

# **Governor's School Breakfast Challenge!**



**Promising Practices**

# Bethlehem-Center GSBC Promising Practice



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## Description

Bethlehem-Center School District met the Governor's School Breakfast Challenge in two schools – Bethlehem-Center Elementary School and Bethlehem-Center Junior/Senior High School. Katelyn Vogel, Director of Student Support, and Randy Stimmell, School Food Service Director, credit wide-spread support for school breakfast from teachers, administrators, school food service staff, and everyone in the school community as a key to the success of the breakfast program in their schools. to use the DOD Fresh Program to acquire Pennsylvania-grown apples, potatoes, and mushrooms.

Second Chance breakfast was implemented at the Junior/Senior High School. Breakfast was made available from breakfast carts in the hallways between first and second period. Students who may not have been hungry when they first arrived at school now had an opportunity to get breakfast a little later in the morning. Teachers, understanding the importance of breakfast, reminded students that this option was available and encouraged them to take it.

At both the elementary and junior/senior high levels, promotion and marketing were also keys to success. "Golden Ticket" days were introduced, during which tickets were placed in breakfast bags or under trays. The student who got the golden ticket was awarded with a prize and the opportunity to be first in line for lunch. Students voted on which teachers they wanted to see as guest breakfast servers which became competitive among the teachers and created excitement for the students as they anticipated the top vote-getters. "Surprise" breakfast servers included the high school principal, the school police officer, the Superintendent, and the school mascot.

The breakfast program was also promoted through signage that was posted where the students enter the buildings and even in the school busses, with the bus drivers reminding students to eat breakfast. Photographs were also posted on social media platforms.

Katelyn feels that the team approach, with everyone on board and in agreement about the importance of school breakfast, made the programs successful. Although reaching high school students can sometimes be challenging, Randy feels that Second Chance breakfast really propelled participation in that school in a positive direction. Beyond the timeframe of the Challenge, Bethlehem-Center continues to take steps to make further improvements. The district will now collect input from elementary school parents and high school students through a newly formed nutrition committee. Bethlehem-Center is also excited to soon be introducing smoothies at the junior/senior high school soon, which they expect to be popular with the students.



# Colonial GSBC Promising Practice



## Contact Information

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## Description

Colonial School District met the Governor's School Breakfast Challenge in Colonial Elementary School. This school, which houses 4th and 5th grade students, had two lines in the cafeteria for serving breakfast and lunch. At breakfast, time was limited as students only had about 7-8 minutes to eat after busses had dropped them off. To alleviate this problem, the principal decided to allow students to pick up breakfasts in the cafeteria and take it to their classrooms. By the end of the three-month Challenge, breakfast participation had increased by almost 10 percent!

Lori McCoy, the district's Director of Food and Nutrition Services, points to the relationships she has built with school administrators as key to the success of the breakfast program in her school district. She meets with each principal at the beginning of the school year to educate them about the importance of the school breakfast program. She has also educated her cafeteria staff who have now bought into the program and recognize the important role it plays for the students that they serve. The staff have created a fun environment around school breakfast by playing music, wearing funny hats, and offering giveaways of items they were able to get from vendors.

One of the challenges that Lori noted was reducing the number of high-sugar items on the breakfast menu. They prided themselves on providing a variety of options and some of these options were higher sugar items. The cafeteria staff was also initially doubtful that the students would accept lower sugar items such as mini quiches and overnight oats. At first, students asked for the higher sugar items they were accustomed to seeing on the serving line. However, as time went on and the lower sugar items were continually offered, students became more accepting.

Lori feels that participation in the Challenge has been an eye-opener for many in the district by bringing to the forefront the importance of school breakfast in meeting children's needs. The district's Superintendent is among those who have shown increased buy-in for school breakfast. Although he has many issues to deal with in his role as Superintendent he understands the importance of school breakfast. After seeing that the success in Colonial Elementary School led them to being recognized at the state level, he directed each building principal to work with Lori to implement alternative breakfast service models in their schools to reach more students. Lori feels it is important to continually educate school administrators about the academic, behavioral, and health benefits of school breakfast. She also feels that it is important to consistently promote to families that school breakfast is free in Pennsylvania.



