



Manual features county schools' breakfast

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Mar. 6--Daviness County Public Schools' "grab-and-go breakfast" is featured in a national instructional manual released Monday during a press conference in Washington, D.C. which kicked off National School Breakfast Week.

Food Services Director Lisa Sims is quoted in the booklet with a case study of the Classroom Breakfast project.

"The main purpose of the conference was to raise the issue of the importance of children having breakfast," said nationally-known nutritionist Tami Cline, who helped the "got breakfast?" Foundation write the "Classroom Breakfast Playbook."

The federal government provides funds for the School Breakfast Program, but few students are taking advantage of it, Cline said in a phone interview.

Last year of the 55 million school-age children, 30 million ate lunch, but only 9.8 million ate breakfast.

Of the 30 million students who ate lunch, 16 million qualified for free or reduced lunch prices. Of the 9.8 million who ate breakfast, 8 million fit those income guidelines.

"We were concerned about that big gap in needy children who could all be eating breakfast free," Cline said. "With the playbook, we try to remove some of the obstacles."

The instructional manual includes brief case studies from food service directors who have implemented successful programs.

In Daviness County, where students pick up a "grab-and-go breakfast" in the cafeteria and take it to the classroom, participation has increased 15 percent, Sims said.

"The teachers report that students get excited about breakfast and are less disruptive in class," Sims states in the district profile.

By providing alternate venues for breakfast, it removes the stigma that may be associated with having to eat in the lunchroom, Cline said.

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