

Breakfast Program Success Stories

White Bear Lake Area Schools ISD 624

Breakfast participation has **steadily increased** since Second Chance Breakfast was introduced in WBL's high schools.

📌 WBLAHS-South Campus participation jumped from 5.8% in 2016-17 to 12.2% in 2019-20; WBLAHS-North Campus participation increased from 4.7% in 2016-17 to 16.8% in 2019-20

📌 Area Learning Center participation grew from 13.7% in 2016-17 to 20.7% in 2019-20.

The success of the high school programs has WBLAS planning to **expand alternative breakfast programs to their middle schools**, which can also boost participation for high school students down the line.

While the high schools still offer traditional breakfast in the cafeteria before the start of the day, Second Chance Breakfast is still a popular option for students, making up the majority of breakfasts served at WBLAHS-North Campus.

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Students are the program's biggest advocates, so getting some of them on board & enthusiastic helped to bring more people into the fold.

— Bridget Lehn, Director of Nutrition Services

Bemidji Area Schools – ISD 31

Since implementing Grab and Go Breakfast and Second Chance Breakfast last year, **participation in Bemidji High School's school breakfast program has tripled!** And administrators anticipate continued growth.

Up-front costs were minimal, and the school saw a return on investment very quickly. Similarly, labor costs have been well within line.

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On implementing a new school breakfast program:

You have to have faith in the fact that this is going to be a phenomenal program & really is going to touch the students where they need it.

On the enthusiasm of food service staff:

They have a good attitude about everything. They totally understand that they're there for the students. They know the program is important.

— Marleen Webb, Food Service Coordinator



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Hmong International Academy

Students would amble in the hallways and often be late for class. Teachers would struggle to usher kids into classrooms. There were sometimes even behavior issues to deal with.

Then, Hmong International Academy (HIA) rolled out a new Grab and Go Breakfast service model and everything changed. The on-the-go breakfast was introduced in partnership with Second Harvest Heartland — proving to be a big hit with students and teachers alike. Students grab a nutritious breakfast from kiosks before heading to their classrooms to eat. HIA offers free breakfast to all students. With this change in their breakfast model, **they went from serving 260 to 402 students on their first day!**

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Teachers have additional time to connect with students while eating breakfast because they're in the classroom earlier. The mornings are so much nicer. I couldn't imagine going back to the traditional cafeteria breakfast.

— Gao Xiong, assistant principal

Lake Marion Elementary School Lakeville Area Schools ISD 194

Lake Marion Elementary (LME) went from 60-80 kids participating in breakfast to 180-210 — **more than doubling** the number of kids served each day!

No classes were missed due to the shift, and concerns, like messy classrooms, that had been raised before implementation ended up not being an issue.

LME staff feel that not only does the alternative breakfast model offer a convenient option for parents, but kids who qualify for free and reduced lunch are now a part of the classroom culture — **addressing equity** in their school.

About half of the students who participate in breakfast qualify for free or reduced meals — the other half are paying. **By making breakfast more accessible for all students, they're also helping to eliminate the stigma of having breakfast at school.**

After a three-week trial period, Grab and Go breakfast officially became a regular part of the school day at LME.

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We know, we know, children are able to learn better when they're not hungry.

— Kathy Lewis, ISD194 Board of Education Vice Chair

