

Breakfast After the Bell Program

Per PA 99-0850, starting SY2017-18, every public school in which at least 70 percent of the students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunches in October of the preceding year must operate a **Breakfast after the Bell Program**. Breakfast after the bell means breakfast is provided to children after the instructional day has officially begun and does not prohibit schools from also providing breakfast before instructional day begins. Schools may choose whatever delivery model that best suits the students. Typical options include:

- Breakfast in the Classroom: Food is delivered (by staff, students or volunteers) to each classroom after school begins and students are permitted to eat breakfast in the classroom.
- Grab and Go: Students pick up bagged or boxed breakfast from carts or specified areas and are permitted to eat in either designated areas or the classroom.
- Breakfast After First: An extended passing or breakfast period is offered in the cafeteria, following the first or second period of the day.
- Other options include serving breakfast during an early recess or outdoor lesson. As long as breakfast is offered to all students after the instructional day has begun, schools and districts have great flexibility in serving breakfast after-the-bell.

Assistance with determining whether or not your district meets the 70 percent threshold is available at http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/pdf/schools_mandated_operate_sbp.pdf.

State reimbursement to offset a portion of the cost of the meal is available if a site serves a reimbursable meal to a student eligible for a free meal and the site is enrolled in the Illinois Free Breakfast and Lunch Programs. Both state and federal reimbursement is available if a site enrolls in the School Breakfast Program (SBP).

Schools participating in the School Breakfast Program must inform families of the availability of breakfasts just prior to the beginning of the school year and throughout the school year via routine methods of communicating with families, such as website posting, weekly messages, public address system, etc.

Districts may be relieved from this Breakfast After the Bell requirement if they demonstrate either:

- 1) they are delivering a school breakfast effectively, as defined by 70 percent or more of the free and reduced-price students participating in the School Breakfast Program, or
- 2) due to circumstances specific to that school district, the expense reimbursement would not fully cover the costs of implementing and operating a breakfast after the bell program. District must submit cost analysis to district's board of education, district board holds public hearing, and district board passes a resolution that district cannot afford to operate a breakfast after the bell program. District must post date, time, place, and subject matter of meeting on its website; notify ISBE by emailing cnp@isbe.net at least 14 days prior to the hearing; and submit final resolution approving the breakfast after the bell exemption to ISBE by emailing cnp@isbe.net upon passage.