Take a Tour of SNF’s Breakfast in the Classroom Operations and Equipment Digital Guide

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Affiliation or Financial Disclosures

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Breakfast in the Classroom

- PBIC established in 2010
- Funded by Walmart Foundation grant
- Provide grants to fund BIC start-up including equipment & technology
- Provide technical assistance

Source: School Nutrition Foundation
Breakfast in the Classroom

- PBIC’s work increased breakfast participation, academic and nutrition outcomes
  - worked with more than 70 school districts
  - provided over $11 million in grant funding
  - provided technical assistance in over 500 schools in 26 states
  - made breakfast accessible to nearly 100,000 students.

Source: School Nutrition Foundation
Breakfast in the Classroom

▶ BIC results

▶ Up to doubled participation rate when moved from cafeteria to classroom
▶ Improved attendance
▶ Reduction in tardiness
▶ Greater accessibility to nutritious foods

Source: School Nutrition Foundation
Breakfast in the Classroom

- 2018 BIC Impact Report findings
  - All stakeholders are crucial to BIC success
  - BIC benefits goes beyond breakfast participation
  - Student involvement can increase participation
  - Strategic investment in equipment can help overcome challenges
  - Peer-to-peer interactions are influential to BIC sustainability

Source: School Nutrition Foundation
PBIC Operations & Equipment Guide

This Operations & Equipment Guide is designed to help you choose the right equipment for your breakfast after the bell program, regardless of delivery model or grade level.

This online guide transforms the lessons learned from implementing Breakfast in the Classroom (BIC) programs funded by the Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom grant project into an operational implementation guide to help you plan your own BIC program. Our goal is to help all schools successfully implement BIC programs with thoughtful planning and access to practical experience.

Starting a BIC program can seem like a daunting task. BIC schools have learned that in order to be successful, they need to be flexible and allow for change during their implementation process. Every school is different and getting the buy-in of the entire school community is critical to success. Implementing the program in stages can also help avoid costly mistakes.

Strategies to pilot the program in a few schools can help fine-tune the implementation, identify what works and what doesn't work, and develop school breakfast advocates among principals and teaching staff. It can also identify critical needs in the areas of food production, meal delivery, meal counting and claiming, janitorial services, and menu planning that can guide your implementation strategy. The end result will transform your school breakfast program into an integral part of the school community and create a culture of emotional and social support for students.
FOOD DELIVERY SYSTEMS
The type of equipment you choose for your program will depend on your delivery model. Review this section to find the right equipment for your grab-and-go, direct delivery, or hybrid breakfast after the bell program.

FOOD PRODUCTION SYSTEMS
The equipment in this section will help you plan what you need for storage, cooking, and holding food for breakfast after the bell.

CUSTODIAL SERVICES
Make sure your custodial staff has the equipment required for efficient breakfast after the bell cleanup.

MEAL COUNTING & CLAIMING SYSTEMS
Find the equipment you need to help teachers and/or school nutrition staff keep accurate records for breakfast after the bell.

MENU PLANNING
Sample recipes from Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom school districts are included along with equipment suggestions to help you plan your breakfast after the bell menu.
Food Delivery Systems

Part of the PBIC Operations & Equipment Guide

There are several food delivery and service options used to implement BIC. The two most common delivery systems are the use of hot and cold pack bags or containers that transport and hold food for individual classrooms, and mobile grab-and-go serving carts that are strategically placed in locations outside the cafeteria in building entrances, hallways, and common areas where students grab their breakfast and bring it to the classroom or other common gathering place.

Food Delivery

- Hot & cold pack bags or containers
  - Used commonly for individual classroom delivery in elementary schools
- Mobile grab-and-go serving carts
  - Most common in middle & high schools placed in high traffic areas, but growing at elementary level
Food Delivery Systems

Food delivered to individual classrooms is most commonly seen in elementary school settings. It may also be used in middle schools and less commonly at the high school level. Using the model for individual classroom delivery requires several important considerations. Size and durability of the food containers is key. It is ideal if one container for hot food and one for cold food can accommodate each individual classroom. Color coded bags such as red bags for hot foods and blue bags for cold foods helps with logistics.

