

SCHOOL BREAKFAST: THE 22¢ SOLUTION

Breakfast is often cited as the most important meal of the day. Unfortunately, it's also a meal many California students are likely to go without. Impractical state and local policies, a lack of public investment and overwhelmed, busy parents make the morning meal a missed opportunity for many California students.

The School Breakfast Program reaches only one-in-three California students who are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. This means **2.2 million of our most vulnerable students miss out on the health and academic benefits of school breakfast each day**, making it even harder for these children to reach their full potential. Dozens of studies have shown that breakfast is linked to:

IMPROVED	DECREASED
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cognitive Function• Academic Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School Attendance• Nutrient Intake• Psychosocial Well-Being
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Risk for Obesity• Aggressive Behavior• Delinquency• Suspensions• Tardiness

THE PROBLEM Most schools serve breakfast only in the cafeteria and only before class begins, sometimes as early as 7 a.m. Bus schedules, hectic morning routines and other factors can make early arrival at school, as well as in-home breakfast, an enormous challenge for parents and their children. Serving a nutritious breakfast at home may not even be an option for over 2 million food insecure California families.

THE SOLUTION The School Breakfast Program is chronically underutilized, not because funding isn't available but because breakfast isn't served when or where kids can eat. By using after-the-bell service models, we can reach kids in need and ensure that high-poverty schools with low breakfast participation leverage existing federal resources to integrate breakfast into the school day.

FISCAL BENEFITS Increased participation in the School Breakfast Program would trigger significant boosts in federal funding, while only costing the state about 22 cents a meal. More than half of this cost would be recaptured through an increase in taxable economic activity generated by the expenditure of those federal dollars.

A 10% increase in breakfast participation would bring California **\$40.2 million in additional federal funds** while costing the state only \$4.8 million – \$2.7 million of which would return to the General Fund via **increased tax revenue** from new economic activity, including **1,000 new jobs**.

SCHOOL BREAKFAST IS A WIN-WIN-WIN FOR STUDENTS, SCHOOLS AND THE STATE ECONOMY.

