

# Breakfast After the Bell



**TACKLING CHILDHOOD HUNGER IN OUR SCHOOLS**

**SCHOOL NUTRITION ASSOCIATION OF VIRGINIA**  
[WWW.SNA-VA.ORG](http://WWW.SNA-VA.ORG)

## Childhood Hunger in Virginia

2

- More than 321,000 children in Virginia are at risk for hunger
- 21% of children in Virginia struggle with hunger
- Only 50.6% of students eligible for free/reduced meals participate in school breakfast
- 3 out of 5 teachers say they have children in their classrooms who regularly come to school hungry

*\*Statistics from Share our Strength's No Kid Hungry In Virginia campaign*

## School Breakfast Programs in Virginia

3

- USDA National School Breakfast Program
- All school divisions in Virginia participate
- Usually served before the school day begins
- Operates similarly to the lunch programs
- Full price or free/reduced prices for eligible students

## Students Who Eat Breakfast:

4

- Attend an average of 1.5 more days per year
- Average 17.5% higher on math scores
- Are 20% more likely to graduate high school
- Show improved cognitive function, attention and memory
- At a lower risk for overweight and obesity

## Students Who Do NOT Eat Breakfast:

5

- Have trouble concentrating in the classroom
- Show poor academic performance
- Experience headaches and stomach aches

**Hungry kids cannot learn.**

**So why aren't more students participating in school breakfast programs?**

## Barriers to School Breakfast

6

- Transportation
- Schedules
- Peer Pressure
- Stigma

**“Breakfast After the Bell” programs remove these barriers and provide more opportunities for more students to participate in school breakfast.**

## Breakfast After the Bell Options

7

- **Breakfast in the Classroom**
  - Students eat breakfast in their classroom after start of the day
  - Typically takes 10-15 minutes (usually during attendance/announcements)
  - Most often used in elementary schools
- **Grab n' Go**
  - Students pick up packaged breakfasts from mobile service carts
  - Students can eat in the cafeteria, classroom or elsewhere on campus
  - Most often used in middle and high schools
- **Second Chance Breakfast**
  - Students eat during a break in the morning, often after first period
  - Can be served similar to Grab n' Go
  - Effective for older students who may not be hungry first thing in the morning.

## Providing Breakfast to Students at School:

8

- Improves their concentration, alertness, comprehension, memory and learning
- Improves attendance, behavior, and standardized test scores
- Decreases tardiness and visits to the school nurse

**And all the other benefits  
that come from eating breakfast!**

## Policy Trends

9

- U.S. Secretary of Education memorandum
- Colorado
- New Mexico
- Arkansas
- Virginia
  - School hunger resolution; HJ 598 (Garrett); SJ 280 (Carrico)
  - Department of Education will submit report
  - Superintendent's memo

## Examples in Virginia

10

- Norfolk Public Schools
- Stewartsville Elementary in Bedford County

**Every school is different. Principals, teachers and school nutrition staff need flexibility to implement a “Breakfast After the Bell” program that works for their specific school and student population.**

## Norfolk City Public Schools

11

- First implemented in May 2011
- Breakfast offered for free to all students
- Model similar to “Grab n’ Go”
- Students eat in classroom
- Almost all elementary schools participating
- Increase in breakfast participation: +39% in elementary schools as a group, +100% in some individual schools
- Positive feedback from surveys

## Stewartsville Elementary (Bedford County)

12

- 416 students total
- 61% (254 students) are eligible for free/reduced
- New breakfast program began in 2011-2012 school year
- Started with *Responsive Classroom* program
- Coordination with administration, teachers, school nutrition office and janitorial staff
- Students pick up breakfast in cafeteria; eat in classrooms
- Participation is now 57% (about 250 students eat breakfast every morning)
- Numerous positive outcomes

# Questions



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