

# CHILD NUTRITION OUTREACH SPECIALIST TRAINING MANUAL



New Mexico No Kid Hungry  
Child Nutrition Outreach Project  
2011-2012

## *Acknowledgements*

This training manual was developed by the New Mexico Collaboration to End Hunger (the Collaboration) as part of the New Mexico No Kid Hungry Campaign. The New Mexico Child Nutrition Outreach Project has been developed in partnership with Dairy Max, Share Our Strength, and the New Mexico Public Education Department School Nutrition Bureau.

The Collaboration gratefully acknowledges the support and expertise from these organizations. This program is funded in part by Weight Watchers and Walmart Foundation.



## *About the Partners*

The New Mexico No Kid Hungry Campaign is a partnership between the New Mexico Collaboration to End Hunger and Share Our Strength, a leading national anti-hunger organization. The goal of the Campaign is to end childhood hunger in New Mexico by 2015. The Collaboration is a state-wide coalition, made up of more than 80 partners from both public and private sectors. In 2007, when New Mexico ranked number one as the most food insecure state in the country, the Collaboration was formed with the goal of partners working collectively to implement and expand programming and policy to reduce food insecurity in New Mexico. As of 2011, New Mexico ranks 12<sup>th</sup> in the nation for highest level of food insecurity, according to the USDA.

Through its No Kid Hungry® Campaign, Share Our Strength ensures children in need are enrolled in federal nutrition programs, invests in community organizations fighting hunger, teaches families how to cook healthy, affordable meals, and builds public-private partnerships to end hunger, nationally and at the state and city levels.

At the core of the No Kid Hungry Campaign to end childhood hunger are three goals:

- ✓ Improve access to public and private programs that provide food to families and their children who need and are not receiving it.
- ✓ Strengthen community infrastructure and systems for getting healthy food to children.
- ✓ Improve families' knowledge about available programs, healthy food choices and how to get the most from limited resources.

The New Mexico No Kid Hungry Campaign, through state-wide partnerships, develops and implements strategies to reduce childhood hunger. The key focus areas of the New Mexico No Kid Hungry Campaign in 2011 include increasing access to summer meal programs, the School Breakfast Program, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Dairy MAX is a non-profit organization affiliated with the National Dairy Council and funded by the dairy farming families in Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma and southwest Kansas. Dairy Max has a dedicated team of professionals devoted to the promotion of dairy's lifelong health benefits and enjoyment of nutrient-rich foods such as milk, cheese and yogurt as supported by the US dietary guidelines. Dairy Max provides timely, research-based nutrition information to the

media, health professionals, schools, educators, consumers and others committed to fostering a healthier society. For over 35 years, their team has supported the demand for dairy foods via strategic partnerships and programs while proudly representing the dairy farming industry's positive image.

Fuel Up to Play 60, a program of Dairy Max and the National Dairy Council, responds to real-world needs in today's schools with wellness tools that complement – not compete with – the academics-focused environment. The program encourages students to work collaboratively with adults to make real changes by implementing school-wide healthy eating and physical activity “Plays” – strategies that help students “fuel up” with nutrient-rich foods and “get up and play” for at least 60 minutes a day. If a school already has existing wellness programs or efforts, Fuel Up to Play 60 can complement and enhance them with additional resources, tools, rewards and incentives for students, adult Program Advisors and the school.

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## *Executive Summary*

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day, particularly for children going to school, yet in the 2009-2010 school year almost 40% of students that were eligible throughout New Mexico did not participate in the free and reduced price breakfast at school.

There are common barriers that keep students from participating in the School Breakfast Program. These barriers include:

- Tight morning schedules
- Transportation not arriving to school on time
- Not feeling hungry early in the morning
- Preference to play or socialize when arriving at school
- Stigma when accessing school meals

When these barriers are addressed, students can more easily access school breakfast, which has an overall positive impact on personal nutrition, academics, as well as long-term health outcomes.

Child Nutrition Outreach Specialists (CNOS) can provide extensive outreach, resources, and technical assistance to schools to support them in developing a school breakfast expansion plan to increase student access to school breakfast.

Schools can implement a variety of effective breakfast models to increase student access to breakfast. Common alternative breakfast models that are shown to be effective are:

- *Breakfast in the Classroom*

Providing classroom breakfast is an easy and effective way to increase student participation. Using this model, students eat breakfast in their classroom during the first period or early in the school day. Students can eat breakfast during the first 10-15 minutes of class, while teachers complete administrative tasks, take attendance, read with their students, or start the first lesson. Teachers that have breakfast in the classroom see

significant and positive changes—students are able to pay more attention in class and focus on their work.

➤ *Grab-and-Go Breakfast*

Some schools will prefer a grab-and-go breakfast model. Students can grab a breakfast bag in the morning or during a breakfast break from the cafeteria, hallway carts, or another designated area at school. Depending on what the school administration and staff prefer, students can eat their breakfast in the classroom, cafeteria, or somewhere else on school grounds. This model can work well in middle and high school settings.

➤ *Breakfast after 1<sup>st</sup> period*

There are students who are not hungry early in the morning and prefer to eat breakfast mid-morning. Some schools offer breakfast after 1<sup>st</sup> period, especially in middle and high schools. Breakfast can be available using a grab-and-go style, in the classroom, or in another designated high traffic area. This works well for students that are not eating breakfast early, but need energy to get through the morning.

➤ *Breakfast on the Bus*

In school districts where most students have long bus rides to school, serving breakfast on the bus can be an innovative way to help students get through a long commute and arrive at school focused and ready to learn. In this method, food is kept in containers and served as students get on the bus. Schools that typically use this method also serve universal free breakfast.

Some schools will prefer to maintain a traditional breakfast serving method (in the cafeteria before school starts) and work to increase participation through marketing. However, alternative breakfast models have been shown to significantly increase student participation in school breakfast. Alternative breakfast models can address the barriers that students experience in accessing breakfast.

