

# The Washington Post

## **SE School Receives Breakfast Grant**

Friendship Campus Is 1 of 4 in Nation

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A national nonprofit group that works to eliminate childhood hunger has awarded a Southeast charter school a grant to serve breakfast schoolwide to children in their classrooms.

District-based Share Our Strength Inc. will give a one-time grant of \$8,250 to Friendship Southeast Academy to help the charter school establish its first classroom breakfast program. The school, in Congress Heights, has 352 students in pre-kindergarten through sixth grade, but just 55 students eat breakfast every day, about 16 percent, said A. Jerry Haley Jr., director of Food and Nutrition Services for the five charter schools in the Friendship district.

Eighty percent of students at Friendship South qualify for free or reduced-price lunch.

The Friendship charter school district is composed of 3,765 students, many of whom come to school munching chips and sipping high-sugar drinks for breakfast or they don't eat at all, Haley said.

"This is not just about breakfast," he said. "Friendship has a rigorous academic structure, and in order for our kids to benefit from it at the maximum level, they're going to have to be fed properly."

The grant will allow the school to serve 550 children starting next fall, when the school expects to move into an expansion location and add seventh and eighth grades. The grant also covers trash pickup, the salaries of custodial staff who will remove trash daily from

the classrooms, pest control and promotional materials, said Pat Nicklin, managing director of Share Our Strength.

The Friendship elementary school grant is one of four awards issued this year under a new program called "Got Breakfast?" representing a foundation of the same name. The foundation consists of nonprofits, government and private businesses, including the National Dairy Council, General Mills, the Food Research and Action Center and others.

A Long-Island based company, East Side Entrees, which manufactures and distributes food products nationwide for child nutrition programs, donated a percentage of its product sales to finance the initial round of \$35,000 in grants.

The other schools that received grants include Langley Park McCormick Elementary in Prince George's County.