



Building A Breakfast Media Plan: Communications Playbook



Dear No Kid Hungry Partners,

We know you've been hard at work pulling together a strategy to make sure kids in your community are able to get the nutrition they need while they're in school.

Thank you for your tremendous efforts; we know your success is due to a lot of hard work.

Now that you have your strategy in place, it's time to get the word out. Whether you're trying to reach community leaders, opinion elites, educators or lawmakers, we've created this Strategic Communications Playbook so you don't have to start your efforts from scratch.

We've collected **tips, best practices, and customizable assets from experts and partners around the country** so you have the tools at your fingertips to get the right people to take the right actions at the right time.

We hope you find this useful. And we'd love to hear about the great work you're doing to use communications and marketing to drive participation in your communities, so please, keep in touch. And good luck this year!

Sincerely,

Christy Felling
Director, Media & Public Affairs
Share Our Strength/No Kid Hungry



Breakfast Tactics Hotline

Have an idea, a question, or a best practice to share? Stay in touch!

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More Breakfast Tools

No Kid Hungry Center for Best Practices
<https://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org/school-breakfast>

Three Phases of a Strategic Communications Plan

All successful strategic communications strategies have one thing in common: They begin with a sharp focus on goals, audiences and objectives. **This will lead to smarter decisions around capacity, budget and ensure that strategy is driving tactics, not the other way around.**

Phase 1: Right Targets

Define GOAL

At the most basic level, what are you trying to accomplish this school year? Get specific; what is the problem you're trying to solve and what needs to happen for this to be a "win"?

Define DECISION MAKERS

Who has the power of "yes" or "no" to achieve the goals we've defined? Where do these decision makers get their information? Who do they listen to?

Make MAPS

Conduct a thorough audit. Who do you know who can act as messengers? What assets do you have? What do you need? What is the current landscape in your community or schools?

Phase 2: Right Message

Define MESSAGE

What do you need your decision makers to hear? What do they want to hear? Is your message substantive enough to have meaning yet simple enough to be repeatable?

Phase 3: Right Tactics

Select your TACTICS

What are you going to do? Is this the most direct route to get in front of your desired audience? Does it have the biggest bang for the buck? And with your current capacity, time and budget, is it achievable?

Build your TIMELINE

Create a plan with timing, assets, budget. Who's taking lead? What are the first next steps?

Measure your RESULTS

Be nimble enough to make corrections in real time if results are lackluster. And have a plan to leverage successes to build momentum for the future.

The Three Phases Of A Plan

Tips on building a strategic communications plan based on goals, audiences and message.

STEP ONE: Right Targets

Five Goals for Step One

- Define your campaign’s broad goal.
- Determine specific steps to achieve that goal.
- Identify a specific list of decision-makers.
- Power Map your targets.
- Sketch out your quick landscape.

A successful strategic communications campaign has one mission:

Getting the **right people** to take the **right action** at the **right time**.



Getting Started

Spend time as a team putting pen to paper around the five following decisions.

1) Define Your Goal. Be as specific as possible. “Get more kids eating school breakfast” isn’t a very specific goal, but “get to 70% breakfast participation in 3 counties by focusing on raising participation levels in high-need schools serving Breakfast After The Bell” is.

2) Determine steps to goal. What has to happen to achieve success? Another way to phrase this question – what problem are you trying to solve? What’s in the way of success?

3) Identify your decision makers. Who has the power to say “yes” or “no”? This could be a school board, lawmakers, a principal, a food service director, or anyone else making breakfast-related decisions.

4) Power Map your targets. What do your decision-makers care about? Who do they listen to? What else are they working on? What are their specific worries? Where do they get their news and information?

5) Sketch Out Your Landscape. Every community is different, with unique needs, challenges and landscapes. What else is happening in your community that could impact breakfast? Are there school budget shortfalls? Success stories in schools a couple of towns away?



STEP ONE (cont.)



No Kid Hungry Best Practice Tip

Really take the time to map your needs and assets before beginning a campaign. This will give you a strong guidepost as you make decisions on where to spend time, capacity and budget in the future!

Example: Core Decisions

Goal: Increase breakfast participation to 70% of free/reduced lunch eaters throughout the county.