## *The Purpose of this Manual*

This training manual provides extensive information and resources to assist Child Nutrition Outreach Specialists in building relationships with schools and provide technical assistance to increase student access to the School Breakfast Program.

This manual is intended to assist you with communicating with schools about school nutrition, the School Breakfast Program, and alternative breakfast models that schools can implement.

Using this manual, you are equipped with resources to help schools:

- Assess their current breakfast model
- Calculate the cost of using an alternative breakfast model
- Seeking funding to help jump start an alternative breakfast model
- Identify, plan, and implement the most suitable alternative breakfast model for interested schools
- Support schools to address barriers and concerns

## *Childhood Food Insecurity in New Mexico*

In 2011, more than 17 million children in the United States are at risk of hunger, that's 1 in 4 children. Over 15 million kids in America are living in poverty, a key factor that increases risk of food insecurity for children and families.<sup>i</sup> In New Mexico, almost one in every five children 18 years and younger are considered to be food insecure; they do not always know where they will get their next meal. New Mexico currently ranks 12<sup>th</sup> in the country for highest food insecurity. In 2009, over 128,000 children under the age of 18 in New Mexico were living in poverty, which ranks New Mexico number 5 in the country for highest percentage of children living in poverty.<sup>ii</sup>

In general, food security is defined as being when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food for an active and healthy life.<sup>iii</sup> Food insecurity is a term developed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to indicate a person or household's access to food resources. According to the USDA, "Food insecurity is a household-level economic and social condition of limited access to food, while hunger is an individual-level physiological condition that may result from food insecurity."<sup>iv</sup> The USDA has developed a continuum with four ranges to describe a household's food security, which is measured annually.

### **USDA's revised labels describe ranges of food security<sup>v</sup>**

General Categories	Detailed Categories		
	Old Label	New Label	Description of Household Conditions
Food Security	Food Security	High food security	No reported indications of food-access problems or limitations
		Marginal food security	One or two reported indications-typically of anxiety over food sufficiency or shortage of food in the house. Little or no indication of reduced food intake
Food Insecurity	Food insecurity without hunger	Low food security	Reports of reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet. Little or no indication of reduced food intake.
	Food insecurity with hunger	Very low food security	Reports of multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake

The Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) analyzes food hardship—the inability to afford enough food—across the country by state, metropolitan area, and congressional districts. Their most recent food hardship report released in August 2011 showed that more than 28 percent of households with children in New Mexico reported in 2009-2010 as not having enough money to buy food that they needed at times for themselves or their family during the prior twelve months. The food hardship rate for households without children was 16.5 percent.

FRAC's *Food Hardship in America* series analyzes data collected by Gallup and provided to FRAC. The data is gathered as part of the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index project, which has interviewed more than one million households since January 2008. FRAC has analyzed responses to the question: "Have there been times in the past twelve months when you did not have enough money to buy food that you or your family needed?"

The primary risk factor of food insecurity, similar to other public health issues, is poverty. Other risk factors of food insecurity include:

- Unemployment and low wage
- Resource poor communities
- Lack of transportation
- Geography
- Cost and location of food
- Access to emergency and federal food assistance

## *Benefits of Breakfast*

Studies consistently show the numerous benefits of starting the day out by eating breakfast. School breakfast improves children's ability to learn, increasing math scores and standardized test scores, decreasing behavioral and disciplinary office referrals, as well as absences and tardiness. Students who do not have regular access to breakfast and experience hunger are more likely to have poorer cognitive functioning, repeat grade levels, and be suspended from school. When students eat breakfast at school, their concentration, alertness, memory, and reaction to frustration improve.<sup>vi</sup>

Please refer to the Resources section for more information about the benefits of breakfast.

### *School Breakfast Program*

The School Breakfast Program was established by Congress in 1966 as a pilot program to ensure food access for children with long bus rides and with mothers in the workforce. It became a permanent federal program in 1975 to assist schools with increasing student access to breakfast.<sup>vii</sup> Schools that participate in the School Breakfast Program must offer free and reduced price meals to students from low-income families, follow USDA nutrition guidelines for school breakfast, and develop and implement school wellness policies.

Like the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program is a federally-assisted meal program available in public and private nonprofit schools. Children from families living at or below 130 percent of the federal poverty level qualify for free meals, while children from families living between 130 and 185 percent of the poverty level are eligible for reduced price meals. Between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011, 130 percent of the federal poverty level was \$28,665 for a family of four and 185 percent was \$40,793 for a family of four.<sup>viii</sup>

Students from families above 185 of the poverty level can access low-cost meals from school, but do not qualify for free or reduced price meals. Schools that sell full price meals to students still receive some reimbursement from the USDA.

### *Traditional School Breakfast*

Traditional school breakfast is served in the school cafeteria before the start of the school day. Meals may be served hot or cold. This model allows schools to use a space that is specifically set up for feeding large numbers of children. The cafeteria location makes it easy to serve hot food and the meal does not require additional transporting or packaging. The disadvantage to this model is that many students who do not have breakfast at home cannot arrive to school early enough to receive the meal; they may prefer to spend time with friends outside of the cafeteria or need to go directly to the classroom. In some situations, there may also be a stigma that “only poor students” go to the cafeteria for breakfast.<sup>ix</sup> Alternative breakfast models like grab and go and breakfast in the classroom can eliminate the challenges of traditional school breakfast.

