



Bring on Breakfast

Making breakfast more accessible and attractive to students in school.

Eating breakfast at school can help you perform better in the classroom, promote good nutrition, maintain a healthy weight, improve attendance, and the ability to pay attention in class. And yet, too few students do it.

These strategies are designed to find ways to improve students' access to and participation in a nutritious school breakfast every day. Through grab-n-go, breakfast in the classroom, regular group breakfasts and picnics, and organizing taste tests to see which are the most appealing foods, these strategies will help you make breakfast a regular part of everyone's day at school.

GRAB-N-GO BREAKFAST

Organize a "grab-n-go breakfast" station at a high-traffic location in school where students can get breakfast before school — or an event such as a "last chance breakfast" break after first period to make breakfast a fun, fast option for everyone!

- **Work with your school nutrition manager and principal** to choose a location for your "grab-n-go breakfast" station. Consider locations where students tend to gather in the morning, such as a lobby or foyer, outside the library or gym, outside the front doors, or near the bus loop.
- **Brainstorm design ideas** for your "grab-n-go breakfast" station. Is it a table? A cart on wheels? A refrigerated station? Check out [Breakfast Anytime, Anywhere Tips](#) for ideas on organizing a "grab-n-go breakfast" program.
- As another option, work with school nutrition professionals to offer these more convenient and nutritious choices in the cafeteria breakfast line, for students who eat breakfast in the school cafeteria.

- **Spread the word** about your "grab-n-go breakfast" station: Create posters to put up in high-traffic areas, distribute flyers in classrooms, and advertise your program during morning announcements.
- What tasty, appealing, healthy foods will your station offer? Work with your school nutrition professionals to create a menu of nutrient-rich breakfast choices. Offer conveniently packed and easy-to-grab foods that include low-fat or fat-free dairy products, whole grains, fruits and vegetables. As a starting point, check out these [portable breakfast ideas](#).
- Consider asking students for comments about which choices they like and dislike. Ask them to suggest other healthy breakfast options to offer in the future.
- Local grocery stores may be willing to donate healthy foods for your program. See [Tips and Tools for Engaging Businesses](#) for tips on getting donations. You can also use this [donor request letter](#) template to request donations or assistance.

Everyone Can:

- Provide school nutrition professionals with input on grab-n-go menu items.
- Help choose grab-n-go locations.
- Promote the program.
- Solicit donations from local businesses.



A HERO'S BREAKFAST

Promote healthy breakfast choices by hosting a monthly “hero’s breakfast” for invited community heroes or celebrities, such as firefighters, policemen, good Samaritans, sports figures or other personalities. Encourage more students in your school to enjoy breakfast regularly and get a good start in the morning!

- **Identify the best day** of the month to host a community breakfast (work with students, teachers, school nutritional professionals and the principal). For example, space might be available on the second Monday of each month.
- **Identify local heroes and celebrities** in your community. Create an invitation that will be sent to breakfast invitees. Keep in mind that many invitees will need plenty of advance notice in order to attend, so you’ll want to line up your guests for several months in advance.
- **In your invitation**, ask invitees to share with the community their favorite healthy breakfast choices. In advance, provide heroes with brief information about the program’s goals, what is being served at the breakfast, and why these foods are healthy choices.
- **Promote the breakfast event** to your classmates and school staff. The goal of this program is to encourage more students to enjoy a healthy breakfast, so advertise the event with posters, flyers, and announcements.

- **Prepare a breakfast menu** that includes a variety of delicious and nutritious choices, including low-fat and fat-free dairy foods, fruits, vegetables and whole grains (work with your school nutrition professionals). Local grocery stores or school food vendors might be willing to provide food samples and ideas. See [Tips and Tools for Engaging Businesses](#) for more ideas on getting help from the community. Use this [donor request letter](#) template to request donations or assistance.
- **Highlight your “hero’s” healthy breakfast choices** on the menu! Pass out copies of the *Fuel Up to Play 60* resource [What Foods Can Do for You](#) to participants.

Everyone Can:

- Help select the best day to hold a monthly breakfast event.
- Identify and invite local heroes and celebrities.
- Create invitations.
- Provide input on the breakfast menu working with school nutrition professionals.
- Solicit community donations.
- Prepare and distribute handouts.
- Promote the event among students and staff.



BREAKFAST IN THE CLASSROOM

Organize a "breakfast in the classroom" program that provides nutritious, easy-to-eat breakfast foods to be offered to students during class. Help your classmates get a good start to their day with a nutritious breakfast!