# Curwensville ASD GSBC Promising Practice



## Contact Information

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## Description

Curwensville Area School District completed the Governor's School Breakfast Challenge in their elementary school and high school. In both schools, a Grab 'n Go breakfast option is provided. Students can eat their breakfast in the cafeterias or take it to their classrooms. While some schools have reported resistance to breakfast service methods that allow food in classrooms because of trash issues, this has not been a problem for this school district. They placed large garbage cans in the hallways where students deposit their trash. This keeps the classrooms clean, addressing one of the biggest barriers related to this service method.

Vickie Bunnell, Food Service Director, felt supported by her administration to participate in the Challenge. A change at the Superintendent position in the midst of the Challenge could have been seen as a potential setback but instead Vickie feels it was a benefit. The new Superintendent came in with "a fresh set of eyes" and was able to share what had been successful in her previous district.

Samples of new breakfast items are offered during breakfast before putting them on the menu. Sometimes, samples of breakfast items are offered during lunch and students are told that the item will be on the breakfast menu the next day to encourage them to participate. Vickie feels that sometimes new menu items have to be offered multiple times or in different flavors to encourage students to try them. The introduction of smoothies at the high school has been very successful, as they sell out every time they are offered. Vickie reports that students will choose smoothies over some of the higher sugar items. Other popular items have included parfaits and hot breakfast items. These more popular items tend to be somewhat labor intensive so Vickie is looking for strategies to address that, including trying to prepare some items in advance. She is always looking for tips and tricks from colleagues, as well as recipe ideas and feels that the recipe book that resulted from the Challenge has been very helpful.



# Easton ASD GSBC Promising Practice



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## Description

Easton Area School District completed the Governor's School Breakfast Challenge in their middle school. In this large school building, breakfast is available to students from food carts in two areas where students enter the building. School food service staff members engage with the students and encourage them to participate.

When participating in the Challenge, this school implemented a Breakfast After the Bell option to reach students who were either late to arrive at school or did not choose to pick up breakfast when they arrived. Four stations were set up throughout the school, including one near the main office, to offer this option which is available until 9:30am. Among the options available are breakfast burritos, biscuits, yogurt, fruit, whole grain cereal, and milk. Colorful signage and balloons were used to attract students to these areas. On the first day that the Breakfast After the Bell option was offered, only 12 students participated. However, after a few weeks of offering this option, participation increased to 170-175 students each morning.

Matthew Martinez, the district's Food Service Director, says that the principal has been "100% supportive" and teachers are also very supportive of new programs like Breakfast After the Bell that benefit students, which has contributed to its success. He also feels that promotions have been effective in increasing awareness about the program and generating excitement. In particular, he has found success with promotions that incorporate school spirit. During one month of the Challenge, they implemented a promotion during which "golden tickets" were randomly placed in selected breakfast bags. The two winners were excited to be able to select among Easton Area School District apparel as their prizes.



# Erie GSBC Promising Practice



## Contact Information

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## Description

Erie City School District met the Governor's School Breakfast Challenge in two schools – Joanna Connell Elementary School and Collegiate Academy. Breakfast in the Classroom had been in place in most schools in this district for many years and has proven to be very successful in increasing participation in school breakfast.

At Joanna Connell Elementary School, bagged breakfasts are made available at the entrance to the school and students can take the breakfast to their classrooms. During the Challenge, local foods and hot breakfast items were added to the menu.

A variety of breakfast service methods had been implemented at Collegiate Academy over the years to identify one that works best. Prior to the Challenge, students picked up breakfast in the cafeteria and took it to their classrooms. During the Challenge, breakfast was also made available for pick-up in the hallways. Students could eat in the cafeteria or take their breakfast to their classrooms. Jennifer Patterson, General Manager of Erie's Public Schools Culinary Center, shared that students were stopping at coffee shops for breakfast prior to school instead of taking advantage of the free breakfast offered at school. To match the appeal of the coffee shops and draw in students, they added a cold brew coffee and mocha station in the cafeteria. Offering the option to purchase coffee drinks proved to be successful in enticing more students to participate in school breakfast.

