

Second Chance Breakfast

QUICK GUIDE

Part of the Massachusetts
After the Bell Toolkit Series



This resource is brought to you by the Child Nutrition Outreach Program at Project Bread and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Preface

Approximately 1 in every 8 Massachusetts children is food-insecure.¹ While these children and their families may not be hungry today or even tomorrow, the threat of hunger is a daily reality in their households. Federal nutrition benefits are a critical safety net to help keep these families' budgets in balance and minimize trade-offs between food, housing, medical care, and other critical needs.

For children living in food-insecure households, eating a healthy breakfast at home is often not possible. The National School Breakfast Program (NSBP) is a federally-funded program that helps bridge this gap for families, providing nutritious meals at low or no cost to low-income students at schools throughout the country. According to the Food Research & Action Center's 2015-2016 School Breakfast Scorecard, of the more than 330,000 students in Massachusetts who qualify for free and reduced-price meals, only 49% are eating school breakfast. Starting the day with a nutritious meal is critical for every student—no matter their family's income level.

School breakfast champions here in Massachusetts are making great strides in increasing breakfast participation across the Commonwealth. Participation among students eligible for free or reduced-price meals rose by 15% from the 2014-2015 school year to the 2015-2016 school year alone. Together, we can ensure that all students in the state have access to nutritious meals that help them learn and thrive.

¹ Feeding America, 2018

About the Child Nutrition Outreach Program

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Child Nutrition Outreach Program (CNOP) works with local districts, schools, and communities across the state to increase participation in the National School Breakfast Program. Administered by Project Bread since 1994, CNOP provides technical assistance and innovative solutions to support schools implementing and expanding school breakfast programs. Together, we strive to ensure that all children in Massachusetts start the school day nourished and ready to learn.

This quick guide, presented by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Child Nutrition Outreach Program at Project Bread, is intended to assist school nutrition directors and other breakfast advocates in launching and implementing Second Chance Breakfast in order to increase participation in school breakfast. The Second Chance Quick Guide is part of a series of quick guides designed to help with the implementation of alternative breakfast models including Breakfast in the Classroom, Grab & Go, and Second Chance Breakfast. View the entire series at www.meals4kids.org/resources.

For additional resources and technical support, please contact the CNOP team at cnop@projectbread.org or (617) 723-5000.

Massachusetts School Breakfast Challenge

The Massachusetts School Breakfast Challenge partners are challenging schools to increase student participation in school breakfast by October 2020. Schools are encouraged to increase their breakfast participation to reach Challenge goals corresponding to the percentage of students eligible for free and reduced-price meals. Schools achieving these participation goals will be recognized and eligible for awards.

challenge group 1

Schools where 60% or more of students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals.

GOAL:

All schools achieve an 80% or higher student participation rate.

Note: Schools should strive for school breakfast after the bell and in the classroom.

challenge group 2

Schools where 30-59% of students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals.

GOAL:

All schools achieve a 50% or higher student participation rate.

Note: Schools should strive for an alternative school breakfast after the bell model.

challenge group 3

Schools where 29% or less of students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals.

GOAL:

All schools achieve a 25% or higher participation rate.

Note: Schools should strive for an active school breakfast program.

Visit www.maschoolbreakfast.org for future announcements regarding breakfast trainings, funding, and networking opportunities.

What is Second Chance Breakfast?

The Second Chance Breakfast model typically mirrors traditional cafeteria breakfast except that it occurs as part of the school day—often during a break or passing time between morning classes. Some schools choose to offer Second Chance Breakfast from carts or kiosks located in high-traffic areas of the school, mirroring a Grab & Go model. For more information about switching to a Grab & Go Breakfast model, see the Grab & Go Quick Guide at www.meals4kids.org/GnG. In the Second Chance Breakfast model, students eat during a break in the morning, making it beneficial for those who arrive late to school or are not hungry when they first arrive. Schools may add a Second Chance model to increase breakfast participation without needing to change the basic structure of their current breakfast service. When considering the timing of the Second Chance offering, schools should be sure to offer breakfast at least two hours before lunch.

BENEFITS

- 1** This model can be very successful for serving middle and high school students. These students are often more independent and have passing time between classes. Additionally, this model allows older students who are often not hungry first thing in the morning to eat later.
- 2** Students do not need to arrive early to school to eat since breakfast is built into the day. This eliminates one of the major barriers preventing students from participating in school breakfast.
- 3** Offering Second Chance Breakfast often does not require additional equipment. By just shifting the timing of breakfast, schools can increase the opportunity for students to eat a healthy breakfast.
- 4** By making breakfast part of the school day, Second Chance Breakfast reduces the stigma often associated with eating school breakfast.

Building a School Breakfast Coalition

Creating a coalition of supporters for Second Chance Breakfast is the first step in successfully implementing a school breakfast change. Principals and superintendents are key champions as part of the coalition, but also consider the key perspectives that teachers, custodians, school nurses, parents, and students themselves will offer in the planning process. Make sure that when presenting the plan to school faculty and staff, you are seeking their concerns and presenting answers and solutions as part of their training. If you are able to involve other stakeholders in the planning process and incorporate ways to ease their concerns, you are less likely to face resistance down the road.