Steps to Goal:

- 1) Use successes in high-performing schools to create momentum throughout the district
- 2) Create enthusiasm among teachers in schools new to Breakfast After The Bell
- 3) Create champions among principals in mixed-income schools in district

Decision-Makers:

FNS Director
Six Principals
District
Superintendent
School Board

PowerMap

Superintendent keeps an eye on local media
Principal deeply in tune to needs of teachers
School board worried about budget cuts
FNS director nearing retirement, not looking to make waves

Assets

Board Member Margaret on PTA
Pastor Charles a volunteer
Head of local Chamber of Commerce
Head of Teachers Union
Breakfast Champion principal

Resources

- This [Breakfast Implementation Playbook](#) has resources you can use to assist principals, teachers and school nutrition directors in a streamlined Breakfast After the Bell implementation.
- Address concerns with this myth-busting [FAQ about breakfast after the bell](#)
- Check out this overarching [Breakfast After The Bell Model Guide](#)
- These [Breakfast After The Bell 101](#) videos bring the program to life.

Checklist

- Clearly articulated goal.
- List of 3-5 critical decision-makers.
- Power Map – A short list of issues that will resonate with your decision-makers.
- Power Map – A short list of influencers you know who are willing to share their voices.
- Landscape – Challenges and opportunities that may affect your goal.

STEP TWO: Right Message

Three Goals for Step Two

- Create a clear picture of your target audience
- Craft a sharp message with one key takeaway and four support points.
- Know your specific call to action.

Creating The Right Message

The right message has three key components.

It's targeted. The message that resonates with teachers is probably different than the one that resonates with parents or with lawmakers.

It's clear and specific. Hone your message until you have a single key takeaway with three or four supporting points and a sharp call to action.

It's repeatable. A strong message is clear, short and easily repeated. This ensures the widest audience reach.

No Kid Hungry Best Practice Tip

Trying to figure out your key takeaway?

Here's a helpful scenario. Pretend that, after hearing you speak, a member of your audience runs into a friend at happy hour. "So, what was that speech about?" the friend asks. What do you hope your audience member replies? That is your Key Takeaway. (Also works for "after reading your op-ed," or "after seeing your ad.")



Five Steps To A Great Message

1) Know Your Goal: What do you want to happen after people read this op-ed, hear you speak, see this ad? What's the goal you need this message to achieve?

2) Know Your Audience: What are the top worries, concerns or passions of this audience? How much do they already know about breakfast?

3) Craft Your Key Takeaway: What is the one thing you want your audience to take away from your message? This should be short and specific – no more than 15 words.

4) Develop Your Four Supporting Points: Keep your message sharp by editing yourself to (the best) four points that support your key takeaway.

5) Articulate Your Call To Action: What action to you specifically want your audience to take after hearing your message? You may or may not choose to say this directly to your audience, but it's important to have it clear in your own mind.

STEP TWO (cont.)

Example: Core Message

GOAL: Show audience the direct link between when breakfast is served and ending childhood hunger.

AUDIENCE: General, little-to-no deep knowledge around school breakfast

KEY TAKEAWAY: Making school breakfast a regular part of the school day is a critical step in ending childhood hunger in America.

FOUR SUPPORTING POINTS

1) The Need: Kids In America Are Hungry

1 in 6 kids in the United States struggles with hunger.

Ask any teacher: Hungry kids can't learn. For kids, a healthy school breakfast is as important to learning as textbooks or pencils.

2) The Program: School Breakfast Feeds Kids.

One of the most effective ways to make sure hungry kids are getting the nutrition they need is to connect them to the school breakfast program.

3) The Problem: The way breakfast is usually served at school means too many kids miss out.

The traditional method of serving the meal before the school day starts, however, is ineffective. Transportation challenges, tough morning schedules, even stigma can stop kids from getting this important meal.

As a result, only a fraction of the students who may need this meal are unable to access it. Last year, just over half (56%) of kids who may need school breakfast were actually getting it.

4) The Solution: It's time to rethink breakfast as usual.

Something as simple as *when* school breakfast is served can make all the difference. No stigma. No tricky logistics. No hunger.

CALL TO ACTION: Visit our website to learn more.

Resources

- Click here for more [sample breakfast messages](#) to customize for specific audience needs.
- Here's an op-ed with [great school breakfast messaging](#) from Washington.
- These [pre-written Tweets](#) highlighting the importance of breakfast can people to resources where they can learn more.

No Kid Hungry Best Practice Tip

Use your Core Message when you create your assets – talking points, social media, ads, op-eds, speeches, presentation decks, meeting prep – to ensure a consistent message across all of your tactics.