### *Funding/ Reimbursement*

The USDA provides a cash reimbursement to schools that participate in the School Breakfast Program. Some schools may qualify for higher “severe need” reimbursements if 60% or more of school lunches are served free or at a reduced price. Severe need payments are up to 28 cents higher than the normal reimbursements for free and reduced-price breakfasts. Schools may charge no more than 30 cents for a reduced-price breakfast. Schools must operate their meal services as nonprofit programs and they determine their own payment process for breakfasts served to students who pay the full meal price. For the latest reimbursement rates visit FNS website at [www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/notices/naps/NAPs.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/notices/naps/NAPs.htm)

*Reimbursement rate for the school breakfast program (2011-2012)*

	<b>Non-Severe Need School</b>	<b>Severe Need School</b>	<b>Price of Meals to Children</b>
Free	\$1.51	\$1.80	\$0
Reduced Price	\$1.21	\$1.50	\$0.30 (maximum charge)
Paid	\$0.27	\$0.27	varies

### *Healthy Meals through the School Breakfast Program*

Healthy eating habits developed during childhood lead to healthier eating habits in adulthood. Students who eat meals at school consume more vegetables and grains, drink more milk and fewer sweetened beverages, and eat less sweetened foods than students who do not eat school meals. School breakfast meals meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and are made up for four food components: fruits and vegetables, whole grains, milk, and meat or meat alternatives.

School breakfast meals are required to have no more than 30 percent of calories from fat and no more than 10 percent calories from saturated fat. Breakfast meals have one-fourth or more of the daily recommended levels for key nutrients that children need: protein, calcium, iron, Vitamin A,

Vitamin C and calories. Local school food authorities decide which specific foods to serve and how to prepare them.<sup>x</sup>

Schools must offer four food items from the following food components (portion sizes depend on ages and grade groups):

- Vegetables and/or fruits (1/2 cup or full-strength juice)
- 1% milk (8 ounces); nonfat flavored milk
- Two servings of meat/meat alternatives, two servings of whole grains/breads OR one serving from each of these components

Schools must comply with federal and state regulations, but what each school serves for breakfast is dependent on many factors. Schools must consider the cost of food and the cost and time to prepare foods, as well as food seasonality, nutrition quality, what students like to eat, and storage and perishability of foods.

How a school serves breakfast will also determine to some degree what foods they decide to serve. For example, many school nutrition directors decide to discontinue their use of serving foods that require syrups when they serve breakfast in the classroom to avoid the potential of spillage. There are many factors that food service staff need to consider when deciding a menu and menu pattern.

### *Senate Bill 144—Increasing student access to School Breakfast*

The Spring of 2011 was a triumph for New Mexico children who come to school hungry every morning. During the legislative session, the legislature enacted and Governor Martinez signed SB 144, a bill spearheaded by New Mexico Appleseed, that supports Breakfast After the Bell programs. Under this new state policy, starting the 2011-2012 school year, elementary schools with 85% or more enrolled children qualifying for free or reduced school meals are required to implement breakfast after the bell. These schools will receive state school breakfast funding to fulfill this requirement.

Whether it is Breakfast in the Classroom, Grab-and-Go or Breakfast in the Cafeteria during the school day, schools will be improving the health and academics of their students. Breakfast has been shown to improve dietary intake and reduce nurse visits and hunger-related issues. Children who eat breakfast also reduce tardiness, absenteeism, disciplinary actions, violence and aggression.

## *Serving Universal Breakfast Using Provision 2*

Universal School Breakfast refers to any school program that offers breakfast at no charge to all students, regardless of family income. Schools can provide Universal School Breakfast to students by opting for Provision 2 status within the federal School Breakfast Program. Provision 2 is an option outlined in the National School Lunch Act that allows schools to provide breakfast at no cost to all students without the burden of collecting applications and tracking and verifying school meal data every year. Paperwork for schools decreases with Provision 2 because schools are able to use a base year eligibility data for subsequent years.

Schools claim the federal reimbursement based on the eligibility category of each student, so they receive reimbursement based on whether students are eligible for free, reduced price, or full price meals. Schools must cover the cost of students who are eligible for full price meals. However, many schools do not experience a financial loss because using Provision 2 in combination with an alternative breakfast model drastically increases participation.

Typically schools with at least 75% or more students eligible for free and reduced price meals are able to successfully use this option.<sup>xi</sup> There are schools with fewer eligible students who have successfully used the Provision 2 option for serving universal breakfast. Provision 2 specifics include:

- All students receive free meals, regardless of income, and schools collect applications for free and reduced-priced meals once every four years, at most.
- Schools do not have to track and record the different categories of meals served for at least three out of every four years.
- The school pays the difference between the cost of providing meals at no charge to all students and the Federal reimbursement for those meals. In most cases, the significant administrative savings and increased meal participation (i.e. economies of scale) of Provision 2 help offset the cost difference.

- Provision 2 can be done with breakfast and/or lunch, by school or by district. Experience has shown that schools save more in administrative and time costs if Provision 2 is used for both breakfast and lunch.

Provision 2 makes it easier for schools to implement an alternative breakfast program like Grab and Go and Breakfast in the Classroom because students do not need to provide money, cards, or food tickets to receive meals. Schools have found that Provision 2 breakfast can reduce the stigma related to eating school breakfast.

Provision 2 works best when:

- Schools with more than 75% of students eligible for free and reduced price meals
- Stigma appears to be a factor in low participation rates
- The number of reduced-price eligible students who eat breakfast is much lower than the number who participate at lunch
- Teachers are supportive of breakfast and realize its importance to learning
- Kitchen equipment and space can accommodate increased participation

For more information about Provision 2, visit the USDA website:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/governance/prov - 1 - 2 - 3/Prov1 2 3 FactSheet.htm>

### *Eliminating the Reduced Price Fee for Breakfast*

Schools that are not Provision 2 can eliminate the reduced price for breakfast and only offer free or full priced breakfast options. Under this model, students that qualify for reduced price meals receive their breakfast at no cost. This works well in schools with a high percentage of students that qualify for free and reduced price meals, but have low participation of reduced price students. Even though the school only uses two categories for charging students, the school still receives federal reimbursement at the correct income category for each student. There is no additional funding provided by the federal government to cover the cost of the reduced price students that are provided free breakfast.