Erie had always offered a variety of choices for breakfast, but Jennifer stated that participation in the Challenge required them to think differently about ways to meet the Challenge criteria. One menu item that was particularly popular in this district was the banana split yogurt sundae. This sundae includes vanilla yogurt, blueberries, strawberries, bananas, granola, and light whipped topping. The addition of the yogurt sundae and some of the other changes renewed students' excitement to participate in school breakfast.

Jennifer feels that Breakfast in the Classroom has been completely successful in the Erie City School District. Given her years of experience with this service method, the advice that she would offer to others who might be thinking about implementing it is to consider the best delivery method. Initially, breakfast was delivered to all classrooms, but this method resulted in higher labor needs and food waste. They found the better option for this district was to have clusters of stations in high traffic areas from which students can pick up breakfast and take it to the classrooms themselves



# Gettysburg Montessori Charter School GSBC Promising Practice



## Contact Information

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## Description

Gettysburg Montessori Charter School is a small school with an enrollment of only 280 students. Because their kitchen is just a small church kitchen, they do not have the ability to do on-site food preparation so food is provided by a vendor. Stacy Fazenbaker assumed the role of Food Service Coordinator in November of 2023. Despite being new to the position and the school's unique circumstances, when presented with the Governor's School Breakfast Challenge, she decided to attempt the Challenge because she thought the changes were achievable and worthwhile. She was both shocked and excited to learn that they had finished among the top 10 schools who completed the Challenge.

Prior to the Challenge, approximately 120 students were participating in breakfast each day. During the Challenge, those numbers increased to 150 to 160 students per day. Stacy credits this success to promotional events that were implemented to create excitement around the breakfast program, the implementation of an alternative serving method, a specific menu change, outreach to parents about the availability of free breakfast, and support from teachers and the building principal.

Each of the three months of the Challenge featured a different event to increase participation. In January, firefighters from a local fire department were invited to serve breakfast to the students and mingle with them. In February, a similar event was held with a local martial arts studio. March featured a St. Patrick's Day event during which festive music was played and administrators dressed in green, one of them as a leprechaun.

The school advertised the events to parents and did outreach to ensure that parents knew that breakfast was free every day. This outreach was done using a flier that was provided as part of the toolkit for the Challenge and via email message to parents. When Stacy decided she wanted the school to participate in the Challenge, she discussed this with the principal, who was completely supportive. She then reached out to teachers, explaining the Challenge and the benefits of school breakfast. They were also supportive and encouraged students to participate.

A menu change and alternative serving method also contributed to their success. During the final month of the Challenge, they began to serve hot breakfast three times per week, which increased participation. During the Challenge, they also began to offer a Grab 'n Go option so students could take breakfast to their classrooms. While most students enjoyed eating in the cafeteria and socializing with friends, during the Challenge, they also began to offer a Grab 'n Go option so students could take breakfast to their classrooms. This Grab 'n Go option was attractive for students who arrived late or who had homework to complete before the start of the school day, since they could complete the work in their classroom while not missing out on breakfast.



# Great Valley GSBC Promising Practice



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## Description

Great Valley School District met the Governor's School Breakfast Challenge in their high school, where school breakfast participation had been the lowest in the school district. Skylar Flint, the district's Nutrition Coordinator, stated that they wanted to make school breakfast as appealing to high school students as possible and noticed that they enjoyed picking up breakfast at coffee shops and local convenience stores. Therefore, they tried to recreate some of the offerings that students were selecting at these other locations and offer them at school. They added several scratch-cooked items including pancakes, egg and sausage bakes, egg bites, avocado toast, and smoothies. They also added coffee as an ala carte option.