Weights and size of the containers can affect the ability to conveniently transport the food from cafeteria to classroom. Soft-sided insulated bags (similar to, but larger than pizza delivery bags) can help to reduce weight. They vary in price and convenience. Less expensive models can be harder to clean and less durable, requiring frequent replacement. More expensive models are built to last longer with reinforced materials and may feature bacteria resistant and odor free interior liners. They also may include a clear vinyl window to insert classroom delivery information. Some manufacturers even offer dividers to hold parfait, smoothies, or other foods that may be susceptible to spillage. Hard-sided polyethylene insulated containers offer durability and may be easier to clean, but may be heavier to handle. They can accommodate ice packs, and in some instances, hot packs to extend holding times, if needed. Some insulated bags offer travel carts similar to luggage carts, and some hard-sided containers have built in wheels for transport. There are a few important things to consider here. Make sure that the handle height of the travel cart or wheeled containers are ergonomically appropriate for long distance transport to a classroom. Purchasing a wheeled transport unit (cart, dolly, rack, flatbed) that is separate from the container may be more cost effective as you won’t have to replace the entire container when the wheels wear out. Purchasing commercial foodservice equipment from a foodservice equipment dealer is a good choice over purchasing retail products from big box retailers. Many elementary schools use student ambassadors or teacher’s aides to transport breakfast and from the classroom. Ease of transport is an important consideration when using students. Visit this link (coming soon) to link to hot and cold container manufacturers and dealers.
Food Delivery Systems

The use of mobile grab-and-go serving carts is a popular option used mostly in high schools and middle schools, and becoming more popular in elementary schools. These solutions work well for serving grab-and-go breakfast as students are entering school and passing through hallways or common areas. One BIC school district experienced significant participation increases by using crowd control stanchions to route students entering school past the breakfast carts. They found that students were more likely to participate in breakfast when required to pass by the cart.

The major consideration when purchasing a mobile cart is verifying adequate passage way through doorways and elevators. Some mobile carts may be too wide or too tall to transport to your remote service locations, especially in older school buildings. Size and weight of the cart is critical in determining ease of transport out of the cafeteria. Carts that are too heavy can be a safety concern for employees. There are lightweight options that can alleviate these concerns. Many mobile carts come with attractive graphics, or you can customize your own graphics; a dedicated BIC brand can help market school breakfast to students and faculty. Carts are a traditional serving mode that come with many options to hold and merchandise food choices. Some options include taller and narrower tiered shelves that may be tilted to display the food options. They work well for both cold and hot wrapped foods. Visit this link to link to mobile serving equipment manufacturers and dealers.

Food Delivery

- Mobile grab-and-go serving carts
  - Captures students entering school/high traffic areas
  - Participation increases using crowd control stanchions
  - Verify passageway through doorways and elevators
  - Size and weight of cart is critical
  - Attractive, customizable graphics
  - Tall, narrow carts with tilted shelves to display the food options
Food Delivery Systems

Using separate hot or cold holding carts to backup serving carts can be a good option when food is served over an extended period of time such as second chance breakfast that is served between morning periods. Flex carts are available that can hold both hot and cold foods. Holding carts can also include an electrical plug to maintain temperatures over time. Bumpers and heavy-duty casters are good options to consider. Consider purchasing rain gear for your staff if serving and holding carts need to be transported through outdoor areas. Visit this link (coming soon) to link to mobile holding equipment manufacturers and dealers.

The appearance and sophistication of mobile carts vary widely driven by cost. You can accomplish a mobile serving location with standard kitchen equipment like utility carts, racks or mobile shelving. Your solution may be as simple as purchasing folding polyethylene tables that can be conveniently stored in remote locations near the serving area. While these options can be cost-effective, it may or may not adequately promote student participation. This will depend on your individual school needs.

Designating storage space for your food delivery equipment is also important. The ability to securely store your equipment may dictate the food delivery system you use and the size of containers or carts you purchase. You can get double duty from your food delivery equipment if you offer other child nutrition programs such as suppers, snacks, or summer food service.

