits, Nutritional Status, Body Weight, and Academic Performance in Children and Adolescents." *Journal of American Dietetic Association* 2005; 105:743-760.

<sup>9</sup>Fiore H, Travis S, Whalen A, Auinger P, Ryan S. "Potentially Protective Factors Associated with Healthful Body Mass Index in Adolescents with Obese and Nonobese Parents: A secondary Data Analysis of the Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 1988-1994." *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 2006;106:55-64; Barton BA, Elderidge AL, Thompson D, Affenito SG, Striegel-Moore RH, Franko DL, Albertson AM, Crockett SJ. "The relationship of breakfast and cereal consumption to nutrient intake and body mass index: the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute Growth and Health Study." *Journal of the American Heart Association* 2005; 105(9):1383-1389.

<sup>10</sup>Based on 2009-2010 school breakfast reimbursement rates (\$1.46 per free breakfast served, \$1.16 per reduced priced breakfast, and \$0.26 per paid breakfast). Reimbursement rates are adjusted annually. In addition, in schools where at least 40 percent of lunches are served to students who qualify for free and reduced-price meals, schools receive an addition \$0.28 for "severe need" funding for free and reduced price meals. With SB07-059, there is no reduced price for K-2nd grade.

<sup>11</sup>Colorado Department of Education regulations on classroom instructional time: 2254-R-2.06 (page 4) and Section 22-32-109, C.R.S. [http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeboard/download/bdregs\\_301-39.pdf](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeboard/download/bdregs_301-39.pdf)