Prior to these menu changes, they had been offering a lot of pre-packaged items that were introduced out of necessity during the COVID-19 pandemic. While this would have been easy to continue, they realized this was no longer necessary. The introduction of the scratch-cooked items created excitement among both the students and the school food service staff who received validation by seeing how much the students enjoyed the new items. Skylar reported that some students mentioned that they had not been eating breakfast before and were very thankful for the new items.

In addition to the introduction of the new scratch-cooked items, Skylar feels that raising awareness of the breakfast program contributed to the success. She was surprised to learn that some students did not know breakfast was available, what was offered, or that it was free. Features on the district's morning news, which included interviews with school food service staff members and footage of the breakfast offerings, helped raise awareness. They also posted signs and social media messages about breakfast. Among the high school students, however, the most effective strategy was word-of-mouth. As students talked with their peers about the new items or were seen with smoothies, word spread about what was being offered at breakfast and participation in the program grew.





# Lakeview GSBC Promising Practice



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## Description

Lakeview School District involved both schools in their district in the Governor's School Breakfast Challenge which includes Oakview Elementary School and Lakeview Middle/High School. At the elementary school, teachers bring the students to breakfast where they either go through the cafeteria line where a hot breakfast is available every day or through a cereal line in the hallway. The majority of students eat in the cafeteria, although some take their breakfasts to their classrooms. The middle school/high school pick up breakfast in the cafeteria and can either eat it there or use "Grab 'n Go" and take it to their classrooms. As part of the Challenge, Lakeview Middle/High School introduced two breakfast buffet options. The yogurt bar consisted of vanilla and strawberry yogurts with toppings such as granola, honey, raisins, and fresh fruit along with mini-muffins, fruit juice, and milk. The hot breakfast buffet consisted of sausage patties, scrambled eggs, French toast sticks, assorted fruits, juice, and milk.

When Darlene Wendrock, the district's Food Service Director, learned about the Challenge she was immediately interested. She reached out to school administrators about the district's participation in the Challenge and told them that they were "in it to win it!" She feels that implementing activities that generated fun and excitement and providing information to teachers and administrators about the importance of school breakfast helped them achieve success. While many schools do "Green Eggs and Ham" promotions in celebration of Dr. Seuss' birthday, Oakview Elementary took this promotion to another level by having seniors and upper classmen dress up for the event and by inviting parents to join their children for breakfast. Over this two-day promotion, 800 parents and students participated. The elementary school also hosted a "Breakfast with a Police Officer" event where police officers served breakfast. Tori Weller, a Metz dietitian, held an assembly for 3rd-5th grade students, educating them on the importance of a healthy breakfast and giving them an interactive coloring sheet where they could choose their own healthy breakfast and then color it with crayons. At the Middle/High School they celebrated National School Breakfast Week in collaboration with the National Dairy Association, giving school breakfast participants a chance to win Amazon gift cards. They also worked with the school's drama department to create a fun, engaging, and upbeat video about the importance of breakfast.

During the timeframe of the Challenge, the school district held a wellness fair for teachers and school administrators. Understanding the need for support for school breakfast from these groups, the food service department used the fair as an opportunity to educate them about the importance of school breakfast and provided free breakfast and a healthy cooking demonstration. Darlene stated that she explains that food is a basic human need, and that school meals may be the only hot meal or the meal of highest nutritional quality that some students receive in a day. She stresses the important role that these meals play in helping students achieve success.



# Lebanon SD GSBC Promising Practice



## Contact Information

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## Description

Lebanon School District completed the Governor's School Breakfast Challenge in their high school. An alternative breakfast service method was already in place in this school, so efforts focused mainly on menu changes, marketing strategies, and incentives for students to participate.

At the high school, breakfast is served in the cafeteria and through a Grab 'n Go station at the entrance to the building where most students enter. Nereyda Hernandez, Assistant Director of Food and Nutrition, described a marketing approach that was implemented in an attempt to increase participation. One of the steps involved examining participation data, identifying days when participation was low, and trying to determine the cause of the low participation. They also sought input from students about menu options through a survey and via a student advisory committee. They recognized that they had a large number of students of Hispanic heritage and might not have been providing food that appealed to them. They learned that these students preferred eggs, sausage, and breakfast sandwiches over items such as pancakes. Menu changes were implemented based on the feedback they received.

