

Grab and Go Breakfast



Busy schedules – both at home and at school – can keep students from eating the breakfast they need to tackle the day. Grab and Go Breakfast is tailored to provide quick and nutritious meals for those students.

Why is Grab and Go Breakfast important?

Of all the breakfast expansion models, Grab and Go is the most flexible in terms of service time and location, which makes it an excellent choice for schools that want to serve a lot of students in a short amount of time.

Serving breakfast in high-traffic areas – such as student drop-off or main hallways – increases accessibility, reduces serving time and is likely to increase breakfast participation. Disposable packaging and strategically placed trash cans help minimize cleanup for staff.



Grab and Go:

Grab and Go provides remarkable flexibility for schools. Students pick up conveniently packaged breakfasts from mobile service carts or vending machines in high traffic areas—such as hallways and entryways—when they arrive at school or between classes. Students can eat in their classroom or in a common area.



Second Chance Breakfast:

Breakfast service is shifted to later in the morning with this model, often between first and second period. Schools can serve breakfast in the same manner they would with Grab and Go, or can re-open the cafeteria and allow students time to eat there.

Increased Child Nutrition Revenue

On average, schools that implement Grab and Go Breakfast see 65% breakfast participation.¹

Better Performance on Standardized Tests

Students who eat school breakfast achieve higher scores on standardized tests.²

Better Attendance

Serving breakfast after the bell can reduce absenteeism by an average of 6 percentage points.²

Improved Graduation Rates

Students who eat school breakfast attend more school days. Students who attend class more regularly are 20% more likely to graduate high school.²



Providing students with a healthy breakfast is as essential to the academic process as providing them with textbooks and pencils. Unfortunately, many of our high school students were not eating school breakfast. Through the implementation of Grab and Go Breakfast, we have increased our breakfast participation by 65% at Albany High School. **We now serve school breakfast to 85%-90% of our students at AHS every day.** With Second Chance Breakfast, our high school students are excited about school breakfast and look forward to their mid-morning break.

– Sommer Purvis, Administrator of Special Programs for Child Nutrition
Livingston Parish Public Schools, Livingston, Louisiana



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Frequently Asked Questions

Will school nutrition staff spend more time preparing breakfasts for the Grab and Go model versus traditional cafeteria service?

Most Grab and Go menu items can be prepared the day before service, decreasing morning prep time. However, depending on whether you follow “offer versus serve,” you may not be able to offer prepacked foods. Whether you choose to serve a complete prepackaged breakfast or the “offer versus serve” model, you should consider the need for staff to operate the serving kiosks or carts.

How should I address the concerns of parents who think the “on-the-go” food might not be as healthy?

Grab and Go meals are easy and convenient, but that does not mean they have to be less nutritious. Choosing menu items that fit the service model, student preferences and all nutritional guidelines is important to the program’s success. Consider providing a sample Grab and Go Breakfast menu to parents as part of a communications campaign – show all the nutritional information, federal nutritional guidelines and how the new service model will function. You may also want to provide statistics on how eating breakfast benefits students.

What about trash and sanitation? Will Grab and Go service create additional work for custodians?

Strategic planning by school nutrition and custodial staff can help ensure that Grab and Go Breakfast does not create additional work for anyone. Involve the district/campus custodial staff at the beginning and work with them to create a plan for trash and sanitation. Strategies vary by school, but examples include:

- Students can take care of the bulk of cleanup. Set clear expectations of their role and place trash cans in convenient areas.
- Serve menu items with a minimal risk of spillage that are easy to dispose of.
- If students are allowed to take Grab and Go items to their classroom, trash can be disposed in a heavy-duty bag and placed in the hallway for collection by custodial staff.
- Depending on the campus, consider designating specific locations for students to consume their items, limiting the areas needing cleanup.

More questions?

Reach out to your [Local Dairy Council Representative](#)

References:

1. Share Our Strength No Kid Hungry: Center for Best Practices. [Tips for Implementing an Effective Grab and Go Breakfast Program.](#)
2. Share Our Strength No Kid Hungry: Center for Best Practices. [School Meals: About School Breakfast.](#) Accessed November 2023.