



BREAKFAST AFTER THE BELL

PRE-IMPLEMENTATION PREP

Recognizing the importance of school breakfast in ensuring student health, well-being and academic success, schools across the country are increasingly making breakfast a part of the school day. Breakfast After the Bell (BAB) models, such as Breakfast in the Classroom (BIC), Grab and Go to the Classroom (GNG) and Second Chance Breakfast, can increase participation, school meal program revenues, and student performance. Learn more about BAB models and how they can increase breakfast participation with [Innovative Breakfast Delivery Options](#). Implementing BAB may present some initial challenges, however. Preparing for implementation can make the transition from traditional cafeteria breakfast to BAB smoother and increase the chances of maintaining a successful program. Each school has their own unique needs and adaptability during early implementation can help refine and improve the breakfast program. In preparing to implement BAB, there are several important steps to consider, as discussed below.

ASSEMBLE A SCHOOL BREAKFAST TEAM

Assemble a team of stakeholders in the school and/or district that can help plan BAB implementation. The team may include teachers, principals, food service staff, wellness coordinators and custodians. Engaging stakeholders provides an opportunity to educate them about the importance of expanding access to school breakfast, address concerns and inform them about how the new model may alter their morning routine. The team can convene regularly or on an ad hoc basis to facilitate planning, troubleshoot and manage expectations of the new breakfast program. Team members can also be powerful advocates for promoting the program to their peers.

IDENTIFY AND PURCHASE NEEDED EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES

Using input from the School Breakfast Team, create a list of equipment and supplies that will be necessary for successful BAB implementation. Different BAB models will require different equipment. Consider key factors, such as whether breakfast will be delivered to the classroom or offered from stations throughout the school. If breakfast participation is expected to increase substantially, additional storage space or more frequent food deliveries may be necessary. Consulting with other schools that have implemented BAB to learn best practices can be valuable. This [BAB Equipment Tip Sheet](#) from No Kid Hungry may also provide helpful guidance.

While school nutrition directors typically report that increased revenue from BAB can cover program costs, schools may want to seek funding for equipment and other startup costs.

DEVELOP AN IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Using input from the School Breakfast Team, create a timeline for the various stages of implementation:

- Prep work – procure all necessary equipment and supplies
- Training – train and educate all stakeholders about the change in breakfast
- Breakfast service delivery – create a minute-by-minute schedule that will be used to ensure timely prep, delivery, and clean-up
- Post-rollout assessment – assess the new breakfast program 1-3 weeks after the rollout to determine what adjustments need to be made regarding logistics, messaging, or stakeholders training



Many schools find it helpful to have a “dress rehearsal” day where they can practice a morning breakfast service the day or week before the launch date is scheduled. The rehearsal can help to identify any unexpected issues and give stakeholders additional time to troubleshoot. Schools may also opt to stagger the roll out, implementing in a few classes or grades before expanding school-wide.

No Kid Hungry's [Breakfast in the Classroom](#) and [Grab and Go to the Classroom](#) rollout timelines outline action steps school stakeholders can take to help prepare for BAB implementation. Principals, school nutrition staff, teachers, nurses, custodians and paraeducators all play a role in successful implementation, and these rollout timelines detail what each stakeholder can do to adequately prepare for BAB implementation.

CONNECT WITH OTHER SCHOOLS TO SHARE BEST PRACTICES

Schools that have already implemented BAB have a wealth of information they can share. Connect with schools nearby to visit and observe how their BAB program operates. Talk with stakeholders in the school and learn about their implementation roll out, what their best practices are and how they've addressed issues that have come up. For help in finding a BAB school nearby, reach out to No Kid Hungry, the School Nutrition Association or your state agency.

Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) in Orange County, VA launched Breakfast in the Classroom (BIC) at one of its elementary schools, but struggled with classroom issues, such as messiness and teacher push-back. OCPS reached out to Louisa County Public Schools (LCPS) in Mineral, VA to gain insight and learn from its successful BIC program. The FNS Director of LCPS, along with a teacher from LCPS, spoke at a faculty meeting at the elementary school in OCPS about BIC, the logistics and how important BIC has been in their district. That peer-to-peer interaction was enough to motivate OCPS to adopt some of LCPS's best practices and helped the teachers at OCPS think more positively about BIC.

