BREAKFAST SHERIFFS KEEP HUNGER AT BAY

Every morning a group of sheriffs assembles to protect very important cargo – carts stacked with healthy school breakfasts. These aren’t old timey western lawmen, they’re “breakfast sheriffs” at Stanley Mosk Elementary in California’s San Fernando Valley. Principal Barbara Frederich came up with the name to make the students assigned to collect the morning breakfast feel special. Now, every kid in school wants to be a breakfast sheriff.

When you’ve been an educator for nearly 30 years, you learn a thing or two about how to get kids excited. But it doesn’t take 30 years to realize your kids have to start the day with healthy food if you want them to be attentive learners. When breakfast was served in the cafeteria before the school day started, only 30% of kids at Stanley Mosk were eating. But this is a school where more than 90% of kids are eligible for free/reduced price school meals, it was clear to Principal Frederich that many kids struggling with hunger weren’t getting school breakfast.

So Principal Frederich worked with her staff to make breakfast a part of the school day, so that every kid had access to school breakfast. The results were remarkable.

“The first thing we noticed was the morning visits to the nurse’s office almost completely disappeared;” Principal Frederich explains. “We used to have kids coming in with headaches and stomachaches, now we seldom see anyone there in the mornings. With breakfast in the classroom, the kids are just ready to learn.”

Principal Frederich cares about cultivating an environment of healthy, happy kids at her school, and every day she sees how the breakfast program makes the classroom an even more positive environment.

“The kids love it on several levels. They love having breakfast together. It’s just another way the school runs like a little family. It’s a kinder, gentler way to get the day going, and makes the day start with a plus.” Principal Frederich says.

Each morning at Stanley Mosk Elementary the breakfast sheriffs line up to collect the carts stacked with breakfasts. They bring them to their classrooms and the kids sit down for a healthy meal. This story is about so much more than school breakfast, it’s about kids that no longer face the school day hungry because there wasn’t enough food for them at home. It’s about kids who have the fuel they need to focus and learn in class. And, it’s about a principal who has created the kind of environment that encourages kids to learn and grow.

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