Checklist

- List of specific audiences, with “map” of concerns, interests and messengers for each.
- List of your top facts, numbers and assets to buttress your message.
- Single-page core message document with one key takeaway and four support points for each audience.
- Clearly articulated call to action.

STEP THREE: Right Tactics

Three Goals for Step Three

- Decide on 3-5 of the most direct tactics to reach your decision-makers.
- Develop a “ticktock” – a hybrid to-do list and timeline – to organize your work.
- Create a plan to leverage successes to create momentum or to pivot if tactics aren’t working.

As you come up with your list of tactics, kick the tires a bit. Ask yourselves if this directly **reaches your priority audience**. Ask if it helps achieve your stated goals. Finally, check to see if you have the capacity (budget and time) to execute?

Be ruthless; if a tactic sounds great but will not directly reach your audience, shelve it! It’s much better to have a few really powerful tactics than a long list of ineffective ones.



What’s A Tick-Tock?

Putting tactics and activities into a living, organized chart - a tick-tock – can help any communications plan stay on track. A solid tick-tock has five key parts:

- **Tactic** – what is the most direct, specific thing we can do to reach your audience? And does it help to reach our stated goal?
- **Timeline** – Put specific dates to tactics. Find ways to bundle tactics so they create a burst of activity.
- **Assignments** – Designate who is taking lead, who needs to sign off, and who is needed to execute
- **Budget** – Take time to budget both money and capacity. Be realistic!
- **Measurement** – What does success look like? How will we measure both outputs and outcomes?



STEP 3 (cont.)



Example: Targeted Tactics

Strengthen support w. influencers, community

OpEds from champions – teachers, doctors, parents, business owners

Social Media blast – Images w/ facts, retweeted and supported by champs

Local coverage of successful breakfast – invite reporter to breakfast visit and 1:1 conversation with spokespeople

Media drops – Drop breakfast bags w/ healthy food, coffee, 1-pagers about school breakfast.

Radio PSAs – produced by kids, run on local radio or through media partnership.

Resources

- Target influential audiences by getting the message out in [local news publications](#). Tips on using press releases, op-eds, letters to the editor, and blog posts.
- Populate 1-pagers, Facebook feeds, websites and banners with these [breakfast-themed photos](#) of kids.
- A 2017 report containing surveys of parents, students and teachers about hunger and learning. You can also visit [the microsite](#), and these three micro-reports on [families on the brink of poverty](#), the [burden of hunger on teens](#), and [teacher observations](#) on hunger in their classrooms.

No Kid Hungry Best Practice Tip

Earned Media (stories in the local news) depends on a lot of luck. While it's important, also think through other ways to get your message out through channels you have more control (like blog posts, social media, ads, letters from stakeholders, etc.)

Create Enthusiasm among Teachers

Blurbs in publications teachers read – union newsletters, teacher blogs, etc.

Teacher gift baskets w/ classroom supplies and implementation tips.

Teacher video contest – 1-2 minute videos with teachers giving instruction time tips – prizes awarded to top teachers (and videos used to engage new teachers.)

Award ceremony – highlight successes by inviting media to award ceremony featuring teachers going above and beyond to connect kids to breakfast.

Checklist

- List of 3-5 tactics per audience.
- Tick-tock with timing, needs, leads and next steps clearly outlined.
- Clearly articulated measurement – how you will know if your tactic was successful.
- A specific idea of next steps if results are lackluster
- A specific idea of next steps to use successes to build new momentum.

Addendum: Putting It All Together

Sample checklists, strategies and action plans to get you started.

Step One: Comms Checklist, Core Decisions

- Clearly articulated goal.
- List of 3-5 critical decision-makers.
- Power Map – A short list of issues that will resonate with your decision-makers.
- Power Map – A short list of influencers you know who are willing to share their voices.
- Landscape – Challenges and opportunities that may affect your goal.

Step Two: Comms Checklist, Core Message

- List of specific audiences, with “map” of concerns, interests and messengers for each.
- List of your top facts, numbers and assets to buttress your message.
- Single-page core message document with one key takeaway and four support points for each audience.
- Clearly articulated call to action.

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Sample Plan (Abbreviated)

Goal: Increase breakfast participation by 70% in Harvey County during the 2017-2018 school year.