When reduced price charges for breakfast are eliminated, access to breakfast is increased, and more students ultimately eat breakfast. Offering breakfast for free to students that qualify for reduced price meals removes the financial barrier these students may experience in accessing breakfast at school. As there is an increase in the number of students who eat school breakfast, there is also more revenue generated from the federal government.

Eliminating reduced price breakfast works particularly well in schools with low breakfast participation from reduced price students. Eliminating reduced price breakfast works best when:

- High free and reduced approval rate at a school
- Additional staffing is not necessary to handle the increase in participation
- Staff is supportive of breakfast
- Breakfast is easily accessible to students<sup>xii</sup>

When students that are eligible for reduced price breakfast are able to access breakfast at no cost, they are more likely to have extra money to afford reduced price lunch meals. Because participation increases with the elimination of reduced price breakfast, schools can see an increase in federal reimbursements that are enough to cover the cost of serving breakfast at no cost to this group of students.

## *School Breakfast Serving Models*

Barriers to participating in the School Breakfast Program exist and should be addressed to guarantee that students have access to the academic and nutritional benefits that school breakfast provides. While schools may have localized barriers, these are common factors that prevent students from eating school breakfast:

- Lack of time during morning schedules, especially for students using public transportation
- Transportation option does not get students to school in time for breakfast
- Students may not be hungry first thing in the morning
- Students prefer to socialize or play instead of eating school breakfast before classes start
- Students experience stigma related to obtaining school meals

The Child Nutrition Outreach Specialist can work with schools to take these factors into consideration, assist schools with developing a plan to assess their current school breakfast model and implement alternative breakfast models to reach more students. Typical alternative school breakfast models include Breakfast in the Classroom, Grab and Go Breakfast, Breakfast After 1<sup>st</sup> Period, and Breakfast on the Bus.

### *Breakfast in the Classroom*

Providing breakfast in the classroom at the beginning of the school day is the most effective way to have the highest boost in breakfast participation. It is an excellent way to increase breakfast access for students who cannot eat breakfast at home and do not get to school in time for breakfast when it is served before the school day starts. Breakfast in the Classroom can be prepared quickly with little extra cost on labor or equipment.

In this model, breakfast can be brought to classrooms from the cafeteria by students or served by food service staff from carts in the hallways.<sup>xiii</sup> Using this model, breakfast can be served hot or cold and individually packaged in easy to grab bags.

Breakfast in the Classroom can be offered three ways:

- Students can stop by the cafeteria and pick up their breakfast in grab and go containers, along with milk and juice and then head to class
- Breakfast can be delivered by student representatives or food service staff to the classrooms using carts
- A student representative can pick the class breakfast up in the cafeteria and take them to the class using a cart or wagon

Students can eat breakfast during the first 10 to 15 minutes of class, while teachers can use the time to take attendance, do other administrative work, collect homework, give announcements, or involve their students in activities, like reading. Many teachers feel this is a valuable use of time and that their classes are more productive when students start their day with a healthy breakfast.

Students are responsible for disposing of their trash in bags provided by the school food service or custodial staff. Classroom representatives can return the trash bag to the cafeteria or leave it in the hallway for the custodial staff to collect.

Breakfast in the Classroom works particularly well in elementary schools and can be successful in middle and high school settings. This model of serving breakfast is most successful with the following characteristics:

- Students are in the same room at the start of each school day
- Busses arrive just before classes begin
- Teachers are supportive of breakfast in the classroom
- There is limited space in the cafeteria to serve breakfast
- The cafeteria is centrally located to facilitate easy delivery of meals to the classrooms <sup>xiv</sup>

*Will Breakfast in the Classroom Be A Fit?*

1. School bussed and non-bussed students arrive right before school begins?  Yes  No
2. Classroom schedules are flexible enough to incorporate breakfast?  Yes  No
3. The school cafeteria is small and crowded?  Yes  No
4. The cafeteria is centrally located for ease of service?  Yes  No
5. The classrooms and kitchen are on the same floor or have ramps?  Yes  No
6. Teachers, school administrators, and food service and custodial staff are open to piloting a new breakfast delivery model?  Yes  No

If school administration and staff can answer yes to most of these questions, a Breakfast in the Classroom model may work for their school to increase school breakfast access and participation.

Child Nutrition Outreach Specialists can assist school staff to make Breakfast in the Classroom successful. Ways to support staff include:

- Encouraging kitchen staff and school administration to use parent volunteers or student volunteers and offer service hours to help with meal distribution
- Ensuring that all school administration and staff are supportive of this service method, including principals, food service staff, teachers, and custodial staff
- Encouraging food service staff to prepare and package cold breakfast the afternoon before
- Encouraging school administration to allow teachers to eat breakfast in the classroom with their students to model good breakfast eating habits, which can also increase teacher support of the new breakfast model

### *Grab and Go Breakfast*

Grab and Go Breakfast is successful in any school setting, particularly in middle and high schools. Using this model, food service staff can prepare hot or cold breakfast meals and package them in a paper bags, boxes or trays. Students pick their breakfast up from a central location, typically the cafeteria, a designated hall area, and eat it when and where they want, within school guidelines. Grab and Go breakfast can be served first thing in the morning, between classes, at a mid-morning break or delivered to individual classrooms. Students are responsible for following the school's guidelines as to where and when they can eat and for throwing out their trash. Placing extra trash cans in high traffic areas and close to the areas where students tend to eat their food helps minimize litter and trash issues.

Schools that have implemented Grab and Go have seen that more students eat breakfast as opposed to traditional breakfast in the cafeteria. Because it is easy and efficient for students to grab a bag, this method allows schools to serve breakfast more quickly and to a greater number of students in a short period of time.