For further assistance with building your school breakfast coalition and communicating key messages to the various stakeholders, check out the resources accompanying this guide at www.meals4kids.org/SecondChance.

Second Chance Breakfast Implementation Timeline

3-4 months
prior to
rollout

- Contact a member of the Child Nutrition Outreach Program (CNOP) team to set up a meeting by sending an email to cnop@projectbread.org.
- Visit a successful Second Chance Breakfast program at another school. Speak with the staff members there about the challenges they faced and how they overcame them.
- Present the case and initial plan to the principal and superintendent. Invite them to provide feedback and contribute to the plan.

2-3 months
prior

- Check in with the CNOP team to discuss any outstanding questions about Second Chance Breakfast.
- Schedule a meeting with the principal, teachers, custodians, nurses, and school nutrition staff to discuss the introduction of Second Chance Breakfast.
- Schedule an announcement at the next PTA-PTO meeting or Parent-Teacher Night.

4-6 weeks
prior

- Send a letter home to parents informing them about the introduction of Second Chance Breakfast including menus, prices, and times. Sample letters can be found at www.meals4kids.org/SecondChance.

2-3 weeks
prior

- Finalize the waste removal plan with custodial staff.
- Train students on how the program will work. Develop signage or posters that explain the guidelines, including where and when students can eat breakfast.

1 week
prior

- Remind parents about the new Second Chance Breakfast program through a flyer or the school's phone/texting system.
- Check in with teachers and staff to answer any outstanding questions.

1 day
prior

- Remind students about the change over the morning announcements.

1 week
after
rollout

- Continue to plan evaluation meetings with staff involved and make necessary changes to the program.

Community Profile

Frederick W. Hartnett Middle School

Prior to 2014, Frederick W. Hartnett Middle School in Blackstone was serving traditional cafeteria breakfast, reaching just 28 students per day. In 2014, Blackstone's school nutrition director worked with the school and district administration, along with Project Bread's Child Nutrition Outreach Program (CNOP), to launch a Second Chance Breakfast program, offering breakfast in the cafeteria as an alternative to homeroom.



Since implementing this new model, breakfast participation at Hartnett has risen to 120 students per day. On Friday mornings, as a special treat, Principal Justin Cameron gets behind the stove and prepares a pancake breakfast alongside the cafeteria staff to help build student excitement about the breakfast program. On these days, the cafeteria sees an even larger jump in participation due to Principal Cameron's pancakes.



State Representative Kevin Kuros helps Principal Justin Cameron prepare breakfast at Hartnett Middle School.

Because breakfast is offered as an alternative to homeroom, many students participate because they get extra time to socialize with friends while also starting their day off with a healthy meal. By implementing the Second Chance Breakfast model, Hartnett Middle School increased participation in the program from 6% in 2013 to 30% in 2017. Additionally, 45% of the school's students eligible for free and reduced-price meals are eating school breakfast each day, up from 19% in March 2013.

FAQs: Second Chance

Q: I am concerned that students will not participate in the program. How can I ensure that we see increased participation?

A: One of the main reasons students do not participate in school breakfast is because they often need to arrive at school early. Let students know that Second Chance Breakfast makes breakfast available as part of the school day; this will allow more students to participate in the program.

Another reasons students may choose not to participate in breakfast is because they are not interested in the food being offered. Offering breakfast in the cafeteria gives staff more flexibility in serving exciting meals like hot breakfasts or smoothies. These options are more desirable to students and often attract more participants. Consider asking students what they would like to eat for breakfast through a survey, focus group, or breakfast advisory club.

Q: I am not sure if there is enough support from school personnel to change breakfast models. How can I effectively communicate the benefits associated with offering Second Chance Breakfast?

A: Establishing a breakfast coalition to build community-wide support is a great way to mobilize key stakeholders to make changes to your school breakfast program. Meeting with school faculty and administrators to discuss why school breakfast is so important can help build more support. Showcase success stories of other school breakfast programs as examples of the benefits of switching to a Second Chance Breakfast model.

Conclusion

We hope this quick guide will be a helpful ongoing resource to assist you in launching Second Chance Breakfast. While the information and resources provided here will give you many of the tools you need, we know that operating a school breakfast program is a multi-faceted endeavor. CNOP can help! Our expertise gained from more than 20 years of experience can provide you with the guidance needed to increase participation in your program and overcome any challenges that you may encounter. Together, we can make sure all children in Massachusetts are prepared to succeed—starting with a healthy school breakfast.

Along with this quick guide, you can find a multitude of resources on our website that will help you implement Second Chance Breakfast successfully: www.meals4kids.org/SecondChance.



If you have any questions, or if you would like to speak with someone on the CNOP team regarding your breakfast program, contact us by email at cnop@projectbread.org, or by phone at (617) 723-5000.