Steps To Goal:

- Create support in community with positive stories about the impact breakfast has on the lives of students.
- Build enthusiasm for Breakfast After The Bell among educators (Principals and Teachers)

Decision Makers

- Principal James, Principal Payne, Principal Jiminez
- School Board – Dr. Wilkins (chair)
- FNS Director – Mr. Gaulden

Landscape

- Schools facing budget cuts – have a lot on their plates to deal with, so need to showcase how this makes their lives easier, not harder.
- Schools in nearby Corson County all serve breakfast after the bell and have seen great success – we have many champions there.
- Teachers are make/break to this – if they're on board, more likely principals and school board is on board.

Messengers/Champions

- Teachers from Corson County (show how this works well)
- Dr. McNamara, area pediatrician (speak to links to health – respected by Dr. Wilkins)
- Ms. Chang - FNS director/champion from very similar school district who can speak to Mr. Gaulden
- Chef Goldberg – well-regarded celeb chef in town

Tactics – Quick List

- Op-Eds – Chef Goldberg, Corson County teacher, local parent about import of breakfast (Staff time)
- Social media burst – Paid ads about breakfast geotargeted to teachers in district (\$300)
- Media drops – Drop breakfast bags w/ healthy food, coffee, 1-pagers about school breakfast to local broadcast stations to coincide w/ School Breakfast week. (\$250)
- Newsletters - Blurbs in publications teachers and principals read – union newsletters, teacher blogs, principal magazine etc. Great to have these come from existing teacher/principal champions. (Staff time)
- Media Partnership with local NBC station – ads and series of on-air stories about breakfast (\$1K)
- Breakfast Visit – Governor, reporters, influencers see a school breakfast in action, promoting successes. Share story with other area principals.
- 1:1 meetings – connect Mr. Gaulden w/ Ms. Chang. Connect Principal Jiminez with teacher from Corson County. Send letter from Dr. McNamara to Dr. Wilking.

Assets

- Core message docs – one each for principals, teachers, health, community/influencers
- 1-pager – FAQ/mythbusters about Breakfast After The Bell
- 1-pager – importance of Breakfast After The Bell
- Social media – images w/ facts about impact on education
- Newsletter blurb, op-ed, stakeholder letter drafts
- Slide deck – FNS + Principal
- Swag bags for media drops – sunglasses, granola bar, apple, button, 1-pager on importance of breakfast

Measurements

- 3 schools agree to pilot breakfast after the bell programs?
- 5 media hits on broadcast
- 3 op-eds, blog posts or letters sent to decision makers
- 1 breakfast visit w/ media coverage

Sample TickTock

Tactic	Goal/ Audience	Timing	Team Lead	Assets Needed	Status/Next Steps
Op-Eds – Chef Goldberg	Positive breakfast story; clip to bring to Principal meetings	Oct – mid month?	Christy (DeMarcus–chef liaison, Bernadette sign-off)	Chef outreach; Op-ed text; pitch to Harvey County Gazette	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Text – written Chef – on board Waiting to pitch first week Oct.
Social Media Burst	Create breakfast enthusiasm - teachers	Last week Sept.	Megan C (Christy sign-off, Mari has ad contact)	Tweets w/ images; \$300 for targeted ads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repurposing Breakfast Week images Q – twitter or FB? Ask Jason.
Media Drops	Buzz/pos. coverage in key districts	2 nd week of school	Carlos (Christy sign off, Cate drop off)	\$250; Swag; branded bags; 1-pager breakfast; food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Going w/ brown bags w/ sticker Make sure food mirrors what's served at school; list of stations
Newsletter blurbs	Give teachers instructional time tips for ease of implement.	Week before school starts	Megan C (Christy sign off, Nicette w/ partner contacts)	Instruction time infographic; written blurb; contacts w/ union & blog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have prelim space w/ union; Reaching out to Department of Ed Could do Twitter chat – has cost – budget?
Media partnership w/ local NBC station – PSA and on-air stories	Teachers and parents – educate and show how helps students achieve	September-November	Laura H (Christy sign-off, Paul design ads.)	\$1k for ad buys at station; pitch meeting w/ station; sample ads and fact sheets for pitch meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Call station to find out best contact Use NKH images for sample online ad
Governor visit	Principal/ Superintendent – raise profile of program bringing media and Gov. to school – celebrate success	September	Carlos (Laura H for the assist, Megan C for logistics, Mari for contact in gov's office)	Staff Time Logistics & Message points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have Mari reach out to gov's office Get list of potential schools for visit