

Marketing and Promotional Ideas to Increase Breakfast Participation

The key to having a successful School Breakfast Program is to have FUN while still providing a nutritious start to a student's day. You know your students best so customize your breakfast program to meet their needs. Set an attainable growth goal over your average participation and use the following ideas to promote breakfast. Participation can be announced daily over announcements to promote the event and create a buzz.

Offer Incentives and Activities

- Put a sticker on the bottom of a tray/plate and give a prize to the student who finds it. Make sure to promote the event in advance.
- To generate interest in breakfast in the classroom, offer a prize drawing for a home room class to win breakfast in the classroom. Take photos of the event and post on the school or district website.
- If kids eat school breakfast every day for a week they get a free snack coupon.
- If kids eat school breakfast for everyday in a chosen month, they are entered for a chance to plan a breakfast menu for a day.
- Invite your local TV station to broadcast from your school.
- Bring a local radio station in and have them broadcast their show during breakfast time. They bring giveaways and it is a lot of fun.

Use Themes

- Advertise "Fundays" at breakfast to entice kids to come and eat.
- Use a theme or movie to promote breakfast, example the Disney Cars movie. Each car races around the track and the cars would move based on the number of breakfast served each day.
- Have a Dr. Seuss breakfast day.
- Follow the yellow brick road to breakfast. Use a "Wizard of Oz" theme with yellow "bricks" leading to the breakfast serving area. You could serve items such as Wizard Waffles or Munchkin Muffins. Excerpts from the book could be read during breakfast.
- Books and Breakfast: Host a book and breakfast week, invite your library/ media specialist. You could create a display of breakfast books and give bookmarks to participants. Use the books in your menu and decorations. You could even read one during breakfast.

Get Students Involved

- Have a student planned breakfast.
- Offer samples of a new breakfast item once a month.
- Start a breakfast club whose main role is to taste test potential food items.
- Advertise school breakfast with posters and displays around campus. Have a breakfast poster contest with each grade and display results in the cafeteria or around campus.

- Correlate menus with school spirit days. Work with student leadership to advertise these menus as part of spirit day advertising.
- Have a poster contest for students to illustrate movies, songs, bands TV shows and use the winning poster as a theme.
- Have a class participation contest with prizes for the winning class

Make Breakfast More Convenient

- For Grab n' Go Breakfast, use a cart to serve breakfast in the hallways or at the bus entrance.
- Have a frequent breakfast buyers' card which enables students to enter a prize drawing once they have a certain number of stamps or they earn a free snack at break.
- Offer convenient "special delivery" breakfasts during testing week to encourage students to eat breakfast.
- Leverage branding. Serve breakfast in a way students can identify with a restaurant, café, or gas station. Market breakfast specials like a diner.

Invite guests

- Invite local 'heroes' to breakfast such as firefighters, policeman, military personnel.
- Have breakfast with the school mascot and create a photo opportunity.
- Invite parents to join the students for breakfast. Students could make invitations in advance.
- Invite the mayor or a college athlete.
- Invite the local TV station to film in the cafeteria during breakfast.

Get Parents and Staff Involved

- Advertise the benefits and how much time school breakfast will save parents in the morning rush via newsletters, email blasts and signs. See our website for letters and inserts to send home.
- Advertise school breakfast (including menus) on the school website.
- Teach the teachers and sponsor a breakfast with teachers and principals. Let them know the importance of eating breakfast and the positive effects it can have on students.
- Implement "Breakfast with the Principal" for straight A's, award winners etc.
- Have the Principal serve breakfast.

Adapted from resources produced by the School Nutrition Association, the National Dairy Council and Meals4kids.org