



Breakfast After the Bell (BAB)

Serving breakfast after the school day begins is great for students **and** schools.



BAB Facts

- In New York, only about half of students who eat school lunch also eat school breakfast.
- Traditional breakfast, served in the cafeteria before school, is often underutilized. Factors like tight schedules (unlike lunch, there isn't a dedicated period for breakfast) and social stigma contribute.
- Breakfast in the Classroom counts as instructional time, per the NYS Breakfast After the Bell Law.

When Schools Serve BAB, Participation Increases

This has a cascade of positive effects:

Students get nutrition they need, improving dietary intake and health outcomes, attendance, and academic performance (test scores, GPA).¹⁻¹⁴

Classrooms see fewer behavioral disruptions, fostering a calmer learning environment for all.^{4-5, 8, 15}

Schools see increased school meal budgets that can be reinvested for continued program quality and improvement.¹⁶

Everyone benefits from reduced bottle necks and wait times in the cafeteria line, moving student traffic out of the cafeteria and into classrooms on time.

BAB is Flexible

Schools can tailor BAB to meet their needs. BAB can be piloted in individual buildings, and service models can be adapted for different age groups and building situations:



Breakfast in the Classroom: Students eat in the classroom after the school day begins. Meals are delivered and distributed in the classroom or picked up by students from the cafeteria. Great for lower grades, where students start each day with the same teacher and classroom.





Grab and Go: Students pick up meals from designated stations (carts, vending machines, etc.) in high-traffic areas and eat between classes or at their desks. Works well for secondary grades, where students have varying schedules and enjoy more flexibility. Also great for schools with limited capacity to deliver meals or infrastructure that makes delivery impractical (e.g., multiple stories).



Second Chance Breakfast: Students have extended time to pick up meals from the cafeteria after school starts or during a mid-morning break. Works well for secondary grades, where students tend to arrive closer to the start of school and are often not hungry early in the morning.



We've gotten nothing but positive feedback from teachers. They're glad that the kids are in class on time, and they just sit, and they eat, and it's not a big deal."

—Sarah Keen, Food Service Director, Schuylerville CSD



NYS is Invested in School Breakfast: Universal Free School Meals and Breakfast After the Bell legislation

New York's Universal Free School Meals law requires schools operating the federal meal programs to provide free breakfast and lunch to all students. The law also makes it easier for schools to offer BAB by simplifying how the program operates.

Breakfast After the Bell legislation ensures high-poverty public schools offer all students breakfast after the instructional day begins. Schools required to implement BAB are identified by NYS Department of Education (NYSED) each year. Visit cn.nysed.gov for a list of schools required to implement BAB.

Hunger Solutions New York Can Help

We provide resources, data, and best practices to help schools improve participation in the federal school breakfast and lunch programs. For one-on-one assistance at no cost, contact Francesca DiGiorgio at Francesca.DiGiorgio@HungerSolutionsNY.org. Learn more at HungerSolutionsNY.org/SchoolMeals

References 1-16: Visit HungerSolutionsNY.org/sources

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