



“got breakfast?” Foundation Announces New Grants For School Districts To Implement Classroom Breakfast

School Buyers Online

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Washington, D.C - To herald the start of National School Breakfast Week, the “got breakfast?” Foundation recently announced two major initiatives aimed at feeding the millions of low-income children across the country who do not eat breakfast. The first announcement is of “got breakfast?” grants given in conjunction with anti-hunger organization Share Our Strength to four school districts to help them implement the Classroom Breakfast method of serving meals to students. The grants are the first of a series available to schools nationwide that are interested in implementing Classroom Breakfast.

The second announcement is the release of the *Classroom Breakfast Playbook*, an informational survey and manual written by the “got breakfast?” Foundation with Executive Director Tami Cline, a well-known registered dietician. The booklet summarizes studies and the opinions of foodservice directors across the country that prove Classroom Breakfast raises test scores, reduces health issues and doubles and in some cases triples participation numbers in the federal School Breakfast Program.

“Millions of underserved children around the country are not eating breakfast before the school day, and studies show that serving breakfast in the classroom breaks down many of the traditional barriers to getting students the most important meal of the day”, said Pat Nicklin, Managing Director, Share Our Strength. “Our grants will serve as a catalyst for providing classroom breakfasts throughout the country and in the process improve the test scores and overall performance of our students.”

The “got breakfast?” grants totaling \$35,000 will be awarded to Balboa High School of San Francisco, CA, Langley Park McCormick Elementary School of Prince George's County, MD, Friendship Public Charter Schools of Washington, DC and an additional school to be announced shortly to implement Classroom Breakfast. “Today’s grants will have an enormous impact on tomorrow’s children,” continued Nicklin. “These investments will make the difference in giving hungry children the breakfast that they may otherwise not receive.”

“A combined effort among foodservice directors, principals, teachers and other school officials is vital in making classroom breakfast a success, and we hope that through our efforts we can educate as many people as possible to help reach the millions of students who need breakfast the most,” said Cline. “*The Classroom Breakfast Playbook* will be an important tool in our efforts to educate everyone from community leaders to school officials on the outstanding benefits Classroom Breakfast offers.”

The “got breakfast?” Foundation works to help the millions of students who qualify for a free or reduced-price breakfast to access the meals they are not receiving. Out of 55 million children who attend school in the United States, 30 million participate in the National School Lunch Program, yet only 9.6 million eat breakfast in school. The foundation works with a coalition of public officials, community leaders, private organizations and personalities committed to anti-hunger efforts including Share Our Strength, the Alliance to End Hunger, the Coca-Cola Company,

General Mills, the National Dairy Council and East Side Entrees.

In attendance at the announcement were representatives from each of the “got breakfast?” partner organizations: Pat Nicklin, Share Our Strength; Max Finberg, the Alliance to End Hunger; Quinton Martin, the Coca-Cola Company (Minute Maid brand); Kim Main and Lesa Tieszen, General Mills; Camellia Patey, the National Dairy Council; and Gary Davis, East Side Entrees. Also in attendance to support the expansion of classroom breakfast were Kate Houston, United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service, and Jim Weill from the Food Research and Action Center. Sandra Jimenez, Principal at Langley Park McCormick Elementary, and Jerry Haley, Director of Food and Nutrition Services at Friendship Public Charter Schools, were in attendance to receive the grants.

Research proves that principals, teachers, foodservice directors and custodial staff agree Classroom Breakfast positively affects the ability to learn and results in increased test scores, fewer visits to the school nurse for stomachaches and fewer student disciplinary problems. When breakfast is served in the classroom and offered to all students regardless of income, breakfast participation numbers have doubled and in some cases tripled. The School Breakfast Program provides Federal reimbursement to schools for each meal served so when schools increase the number of students eating breakfast, schools will see an increase in funds. According to the Food Research and Action Center, more than \$500 million in federal funds available to provide school breakfast to children in need are not being accessed.

Classroom Breakfast helps address the logistical hurdles that come with serving students breakfast such as time constraints and limited staffing. There are various ways schools implement Classroom Breakfast; some set time aside early in the morning so that when children arrive at school they sit at a desk and are served a convenient grab-and-go meal. This method helps foodservice directors serve more children breakfast, grow the breakfast program without impacting staff and helps alleviate many logistical challenges. During meal distribution teachers often use the time to conduct an educational activity to prepare the students for the start of their day or do administrative duties.

For information on how to obtain a classroom breakfast grant for your school district, go to www.gotbreakfast.org.