

That's A Fact

The National School Lunch Program

- President Harry Truman established the National School Lunch Program in 1946. He did so in response to the large number of WWII recruits that were rejected due to malnutrition.
- Today, the school lunch program serves more than 28 million students per day.
- Just over half of those students who participate in the school lunch program receive their lunch free or at a reduced cost.
- Over 92% of all students nationwide have access to school lunch and about 58% of those students participate on a given day.
- The school lunch program operates in 99% of all public schools and 85% of private schools. That's a total of 99,538 public and nonprofit private schools.
- Lunch prices are divided into the following three categories: free, reduced and paid. Students from families with incomes at or below 130% of the poverty level are eligible for free meals. Those with incomes between 130% and 185% are eligible for reduced price meals.
- The 2004-2005 reimbursement rates were \$2.24 for free lunches, \$1.84 for reduced-price lunches and \$.21 for paid lunches.
- The National School Lunch Program is the largest of the federal child nutrition programs both in terms of spending and children served.
- In fiscal year 2005, \$6.8 billion was appropriated for the school lunch program.

The School Breakfast Program

- The School Breakfast Program began as a 700 school pilot under the Child Nutrition Act of 1966.
- The School Breakfast Program was made permanent in 1975.
- Today, 8.1 million children in 77,000 schools start their day with a school breakfast.
- The qualification criteria for free/reduced price breakfasts is the same as for lunch.
- In 2004, over 82% of the students participating in the program received their breakfast for free or at a reduced price.
- The reimbursement rates for 2004-2005 were \$1.23 for free breakfasts, \$.93 for reduced price breakfasts and \$.23 for paid breakfasts.
- In fiscal year 2005 Congress appropriated \$1.8 billion for the School Breakfast Program.
- Numerous studies including research at Harvard and Tufts and a Minnesota pilot program have shown a direct correlation between school breakfast participation and academic performance.