The Grab and Go breakfast model works particularly well in middle and high schools because older students enjoy the flexibility and choice that the Grab and Go option provides. Grab and Go Breakfast works well in school settings where:

- The cafeteria or gym is crowded or not available for breakfast.
- A large number of students have to eat in a short amount of time.
- Busses arrive just before the start of classes, limiting students' ability to eat breakfast before classes start.
- Teachers are supportive of breakfast and realize its importance to learning.
- Students rely on vending and convenience foods from outside the school for breakfast.
- The cafeteria is not located where students enter the building or tend to congregate.

### *Will Grab and Go Breakfast Be A Fit?*

1. School bussed and non-bussed students arrive right before school begins?  Yes  No
2. Food carts are available (or can be purchased) or space exists for placement of tables in entrances for curbside service?  Yes  No
3. The school cafeteria is small and crowded?  Yes  No
4. Congestion in the cafeteria needs to be reduced?  Yes  No
5. Breakfast needs to be served faster and serving areas need to be more accessible?  Yes  No
6. Meal payment system does not require cash at point of service?  Yes  No
7. Teachers, school administrators, and food service and custodial staff are open to piloting a new breakfast delivery model?  Yes  No

If school administration and staff can answer yes to most of these questions, a Grab and Go breakfast model may work for their school to increase school breakfast access and participation.

Child Nutrition Outreach Specialists can assist school staff to make Grab and Go breakfast successful. Ways to support staff include:

- Encouraging food service staff to prepare and package breakfast the afternoon before
- Suggesting that the school place breakfast carts or tables in high-traffic areas, especially near school entrances
- Suggesting that the school establish multiple points of breakfast pick-up and only offer easy to grab breakfasts

### *Breakfast after First Period*

Using this model, schools make breakfast available to students during a break between classes in the morning. Breakfast is available hot or cold using the Grab and Go method of individually packaged meals available on carts or tables in a high traffic area. In many schools there is a morning break, which is a great time to offer a breakfast meal for students who were not able to have breakfast or were not hungry earlier in the morning. Students are responsible for throwing

away their trash in designated areas. Extra trash cans in the areas where students congregate between classes, helps to minimize trash and food waste issues. The Breakfast after First Period model works well in all schools, particularly in middle and high schools.

Breakfast after First Period works best in schools where the following exists:

- A milk break or other break in the morning already exists
- Busses arrive just before classes begin
- There is no time to serve breakfast before classes or participation is low in breakfast served before school delivery models
- Students rely on vending machines for snacks in the morning
- Teachers are supportive of breakfast and realize its importance to learning
- There is little or no space to serve breakfast
- The cafeteria is centrally located

*Will Breakfast after First Period Be A Fit?*

1. There is flexible class scheduling to accommodate a breakfast break?  Yes  No
2. Food carts are available (or can be purchased) or space exists for placement of tables in high-traffic areas?  Yes  No
3. The school cafeteria is small and crowded?  Yes  No
4. There are one or more areas in the building where breakfast could be distributed?  Yes  No
5. Meal payment system does not require cash at point of service?  Yes  No
6. Teachers, school administrators, and food service and custodial staff are open to piloting a new breakfast delivery model?  Yes  No

If school administration and staff can answer yes to most of these questions, a Breakfast after First Period model may work for their school to increase breakfast access and participation.

Child Nutrition Outreach Specialists can assist school staff to make Breakfast after First Period successful. Ways to support staff include:

- Encouraging food service staff to prepare and package breakfast the afternoon before
- Suggesting that the school to place breakfast carts or tables in high-traffic areas, especially near school entrances
- Suggesting that the school establish multiple points of breakfast pick-up and only offer easy to grab breakfasts

### *Breakfast on the Bus*

This model can work well for students that attend schools far from home and have a long bus ride, particularly in rural settings. Using this model, food service staff can assemble breakfast the afternoon before brown bag style and have it ready to be placed on selected busses with long routes. Students that ride the bus for long periods of time can enjoy a hand-held breakfast before arriving to school.

Breakfast on the Bus works best in schools where the following exists:

- Many students ride the bus to school and the bus ride is long
- Busses arrive just before classes begin
- There is no time to serve breakfast before classes or participation is low in breakfast served before school delivery models
- Students rely on vending machines for snacks in the morning
- Staff are supportive of breakfast
- There is little or no space to serve breakfast

### *Will Breakfast after First Period Be A Fit?*

1. Bussing service is flexible and open to having breakfast on the bus?  Yes  No
2. Students spend more than 15 minutes riding the bus and don't arrive in time to participate in traditional breakfast?  Yes  No

3. Bussing and class schedules are not flexible?  Yes  No
4. Food service staff and equipment are available to prep early morning breakfast pick-up?  Yes  No
5. Meal payment system does not require cash at point of service?  Yes  No
6. Teachers, school administrators, and food service and custodial staff are open to piloting a new breakfast delivery model?  Yes  No
7. Parents have requested an option for their children who don't arrive at school in time for breakfast?  Yes  No

If school administration and staff can answer yes to most of these questions, a Breakfast on the Bus model may work for their school to increase breakfast access and participation.

Child Nutrition Outreach Specialists can assist school staff to make Breakfast on the Bus successful. Ways to support staff include:

- Encouraging food service staff to prepare and package breakfast the afternoon before
- Suggesting that the school establish effective trash removal procedures for a bus breakfast serving site

While efforts such as convenient breakfast packaging and stronger marketing yield positive results, schools with the greatest successes in increasing breakfast participation have structurally changed how breakfast is delivered to their students. Whether breakfast is served in the classroom, hallways, or on the bus, access to breakfast during the school morning is key to ensuring increased access and participation.<sup>xv</sup>

## *Outreach to Middle and High Schools*

Middle and high school students have more freedom to purchase food from area corner stores and fast food restaurants before arriving to school. Students in middle and high school often do not experience hunger in the morning when first arriving to school, they are also more likely to experience stigma associated with free and reduced price meals. Because of these factors, it is important for schools to identify effective methods of increasing student access to school breakfast and reducing stigma.

