

BREAKFAST AFTER THE BELL



Case Study

2015-16 CAPISTRANO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT (CUSD): Kristin Hilleman, SNS, *Director of Food & Nutrition Services*



DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHICS

56 K-12 Traditional Public Schools¹

35 elementary schools

12 middle schools

7 high schools

2 continuation schools

11,363 Students Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price School Meals²

53,930 Students Enrolled³

BREAKFAST MODELS



Before Breakfast After the Bell (BAB) service models: CUSD schools served traditional breakfast in the cafeteria before the first bell.

Since 2009: CUSD offers Second Chance breakfast at 13 schools. Nine secondary schools serve from mobile carts during a 10-minute mid-morning Nutrition Break. Four elementary schools serve from carts during morning recess.

IMPLEMENTATION

Strategy

CUSD implemented BAB at 13 schools concurrently. The support of principals at those schools was key to implementing the program.

Hurdles

The Food and Nutrition Services Department faced staffing challenges during the first year implementing BAB due to the unexpected increase in labor needed to operate the Second Chance service.

Solutions

- + Principals' strong support for the program helped ensure smooth rollout at each participating campus.
- + The Food and Nutrition Services Department adjusted staffing schedules at BAB schools to accommodate the need for increased labor. Hiring additional Food and Nutrition Services staff and instituting split shifts effectively addressed the staffing challenges presented by the new BAB service.

“Students really like the Grab n' Go option. They can take a healthy cereal bar during recess and then still go play with their friends.” –Kristin Hilleman

FOODQUALITY

Given the Grab n' Go model CUSD uses for BAB, schools primarily serve portable foods (e.g. cereal bars) so that students can grab breakfast and then go enjoy recess or Nutrition Break.

CUSD uses the USDA Food Program to procure most of its produce, as well as cheese, chicken, and other proteins.

BEHAVIORALANDACADEMICIMPACTS

After BAB implementation

- ➔ Food and Nutrition Services staff report that more students are eating breakfast at BAB schools, which has reduced the stigma sometimes associated with school breakfast participation.



“We definitely see more breakfast participation after the bell once kids are on campus. A lot of times it’s hard for the kids to get to school. Sometimes they are running in as the bell rings.” –Kristin Hilleman

PROGRAM FINANCES

- Additional program revenue resulting from the increase in breakfast participation is reinvested in the school meal programs.
- The district is planning to expand BAB service to schools where many students qualify to receive free or reduced-price meals. The additional school sites include six elementary schools and two high schools.

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

After BAB implementation

- ➔ Breakfast participation among students eligible for free or reduced-price meals is 14 percentage points higher at the 13 CUSD schools offering BAB than at the schools offering traditional breakfast.⁴

PERCEPTIONS OF IMPACT

- Some parents initially expressed concerns about their kids eating breakfast at school rather than home, but there are few complaints from parents now that the program has been operating successfully for several years.
- Students report that they enjoy having the chance to eat breakfast later in the day during recess with their friends.
- Some principals at schools that don't offer BAB have asked for the program to be expanded to their campuses.

NOTES & REFERENCES

CFPA thanks Kristin Hilleman for her time and insights into the school breakfast programs at Capistrano Unified School District.

¹Traditional, non-charter K-12 schools that were active in the 2014-15 school year. This excludes sites such as continuation schools, virtual schools, and independent study schools. Source: California Department of Education (CDE) School Directory at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/sd/>

²⁻³Students certified as eligible for free and reduced-price meals in traditional, non-charter K-12 schools during the 2014-15 school year. Source: CFPA analysis of the FRPM student poverty data file available from CDE at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sd/sd/files.asp>

⁴CFPA analysis of CDE data describing average daily breakfast participation for October-April of the 2014-15 school year. Data file available from CDE at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sh/sn/>