- **Create a menu** of nutrient-rich, student-appealing breakfast choices (work with your school nutrition manager). Offer conveniently packed and easy-to-clean-up foods, including low-fat or fat-free dairy foods, fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Check out [Expanding Breakfast](#) for ideas on organizing a breakfast-in-the-classroom program.
- **Local grocery stores** might be willing to provide food samples and ideas. Use this [donor request letter](#) template to request donations or assistance. See [Tips and Tools for Engaging Businesses](#) for more ideas on getting help from the community.
- **Speak with teachers** to get their support for the program. Encourage them to use "breakfast in the classroom" as an opportunity to teach about healthy eating and the importance of breakfast. Resources that can help you plan and be shared with students and teachers include: [What Foods Can Do for You](#); [Expanding Breakfast Champion Success Stories](#); and the [USDA's nutrition resources for educators](#).

- **Spread the word** about "breakfast in the classroom." Create posters to put up in high-traffic areas, distribute flyers in classrooms and advertise your program in the school newsletter and Web site. Encourage everyone at your school to make healthy eating choices in the morning and to track their healthy eating choices for the [Fuel Up to Play 60 Competition!](#)

Everyone Can:

- Help create a menu with school nutrition professionals.
- Solicit donations from local stores.
- Provide resources for teachers.
- Advertise the program.
- Help plan the routes.
- Encourage their friends and classmates to eat healthy and track their choices for the [Fuel Up to Play 60 Competition](#).



BREAKFAST PICNIC

Set up an inviting "breakfast picnic" area that students can visit before school or between periods. Choose a convenient location and offer nutritious and tasty choices that will encourage students to make healthy choices throughout the day.

- **Create a menu** of nutrient-rich breakfast and snack food choices (work with your school nutrition professionals). Offer conveniently packed and easy-to-grab foods that include low-fat or fat-free dairy foods, fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. [Expanding Breakfast](#) can help you plan.
- **Choose a location** outside the cafeteria for your "breakfast picnic" (work with your principal). Consider locations that are convenient for everyone and have a wide open area, such as a lobby, outside the gym, outside the front doors, a courtyard, or an area of the lawn. Discuss what time(s) of day your picnic will be available to your classmates. Before school? Mid-morning?
- **Solicit donations** of picnic tables from local businesses. Use this [donor request letter](#) template to request donations or assistance. See [Tips and Tools for Engaging Businesses](#) for more ideas on getting help from the community.

- **Spread the word** about the "breakfast picnic." Create posters to put up in high-traffic areas, distribute flyers in classrooms, make morning announcements and advertise your program in the school newsletter. Pass out information about healthy eating, such as: [What Foods Can Do for You](#). Encourage everyone at your school to make healthy eating choices in the morning and to track their healthy eating choices for the [Fuel Up to Play 60 Competition!](#)

Everyone Can:

- Work with school nutrition professionals to help create the breakfast menu.
- Help choose a location for the breakfast picnic.
- Solicit community donations.
- Promote the program.
- Distribute nutrition information to students.
- Encourage their friends and classmates to make healthy eating choices and track them in the [Fuel Up to Play 60 Competition](#).



TASTE TEST BREAKFAST

Organize a series of breakfast "taste test" days and invite students to try different healthy breakfast food options. Encourage your classmates to make healthy eating choices in the morning and to track their activities for the [Fuel Up to Play 60 Competition!](#)

- **Create a sampling** of nutritious breakfast food options (work with your principal). Feature low-fat or fat-free dairy foods, fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. The [Expanding Breakfast](#) and [Game On! The Ultimate Wellness Challenge](#) resources can help you plan.
- **Choose a convenient location** for your "taste tests" — such as inside or outside the cafeteria, a lobby, outside the gym, outside the front doors or a courtyard (work with the principal).
- **Request healthy food samples** from local grocery stores and businesses. Use this [donor request letter](#) template to request donations or assistance. See [Tips and Tools for Engaging Businesses](#) for more ideas on getting help from the community.
- **Spread the word** about your "taste tests." Put up posters in high-traffic areas, distribute flyers in classrooms, make morning announcements and advertise your program in the school newsletter and Web site. During "taste tests," pass out information about healthy eating, such as: [What Foods Can Do for You](#). With the help of your school nutrition professionals, give your classmates nutritional information about why the foods you offer can help them look and feel their best.

- **Ask classroom teachers** to integrate nutrition education lessons on "taste test" days and to encourage participation. Encourage teachers to check out nutrition lessons on [Bridges to Wellness](#) and [Nutrition Explorations](#). The U.S. Department of Agriculture also offers an [index of nutrition education resources](#).

Everyone Can:

- Work with school nutrition professionals to choose healthy foods to try. Help choose a location for the breakfast picnic.
- Solicit community donations.
- Advertise the program.
- Create and distribute nutrition information to students.
- Encourage their friends and classmates to make healthy eating choices and track them in the [Fuel Up to Play 60 Competition](#).