Getting middle and high school students involved in the process of assessing their school's breakfast program and making recommendations for expanding breakfast can be an effective way of encouraging school administration and food service staff to consider and implement breakfast model changes. Other ways to get students involved include:

- Encouraging the creation of a school breakfast advisory group. Have the group assess student perceptions of school breakfast and barriers they experience to eating breakfast at school. Based on this assessment, have the advisory group identify and propose solutions that can be considered for implementation.
- Encouraging school staff to have students design and use promotional activities, posters, slogans, even videos.
- Suggesting that school staff hold breakfast item taste tests and ask students to vote on their preferred items. Food service staff can add these items to their breakfast menu.

Child Nutrition Outreach Specialists can work with school administration and food service staff to consider methods that can make breakfast more convenient for students. Best methods include:

- Adopting and implementing a Grab and Go breakfast serving model, place breakfast carts or tables in areas where students frequent.
- Keeping the cafeteria open later in the school morning so that students who get to school late or do not have first period class can access breakfast.

## *Understanding Stakeholder Interest and Concerns*

School administration and staff, including principals, teachers, food service staff, and custodial staff, play an important role in assessing their school's breakfast program and considering effective methods of increasing school breakfast access. As a Child Nutrition Outreach Specialist, it is essential that all of these stakeholders are involved in the process of providing input about their school breakfast program.

### *Superintendents and Principals*

Superintendents and principals work hard to ensure the academic success of their students and they play an important role in deciding to implement an alternative breakfast model at their schools.

Key concerns that principals may have include cost, scheduling, and resources. Expanding breakfast adds additional cost, but often breakfast participation becomes high enough to support the program through economies of scale. Federal reimbursement for breakfast can cover additional food and labor costs and revenue can be generated through increased participation.

The breakfast schedule at school can impact student access to breakfast in the morning. Principals are responsible for determining a breakfast schedule that fits into school day activities and ensures student access. Alternative breakfast models can easily be worked into the school day schedule while increasing student access to school breakfast.

In terms of resources, the Child Nutrition Outreach Specialist can provide technical assistance, support, and refer school principals to other resources. School principals and staff can find additional support for expanding their breakfast program by contacting the New Mexico Public Education Department School Nutrition Bureau, the USDA Food and Nutrition Services, Dairy Max or the National Dairy Council, and the American School Food Service Association. Other school districts that have already expanded their breakfast program by implementing an alternative breakfast model can be used as a resource.

## *Teachers*

Teachers are important to expanding breakfast access for students. In schools that have implemented alternative breakfast models, teachers have found that concerns are easily addressed and the benefits of breakfast are demonstrated by their students' improved attention span, academic performance, and behavior during class.

Typical concerns that teachers have with alternative breakfast models that may take place during their class time include their workload, classroom cleanliness, and time commitment. The implementation of alternative breakfast models, like Breakfast in the Classroom, add little or no work to the teaching day. Breakfast is usually completed within 10 to 15 minutes of class starting and teachers can use this time to complete regular administrative tasks, begin the first lesson, or read with students.

Food service staff provide garbage bags, paper towels, and other cleaning supplies for Breakfast in the Classroom programs. Students can clean up after eating in the classroom and are ready to learn in the morning. Breakfast time and work can be limited with a menu and serving method that are appropriate for having classroom breakfast.

## *Food Service Staff*

Food service directors, managers, and staff are key stakeholders in the education process and the implementation of alternative breakfast models. Concerns that food service staff may have include workload and cost.

Implementing alternative breakfast models does not necessarily increase work for food service staff. The breakfast serving method a school chooses to implement can be set up to work with the current operation without much change in staff workload. For example, pre-packaged breakfast foods can keep labor workload to a minimum.

Schools with a high percentage of students that qualify for free and reduced price breakfast can possibly offer universal free breakfast to all students. Food service staff and school

administration should work together to calculate the cost of serving universal free breakfast and implementing an alternative breakfast model.

### *Custodial Staff*

It is important to have custodial staff support of expanding school breakfast access using alternative breakfast models. They play a critical role in maintaining a safe and healthy school learning environment. Custodial staff may be concerned that their workload would increase if their school implements an alternative breakfast model.

Students can help to make sure trash is properly disposed of and can participate in making sure their classroom is cleaned after breakfast. Having students participate in the clean-up process can provide additional leadership and learning opportunities. Custodial staff at schools that have implemented an alternative breakfast model do not generally see an increase in workload.

### *Child Nutrition Outreach Specialist Role and Expectations*

The Child Nutrition Outreach Specialist is an integral member of a team carrying out the New Mexico No Kid Hungry Child Nutrition Outreach Project. The outreach specialist's role is to support decreasing childhood hunger in New Mexico by improving utilization of the federally funded School Breakfast Program and Summer Food Service Program. Child Nutrition Outreach Specialists will assist in widening school and community awareness of and support for these programs, while also acting as a resource to organizations currently operating feeding sites.

Child Nutrition Outreach Specialists will work in several southern New Mexico counties with local schools and community organizations to provide them with information about child food insecurity in New Mexico and federal food assistance programs that increase children's access to food resources. Outreach specialists will work to build trusting relationships with schools and community organizations and provide extensive support to implement best practice strategies that increase children's access to the School Breakfast Program and Summer Food Service Program.