The least expensive food delivery option is to utilize your existing cafeteria line. Students go to the cafeteria to pick-up their breakfast and take it to the classroom. The disadvantage of this system is that it may not promote access and participation in the breakfast program as effectively as meals served at or near the classroom. Routing all students through the cafeteria after the bell can help alleviate this concern. It may take more time out of the instructional day to move students to the cafeteria after the bell.

Other considerations

- Hot & cold holding carts
- Flex carts for both hot & cold foods
- Purchase rain gear for staff delivering outdoors
- Standard kitchen equipment, e.g. utility carts, racks, mobile shelving
- Adequate storage space for delivery equipment
- Routing students through the cafeteria an option
Food Delivery System
Round Table Discussion & Feedback

https://www.schoolnutritionfoundation.org/food-delivery-systems/
Food Production Systems

Part of the PBIC Operations & Equipment Guide

Food production is dictated by the physical foodservice facilities that exist in a school district and individual schools. Some schools have full-service kitchens capable of producing food from scratch or speed scratch. Often times these schools can absorb the impact of increased production with existing cooking equipment. They may or may not have adequate refrigeration including cooler and freezer space to hold the increased volume of food procured without adding additional food deliveries. Central commissaries and central kitchens may face the same dilemma. Satellite or finishing kitchens may need additional cooking and holding equipment, especially when hot breakfast items overlap with lunch production schedules. An often-overlooked area is the need for additional kitchen equipment.

Food Production

- Full-service kitchens and commissaries
  - Often can absorb impact of increased production with existing cooking equipment
  - Many require additional cooler and freezer space
- Satellite and finishing kitchens
  - Often require additional cooking, holding, and refrigeration equipment
Food Production Systems

Refrigeration, including both cooler and freezer space, was the biggest equipment need experienced by BIC school districts. Many schools already suffer with aging facilities and lack of adequate refrigeration. Don’t let this discourage you, just include it in your planning. It may be as simple as adding food delivery days to delivery schedules. This may add to your total food costs if using a broadline distributor for food deliveries. It may be worth it during implementation of BIC until you establish participation levels and can better gauge the revenue impact of your increased participation. If you have your own warehouse and delivery trucks, increased deliveries may require additional labor or delivery vehicle resources. Again, this may be a short-term fix by increasing delivery hours or a short-term lease of a delivery truck. Data you collect will help you determine if investing in refrigeration is a better long-term investment. And that investment will benefit your entire nutrition program.

When deciding on refrigeration, compare the cubic foot cost of a reach-in versus walk-in option, especially outdoor locker options that don’t require major remodeling of an existing building. Visit this link [coming soon] to link to refrigeration manufacturers and dealers.

Food Production

- Refrigeration equipment in highest demand
- Demand may be mitigated with increased deliveries
- Refrigeration considerations
  - Compare cubic foot cost of a reach-in versus walk-in option
  - Consider outdoor locker options that don’t require major remodeling of an existing building
Food Production Systems

Additional cooking equipment was less in demand by BIC schools. The most common piece of equipment needed is convection ovens, the workhorse of the school kitchen. However, there was a significant need for hot holding cabinets, especially mobile units that can be transported to remote point-of-sale locations. One BIC district with a central kitchen added an over-wrap machine so they could satellite hot, pre-plated entrees to relieve the labor required to serve a hot breakfast at the receiving schools. Visit this link (coming soon) to link to cooking and holding equipment manufacturers and dealers.

Many BIC schools were surprised to discover that common kitchen equipment is often in short supply with BIC. The need for bun pan racks, dunneage racks, shelving, utility carts, bun pans, and small wares should all be considered. Visit this link (coming soon) to link to kitchen equipment manufacturers and dealers.

Food Production

- Convection oven most common piece of cooking equipment procured
- Demand for mobile holding equipment
- Consideration needed for cook and hold technology
- High demand for common kitchen equipment
Food Production System
Round Table Discussion & Feedback

https://www.schoolnutritionfoundation.org/food-production-systems/
Custodial Services

Part of the PBIC Operations & Equipment Guide

Breakfast in the Classroom (BIC) schools may also need to support the custodial staff as meal service clean-up takes place in the classroom increasing the amount of trash and floor clean-up. Teaching staff may be concerned about pest control in the classroom. Needs may include additional trash cans appropriately sized for the classroom, mops, buckets, and cleaning supply dollies. Additional 55-gallon trash cans and tilt trucks increase the efficiency of waste removal from the classroom.

