



Indiana Department of Education

SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 30, 2009

FROM: Dr. Tony Bennett

TO: Superintendents and Food Service Directors

SUBJECT: Breakfast Program Guidelines

The Indiana Department of Education ("Department") supports school breakfast programs. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, research shows that eating breakfast has a tremendous positive effect on learning, test scores, and health. Indiana school corporations are required by state law to implement school breakfast programs at certain schools. The Department is required to assist school corporations in implementing their programs and provide guidelines for program implementation.

The Department is also responsible for ensuring that minimum instructional time requirements are met. The purpose of this memorandum is to clarify how schools may serve breakfast without violating minimum instructional time requirements.

Indiana's minimum school year consists of 180 days, each of which must include a minimum amount of instructional time – five hours in Grades 1 through 6 and six hours in Grades 7 through 12. "Instructional time" is time during which students are participating in an approved course, curriculum, or educationally related activity under the direction of a teacher. Instructional time includes a reasonable amount of passing time between classes. Instructional time does not include lunch or recess.

There are several ways in which breakfast can be served. Schools may serve breakfast in the cafeteria or another suitable room outside the minimum instructional day. But it is the position of the Department that breakfast and instructional time may coincide. The Department offers the following guidelines regarding breakfast and instructional time:

- Breakfast and instructional time coincide when breakfast is consumed in the classroom by all or some of the students and instruction is occurring simultaneously.
- Breakfast and instructional time DO NOT coincide when breakfast is consumed in a cafeteria, common area or other room where instruction is not occurring.

The Department encourages schools to provide and expand their breakfast programs. We hope that providing opportunities for instructional time to coincide with breakfast will allow some schools to expand their programs to the benefit of Indiana students.

Please refer questions on this subject to Julie Sutton, Child Nutrition Programs Coordinator, at 317.232.0872 or jsutton@doe.in.gov. For instructional time questions, please contact Dr. George Frampton, Chief School Certification Officer, at 317-232-9060 or frampton@doe.in.gov.

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