As part of promoting alternative breakfast models to expand school breakfast access and participation, the Outreach Specialist will also promote the Fuel Up to Play 60 program available through Dairy Max. Fuel Up to Play 60 is an in-school nutrition and physical activity program aimed to empower students to eat more nutrient rich foods and get 60 minutes of physical activity daily. The program utilizes a school wellness investigation, nutrition and physical activity plays, challenges and rewards to engage students to want to make their school a healthy place. Fuel Up to Play 60 is a tool for schools to implement healthy eating and activity action strategies to achieve sustainable changes within the school environment. The Outreach Specialist will encourage schools within their region to consider implementing an alternative breakfast model as the nutrition component of Fuel Up to Play 60 program. The Outreach Specialist will promote grant funding that is available through Dairy Max to help make these healthy changes at school.

There is no “one size fits all” when it comes to working with schools to provide outreach and technical assistance to assist them design and implement effective alternative school breakfast programs. Administrators, nutrition service staff, community groups, custodians, nurses, parent groups, students, teachers and wellness councils—in addition to school boards—all have important roles in strengthening school breakfast. It is the Outreach Specialist’s goal to involve these stakeholders in assessing barriers and student access to school breakfast and implementing an alternative breakfast model, as well as the Fuel Up to Play 60 program.

### *General Expectations of Outreach Specialists*

- Conduct research and attend trainings as necessary
- Contact, build relationship, and work with assigned target schools to encourage implementation of alternative breakfast models and Fuel Up to Play 60
- Provide technical assistance to schools interested in implementing alternative breakfast models using the Backing Breakfast Resource Guide, Fuel Up to Play 60 program, USDA assessment and planning resources, and other resources
- Conduct Dairy Max School Wellness Inventory and USDA School Breakfast Barriers Assessment tool for interested schools
- Identify 3 schools that want to pilot an alternative breakfast model for 2011-2012 in partnership with NM No Kid Hungry and Dairy Max; receive commitment by October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2011
- Provide technical assistance to 3 participating schools throughout the school year; involve schools in assessment, planning, and evaluation process
- Support schools in deciding which alternative school breakfast model will work best for their school
- Continue providing outreach to other assigned target schools throughout the school year to encourage and support potential implementation of an alternative breakfast model and Fuel Up to Play 60
- Support schools to identify ways they can overcome obstacles related to expanding breakfast
- Conduct evaluation of program process as outreach specialist
- Submit monthly reports and share other materials and information as necessary
- Attend monthly Child Hunger Work Group meetings face-to-face or by conference call

## *Steps to Take with Schools*

It is important to determine the level of interest and capacity of a school to expand their breakfast program using an alternative breakfast model. While working with schools, Outreach Specialists need to identify champions in the school, as well as the best way to communicate with staff at each individual school. Outreach Specialists should determine what type of information each stakeholder needs, particularly to know the benefits of increasing school breakfast access for their students. The overall goal is to increase student access to school breakfast by providing technical assistance to schools to adopt an alternative breakfast model in partnership with the Fuel Up to Play 60 program.

### **Step 1—Initial Contact with School**

- Send email letter to Food Service Director/Manager and Principal in your region (email letter draft provided by Campaign Manager)
- Provide follow-up call to Food Service Director/Manager of individual school
  - Talking Points: Outreach specialists with the NM No Kid Hungry Campaign in partnership with Dairy Max and Public Education Department School Nutrition Bureau
  - Providing technical assistance to support to schools to assess and expand breakfast meal service that meets the needs of school staff and students and can increase participation and revenue
- Provide subsequent follow-up emails and calls as needed based on interaction
- Schedule face-to-face meeting with interested schools; Ask food service manager who else should be present initially and work with the manager to invite those stakeholders
- Complete initial meeting
- With some schools you may not get farther than the initial contact or meeting, which is okay. You want to put your efforts toward working with schools that would like more information about expanding their breakfast program

## Step 2—Share Resources

During initial communication and meetings with school food service staff and other stakeholders, it is important to share the following resources:

- Backing Breakfast Resource Guide
- New Mexico No Kid Hungry Campaign brochure
- Fuel Up to Play 60 program information and grant opportunity
- Share Our Strength mini-grant opportunity (available for up to 10 schools that commit to partnering with the Campaign to implement an alternative breakfast model and Fuel Up to Play 60 this year; each outreach specialist is responsible for identifying and working with 3 schools that will receive this grant)
- Other resources as you see necessary
- Again, with some schools you will not get beyond the point of sharing resources. This is normal; some schools will not be ready to consider expanding their breakfast program. For those that would like to assess their current breakfast model and consider expansion models, your next step with them is to develop a School Breakfast Expansion Team and assist with assessment
- A specific goal you have at this point is to identify 3 schools/districts that are committed to going through the process of assessment, planning, and implementing an alternative breakfast model and Fuel Up to Play 60. The 3 schools you have identified can apply for the Share Our Strength mini-grant

## Step 3—Support school to develop School Breakfast Expansion Team

You will take this step with school stakeholders that show a committed interest in assessing current school breakfast access and are interested in considering implementing an alternative breakfast model in partnership with the Fuel Up to Play 60 program. You will assist your school contacts with developing a temporary School Breakfast Expansion Team that will be involved in assessment, planning, and implementation of an alternative breakfast model and Fuel Up to Play 60 program. Stakeholders to bring to the table include:

- Food service manager, principal, nurse, teacher(s), physical activity person, etc.

#### **Step 4—School Breakfast and Nutrition Assessment**

This process will help you and the school staff you are working with to identify current barriers to participation in the School Breakfast Program and what alternative breakfast model would be appropriate to address barriers. You will assist the School Breakfast Expansion Team with completing this assessment and developing recommendations for breakfast expansion.

