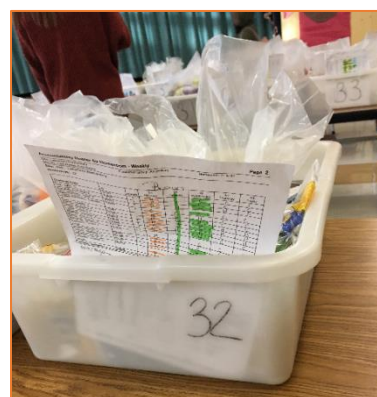


## PRINCIPAL'S PASSION LEADS TO SUCCESSFUL BREAKFAST IN THE CLASSROOM PROGRAM

When Principal Nicole Henderson began her tenure at Laburnum Elementary School in Henrico, VA, a suburb of Richmond, she brought the Breakfast in the Classroom (BIC) program with her. BIC enables students to eat breakfast after the official start of the school day in their classroom with their peers, which has shown to increase participation in the breakfast program. Henderson learned about BIC while serving as an assistant principal in Annapolis, MD, and saw how successful bringing breakfast into the classroom could be. Once she got to Laburnum, she was excited to get a BIC program up and running at her new school.

Laburnum uses the community eligibility provision (CEP) to provide all students breakfast and lunch free of charge. The school had been operating the traditional cafeteria model, where breakfast was served in the cafeteria before the school day started. Seventy-six percent of kids who qualified for free and reduced-price meals (FRM) were participating in the breakfast program, but Henderson knew that percentage could be higher. Additionally, the school was experiencing negative outcomes from the traditional cafeteria model. Students often lingered in the hallways and were rowdy; and, the staff spent a lot of time managing the cafeteria lines and making sure kids ate their breakfast in time to get to class.



Henderson pitched her BIC vision to her teachers, explaining how the program worked and how it could benefit classrooms. Thanks to Henderson's dynamic personality, her passion, and her determination, nearly all of the teachers were on-board. Henderson teamed up with Henrico School District's nutrition department to coordinate an easy morning routine between the cafeteria staff and the teachers. First, the cafeteria staff put each classroom's breakfast items into bins neatly organized in the cafeteria. Next, teachers collected the bins and took them to class just as students arrived. Teachers then distributed breakfasts and recorded student participation. When students finished breakfast, they cleaned up after themselves and cafeteria staff collected the bins from each classroom, which also contained the breakfast participation numbers for the day. This morning routine, known as the *Breakfast Bin Program*,



added a community feel to breakfast. Students were able to start the day calmly eating breakfast with their peers, and it set the stage for a productive day.

Three years later, the program is still going strong and Laburnum boasts a FRM breakfast participation of 98%. Teachers consider BIC to be a normal part of the school day. They also team up and rotate bin collection responsibilities each week to effectively distribute the workload. Teachers with disabilities are provided extra support so every classroom receives a breakfast bin no matter what. In fact, because of Laburnum's success,

seven other schools in the district implemented BIC in the same fashion.