Many BIC schools also provide sanitizing wipes to efficiently clean desk and tabletop surfaces after breakfast service is completed. Visit this link (coming soon) to link to janitorial suppliers.

- Pest control concerns
- Increased trash and floor clean-up required
  - Appropriately sized trach cans for classroom
  - Mops, buckets and cleaning supply dollies
  - Tilt trucks and 55-gallon cans on dollies
  - Sanitizing wipes for desk and tabletops
Custodial Services
Round Table Discussion & Feedback

https://www.schoolnutritionfoundation.org/custodial-services/
Meal Counting & Claiming Systems

Part of the PBIC Operations & Equipment Guide

Meal counting and claiming of BIC meals can be a challenge when students are served outside of the cafeteria where most schools use point-of-sale computer software and hardware to accurately count and claim student meals. There are several effective methods that can be used for meal counting and claiming depending on your food delivery system.

Many schools that offer BIC also participate in the USDA Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) that allows all enrolled students to qualify for meals at no cost. This allows school to count all student meals served without claiming them by income category. It reduces the burden of collecting household applications and determining income category at the point-of-service. Participation in CEP simplifies meal counting and claiming.

Schools using the individual classroom delivery system most often rely on the teaching staff to record meals served. If the school is participating in CEP, it requires only meal counts. This can be accomplished with inexpensive handheld tally counters, tally sheets, or student rosters. The tally sheets and student rosters can be on paper or on a tablet or computer. Some software systems may integrate with attendance software allowing the teacher to record both attendance and breakfast participation at the same time. Check with your State Agency to determine if tally counters or sheets are approved in your state. The challenge with using non-foodservice staff for meal counting is training. “Offer-versus-serve” can be a difficult concept to understand and teachers have many demands in the classroom. Frequent training and reinforcement are needed for accurate meal counts.

Meal Counting & Claiming

- Community Eligibility Program (CEP)
  - Count all student meals without claiming income category
  - Tally counters, tally sheets or student roster that are paper or digital
  - Software that integrates attendance with meal counts

- Classroom delivery relies on teaching staff to record meals

- Mobile carts utilize trained cafeteria staff

- Frequent training on Offer vs. Serve for non-foodservice staff
Meal Counting & Claiming Systems

Student rosters, either paper or electronic, are required for schools not participating in CEP. The roster counts by student name or ID are submitted to the school manager. A more efficient and audit proof option is to use wireless point-of-sale hardware and software. Relatively inexpensive hardware such as tablets and keypads may pay for themselves in the long run. Technology companies offering point-of-sale systems have many good options. Visit this link (coming soon) to link to POS system providers.

Schools using mobile carts typically use food service staff who are well versed in offer versus serve to provide the meal counting and claiming. One BIC school district employs reusable lunch bags similar to reusable grocery bags for students to make their offer versus serve choices. The food service staff looks inside the bag to determine a reimbursable meal. The reusable bags that are replaced three times during the school year makes it easy for students carrying backpacks to easily transport breakfast to the classroom. CEP schools need only verify a reimbursable meal and number of students receiving a meal. Mobile carts lend themselves better to wireless POS systems as well.

Meal Counting & Claiming

- Non-CEP schools
  - Paper or digital rosters required to claim by meal category
  - Wireless POS more efficient and audit proof
  - Inexpensive hardware such as tablets & keypads
Meal Counting & Claiming Systems
Round Table Discussion & Feedback

https://www.schoolnutritionfoundation.org/meal-counting-claiming-systems/
Menu Planning

- Breakfast menu cycle
- Short menu cycle (2 weeks)
- Menu fatigue
- Hot entrées popular
- Many heat and serve products available
- Scratch or speed scratch options add variety
- Regional and seasonal items
- Labor-intensity reduced by staging preparation
Menu Planning
Round Table Discussion & Feedback

https://www.schoolnutritionfoundation.org/menu-planning/
Breakfast in the Classroom
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Your Input is Critical!

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