Assessment tools you will work with the team to complete include:

- USDA School Breakfast Barriers Assessment tool (qualitative tool)
- Schools that would like to implement alternative breakfast model in partnership with the Fuel Up to Play 60 program will also complete the School Wellness Inventory (online)
- Work with schools to have at least 1 class per grade complete the Student Survey (hardcopy inputted into SurveyMonkey by Outreach Specialist)
- Complete a School Breakfast Cost Benefit Analysis of current breakfast costs and revenue and projected costs and revenue if an alternative breakfast model is implemented
- Receive a copy of the school's wellness policy
- Based on assessment, provide school staff with recommendations for increasing school breakfast access
- Work with school staff to consider the appropriate breakfast serving methods for the school
- Consider potential obstacles/challenges and benefits of the proposed serving method
- Some schools will appreciate the assessment process, but may not be ready to go forward with developing and implementing a breakfast expansion plan. You can communicate with them further to identify concerns they may have.

#### **Step 5—Develop School Breakfast Expansion Plan**

After conducting an assessment, identifying barriers to student access to school breakfast, and developing recommendations, you will work with the School Breakfast Expansion Team to develop a plan for school breakfast expansion. You will use several tools to capture information and action steps for the plan. Tools include:

- Fuel Up to Play 60 Interactive Timeline (online) for schools that are participating in the Fuel Up to Play 60 program

- USDA School Breakfast Expansion Plan tool (this can be used for schools that want to implement an alternative breakfast model, but are not ready to participate in Fuel Up to Play 60; it is also a tool that outreach specialists will use for each school they are working with to develop a plan even if the school uses the Fuel Up to Play 60 Interactive Timeline)
- Connect participating schools with resources that demonstrate how other schools have implemented alternative breakfast models
- Support superintendent, principal, and food service director/manager to ensure that all other staff members are supportive of this service method, including teachers, kitchen, and custodial staff
- Encourage food service staff to prepare cold breakfast the afternoon before
- Support food service staff members to identify additional assistance if needed, including using student volunteers or recruiting parents volunteers

### **Step 6—Apply for Grants**

After you have worked with the School Breakfast Expansion Team to complete the Fuel Up to Play 60 Interactive Timeline and USDA School Breakfast Expansion Plan, you can provide them with technical assistance to apply for mini-grants. This step can also come sooner for schools that are ready to implement an alternative breakfast model or Fuel Up to Play 60. The Child Nutrition Outreach Project has two mini-grant opportunities available:

- Up to 10 schools that commit to developing and implementing an alternative school breakfast plan can apply for the Share Our Strength School Breakfast Expansion mini-grant for up to \$2,500. Schools that receive this grant are also committed to working closely with the outreach specialists to implement the alternative breakfast model using the Fuel Up to Play 60 program, as well as evaluate the impact of the new program.
- The 10 schools that receive the Share Our Strength mini-grant will also have the opportunity to apply for the Fuel Up to Play 60 \$4,000 grant
- If the School Breakfast Expansion Team needs technical assistance to complete the grant applications and proposed budgets, the outreach specialist can assist with this

### Step 7—Implementation of Plan

By the time the School Breakfast Expansion Team is ready to implement Fuel Up to Play 60 and their alternative breakfast model, they should have received sufficient resources and support. The Outreach Specialist can support schools to identify solutions to any challenges that may arise. In the process of implementing an alternative breakfast model and Fuel Up to Play 60, the Outreach Specialist can assist schools and the School Breakfast Expansion Team to:

- Identify the most efficient way of getting breakfast to students (i.e. for Breakfast in the Classroom, in some schools having food service staff deliver breakfast to the classroom works well, whereas in other schools having student representatives pick up a breakfast cart and deliver it to their classroom will work better)
- Consider including their new school breakfast model in their wellness policy

### Step 8—Evaluation

The Outreach Specialist will be responsible for participating in the Child Nutrition Outreach Project evaluation. This is the pilot year of the project and part of the Outreach Specialist role is to identify challenges and barriers that outreach specialists experience in building relationship with schools and providing technical assistance to support schools to implement alternative breakfast models. The Outreach Specialist will be a participant in the evaluation process, in part by keeping a regular journal of experiences (qualitative) and a monthly tracking form. The Outreach Specialist will also involve schools and the School Breakfast Expansion Team in the process of evaluation. Schools that receive the Share Our Strength mini-grant are required to participate in the evaluation process. Schools that the Outreach Specialist continues to build relationship with, but do not receive a Share Our Strength mini-grant, should be encouraged to participate in the evaluation process. Initial data collected from the assessment will also support the process of evaluation. Evaluation data you will need to work with schools to collect include:

- Data on the number/percentage of children eligible for Free and Reduced Price Lunch who participate in the School Breakfast Program prior to implementing an alternative breakfast model and after implementing the model
- Menu data prior to implementing alternative model and Fuel Up to Play 60, and menu data after implementation

- Baseline on standardized test scores
- Data on tardiness, absences, and behavioral referrals before and after implementation
- Conduct student and parent survey before and after implementation
- School staff respond to surveys or interviews related to implementation
- Having select teachers keep a journal
- Tracking outreach that the outreach specialist provides

## *Resources*

This section contains various types of resources that can assist you with familiarizing yourself with school breakfast expansion. Some of these resources you will need to use as an Outreach Specialist. These resources are listed below and a hard copy of some of these resources is included in this manual, as well as on the manual CD.

### *Child Nutrition Outreach Project Tools*

This section lists the tools you need to work with schools through the eight steps. You can also find other resources through research that you may want to share with schools. Some of these tools will be available in this manual and on the Resources CD, other tools will be available online or given to you at a later date. The project tools available include:

- Fuel Up to Play 60 School Wellness Investigation (hardcopy, online)
- USDA School Breakfast Barriers assessment tool
- School Breakfast Student Survey (provided in September)
- 10 Share Our Strength mini-grants (provided in September)
- Fuel Up to Play 60 program (online)
- Fuel Up to Play 60 mini-grants (hardcopy, online)
- Fuel Up to Play 60 Interactive Timeline tool (hardcopy, online)
- School Breakfast Expansion Plan tool USDA
- Calculating costs tool USDA
- Evaluation tools UNM (provided in September)
- Backing Breakfast Resource Guide

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