In addition to using signage and posting the menu on-line, they also posted the menu in an app that they felt high school students were more likely to access. In the cafeteria, they attractively displayed a sample breakfast on a plate to appeal to the students. They also implemented a raffle that gave students a chance to win a gift card if they participated in breakfast on four out of five days of the week.



# North Penn GSBC Promising Practice



## Contact Information

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## Description

North Penn School District completed the Governor's School Breakfast Challenge in eight elementary schools, although all elementary schools in the district were involved in an internal challenge to increase school breakfast participation. The district uses a variety of alternative breakfast service models including Grab 'n Go and Breakfast in the Classroom to address challenges related to long lines and limited space and time to eat breakfast. Students are offered bags or paper boats to use to transport the breakfast foods to their classrooms. Teachers also encourage students to take breakfast and even assist at breakfast carts to help students get their food in a timely manner.

When the Challenge was announced, Melissa Froehlich Green, the district's Coordinator of School Nutrition Services, initiated a challenge among the district's 13 elementary schools. Because North Penn is a large district and it would have been difficult for one person to oversee this challenge, Melissa developed ideas for possible breakfast promotions and shared them with each school. The cafeteria managers in each school collaborated with their principals to determine what would work best for their school. Some schools had raffles for prizes that were awarded to breakfast participants. One principal taste tested breakfast each morning and rated it during the school's morning announcements. Changes in school breakfast participation were measured by comparing rates prior to the Challenge with rates during the last month of the Challenge. The top three schools with the largest increases in participation were recognized with certificates signed by the Superintendent and the winning school received free subs for lunch one day.

Melissa had already had plans to make menu changes that were promoted through the Challenge, such as decreasing high-sugar options, and felt that the Challenge criteria provided extra justification for doing so and helped them get started. While students were initially reluctant to accept the changes, they eventually became accustomed to them.

Melissa feels that involving the whole district in an in-house competition helped generate fun and excitement and led to the success in meeting the Challenge. Now that she knows what to expect from the statewide Challenge, she can plan for the next one and continue to get her school community involved and excited about participating.



# Penn Hills Charter School for Entrepreneurship GSBC Promising Practice



## Contact Information

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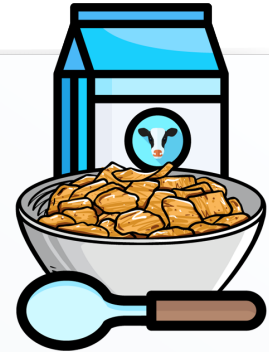


## Description

Penn Hills Charter School for Entrepreneurship has an enrollment of approximately 525 students and had been serving breakfast to about 200 students per day. The introduction of some menu changes and alternative methods for serving breakfast increased participation to a level that sometimes now exceeds lunch participation.

Long lines in the cafeteria showed that there was interest in participating in school breakfast, but the crowded conditions could deter participation. Darlene Shook, the school's Food Service Director, said that they addressed this issue by purchasing carts that are stationed at the entrances to the school and making Grab 'n Go breakfast available. This now gives them three areas from which breakfast is served. They also implemented Second Chance breakfast so students who arrive late do not miss out on breakfast. Front office staff members make sure to direct tardy students to a location where breakfast is available to them.

They surveyed both students and parents regarding food preferences, analyzed the survey results, and incorporated the findings into a review and revision of their menu cycle. One of the changes involved increasing the frequency of offering hot breakfast items which are very popular with the students. Options include pancakes, waffles, breakfast wraps, breakfast sandwiches, and breakfast pizza. The school's chef is committed to ensuring that the menu items are high-quality and appealing to the students. Previously, school staff noticed that some parents were taking their children to local fast-food establishments for breakfast. Now, with the improved menu items and the convenience of the Grab 'n Go option, students are choosing school breakfast over the other local options and are curious about and excited to learn what will be on the menu each day.