PROMOTE YOUR BREAKFAST PROGRAM

Create a strategy to engage parents. Activities could include sending flyers home with students, placing ads in the local newspaper, or making announcements at school events, such as Back to School Nights or PTA meetings. Invite parents to eat breakfast with their children in the classroom, or during Second Chance Breakfast. This gives parents an opportunity to experience school breakfast and see first-hand the benefits of BAB. No Kid Hungry's *Breakfast FAQs for Parents* ([customizable English](#) and [customizable Spanish](#)) provides all of the essential information to curious parents.

Promote BAB to the student body. Students are the customers of BAB programs. They should be informed about changes to the school breakfast program in advance of the BAB launch date, and trained on the new routine. Students should also be regularly engaged to obtain feedback about the breakfast program. Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom created a [district toolkit](#) on how to survey students and obtain helpful feedback that can be used with any breakfast model.

For more outreach materials, visit the Center For Best Practices [Engaging Stakeholders](#) webpage.

PROVIDE TRAINING

Train staff who will be directly affected by BAB, such as cafeteria staff, teachers, custodians and students. Appropriate training will help avoid common pitfalls of BAB implementation and will help ensure program integrity. As the implementation process rolls out, additional training may be necessary.

- *Logistics:* Teachers, including substitute teachers, need to be sufficiently trained in the logistics of serving and monitoring BIC so that the process is efficient, does not take up too much classroom time, and adheres to USDA reporting requirements.
- *Meal Collection:* Cafeteria staff should be trained on meal collection and the importance of ensuring students receive the appropriate meal components so meals can be claimed for federal reimbursement.

If schools are implementing a BIC, teachers may need to be trained on meal collection as well, depending on whether students chose their meals components in the classroom or whether all breakfast components are already packaged in a bag.

- *Student Involvement:* Many schools assign roles to students to assist with the breakfast process every morning, such as bringing breakfast to the classrooms, and helping with trash clean up.



Socorro Independent School District in El Paso, TX created a student breakfast club, where the students assist in administering the breakfast program every morning. Students arrive to school early, and wear vests to show they are part of the breakfast team. As a reward for their service, the district awards a trophy to students and throws them a pizza party at the end of the school year.

For more breakfast information and resources, visit the [Center for Best Practices website](#).

PRE-IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

DEVELOP AN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- Assemble a team of stakeholders prior to implementation to get their buy-in and feedback.
- Identify a Breakfast Champion within the school that will advocate for school breakfast and be the lead in implementing BAB.
- Identify and purchase needed equipment and supplies.
- Develop a detailed timeline for implementation that includes an opportunity to assess effectiveness 1-3 weeks following implementation to make necessary adjustments to processes.

CONNECT WITH OTHER SCHOOLS

- Identify schools in your area that have already implemented BAB.
- Learn from other schools' best practices and adopt best practices that are applicable to your school.
- Visit other schools to observe their BAB process.

PROVIDE TRAINING TO KEY STAKEHOLDERS

- Identify stakeholders that will be responsible for any part of the program logistics, including meal preparation and delivery, record keeping and clean up.
- Develop and provide training for each stakeholder.
- Hold a practice run prior to implementation and/or pilot with a few classes or grades for the first week(s) to give time to refine processes.
- Obtain feedback 1-3 weeks after implementation from the School Breakfast Team to identify the need for further stakeholder training.

DEVELOP A PLAN FOR PROMOTING THE PROGRAM

- Promote the breakfast program through the school newsletter, robo calls or information sent home to parents.
- Schedule time to discuss the program at Back to School Night, PTA meetings or during other school events.
- Decide how you will promote breakfast to your student customers and let them know what will be on the weekly menus through morning announcements, websites or other accessible venues.
- Identify school staff, such as the principal, a coach or school nutrition staff who will actively encourage breakfast participation as kids enter the school.