# Pleasant Valley SD GSBC Promising Practice



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## Description

Pleasant Valley School District completed the Governor's School Breakfast Challenge in their Elementary, Intermediate, and Middle school. School Food Service Director, Eric Ventriglia, credits their success to implementation of alternative breakfast service strategies that made breakfast participation more convenient for the students, improvements in breakfast menu offerings, and positioning of breakfast as part of the schools' educational mission.

At the middle school, two mobile kiosks were purchased and positioned in the hallways near the entrance. While breakfast was still offered in the cafeteria, many students were not taking the time to go there to eat, so the mobile kiosks provided a more convenient location. The district is exploring purchasing additional carts to further increase the convenience. In the intermediate school, five mobile locations were set up to move all breakfast service to the hallways. In the elementary school, students pick up breakfast from the cafeteria and take it back to their classrooms.

While allowing breakfast foods to be taken into classrooms, Pleasant Valley really leaned into the fact that, in Pennsylvania, Breakfast in the Classroom can count as instructional time, which they did not previously know. This concept was promoted throughout the schools and breakfast was seen as a "family mealtime" and an opportunity to educate students about good meal practices, cleanliness, and hygiene.

In addition to changes in the way the meals were served, the school food service department focused on improving food quality. The intermediate school served as a test site for new items including Dutch Apple pancakes, blueberry muffin parfaits, and a hot breakfast sandwich using pancakes. At all schools, the variety of offerings increased and hot food items were added.

Administrative buy-in was also important. Eric and the district's business manager talked to the principals about the new breakfast delivery methods and convinced them it would be a good idea. Principals actively reached out to parents, letting them know that students can eat in the classrooms and breakfast is free. Additional outreach to students is planned because, as Eric stated, "Kids don't participate in breakfast because they think they don't need it. We need to explain to them that breakfast is the most important meal of the day."



# Tyrone Area SD GSBC Promising Practice



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## Description

Tyrone Area School District completed the Governor's School Breakfast Challenge in their middle school. In this school, breakfast is served in the cafeteria as well as from a mobile cart strategically placed near the entrance where students who arrive on busses enter the building. Grab 'n Go items can be picked up from the cart and taken to homerooms. A variety of items are offered, some of which are non-perishable, allowing students to save them to eat a bit later if they are not hungry when they first arrive at school. Hot options, including breakfast sandwiches and breakfast pizzas, are also offered on a daily basis.

Taylor Danko, the district's Director of Food and Nutrition, credits promotion and administrative support as some of the keys to success. The availability of breakfast is advertised to children and parents, with Taylor finding Facebook to be a great platform for reaching parents. She has found that some are still not aware that school breakfast is free, so ongoing reminders are needed. Taylor believes that support from the building principal sets the tone and is a key to success, especially when the breakfast service method involves taking food into classrooms, which can sometimes be met with resistance from teachers and custodial staff. She feels that if there is openness to trying something new and giving it time "to work out the kinks," strategies can be implemented that work for everyone. As Taylor commented, "If everyone buys in, it's a win for everyone. When kids receive a healthy breakfast, they are ready to learn and more likely to pay attention in class."



# Upper Dublin GSBC Promising Practice



## Contact Information

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## Description

Upper Dublin School District involved all schools in the district in the Challenge, which included four elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. In all schools, breakfast was made available in the cafeterias for students to pick up as “Grab ‘n Go” and take to their classrooms. At the high school, a second serving location, the “Cardinal Café” was opened as another option for students to pick up breakfast.

As part of the Challenge, high sugar items were offered less frequently and more savory options were introduced. Savory options included stuffed hashbrowns, breakfast sandwiches, and egg bites. Kristan Delle, Director of Food Service for the district, indicated that finding local items to offer at breakfast was a bit of a challenge but they were able to offer local apples and used local spinach in green smoothies.

Kristan points to several steps that she took to facilitate implementation of the Challenge in her schools. First, she created and shared with all principals, a checklist of actions that needed to be taken to complete the Challenge. She also realized that some students – particularly students who did not participate in school meals - might not understand how school meals work, and this lack of understanding was a barrier to participating in school breakfast. Kristan created a video describing what is offered at breakfast, what constitutes a complete meal, and the process for picking up breakfast in the cafeteria and taking it to the classrooms. The video also explains that breakfast is free for all. Finally, she made breakfast fun for the students by entering them in raffles for items like coloring books, clay art, stuffed animals, and card games.

Because the Challenge was a statewide initiative introduced by the Governor's office, Kristan feels that it brought attention to the importance of school breakfast in a way she had not seen before. Although she had been a strong proponent of the importance of school breakfast in her district for many years, the state-level support heightened others' awareness of the positive impact of school breakfast. As Kristan stated, “Participation in the Challenge was a great opportunity for all administrators to support the free breakfast program and a fun way to see the positive impact the program has on kids.”



# Upper Moreland Township GSBC Promising Practice



## Contact Information

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## Description

Upper Moreland Township School District met the Governor's School Breakfast Challenge in Upper Moreland Elementary School. Randi Watts, Director of Food Services, explained that when regulatory changes to the nutrition standards or meal patterns are coming, she feels it is best to begin to implement those changes at the elementary level early on in stages prior to the USDA start date. That way, when the students advance to higher grade levels, they are already accustomed to the changes.

At Upper Moreland Elementary School, students pick up their breakfast in the cafeteria and take it to their classrooms. They had been using disposable food boats for students to transport their breakfast items. Randi was challenged with an increase in participation and having to serve approximately 520 students in 25 minutes. A solution to speed up the serving line was to place the main entrees in bags. Students could then pick up a bagged entrée and use the bag for their other selections of fruits, juice, and milk.

Randi had already begun to try to reduce the number of high-sugar items and increase hot items before the Challenge began. No doughnuts or toaster pastries are served at this school. When she removed a popular high-sugar breakfast cereal from the menu, her staff was expecting resistance from the students. However, they accepted the change. Randi's advice to others is to offer choices and make small but gradual changes.





# Wallenpaupack GSBC Promising Practice



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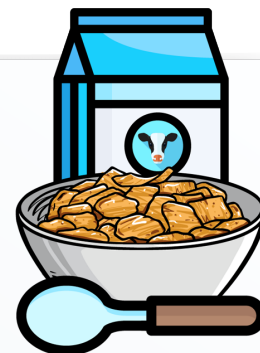
## Description

Wallenpaupack met the Governor's School Breakfast Challenge in two schools – Wallenpaupack Area High School and Wallenpaupack South Elementary School. Heather Fedoryk, the district's Director of Food Services, reported that they revised their menus to add more protein options, such as eggs and string cheese, and limit high-sugar items. Although it was a bit of a struggle to find local items during the winter months, they were able to use the DOD Fresh Program to acquire Pennsylvania-grown apples, potatoes, and mushrooms.

At South Elementary school breakfast is served in a convenient location from a breakfast cart. An impressive 75% of students in this school participated in school breakfast at the end of the Challenge. At the high school, breakfast is served in the cafeteria as well as from a kiosk at the entrance to the school. The high school saw an amazing 34% increase in average daily participation after the 3-month Challenge.

Heather points to several factors that have contributed to the success of the breakfast programs in her schools that she offers as advice to others. One of these factors is administrative support. She met with school administration prior to beginning the Challenge to build relationships with them and garner this support. Another factor is the work that her staff has done to build relationships with students and encourage them to participate. GeJa Richards, Kitchen Manager at the elementary school, believes that periodically adding new items keeps students fully engaged as they anticipate what will be offered next time. She reports that students have said that breakfast keeps getting better and better, which is music to her ears! Students particularly seem to enjoy the high-protein hot options, including the popular Buckhorn Breakfast Casserole, a dish made with eggs, cheese, ham, and potatoes, and is named after the districts' sports teams. Finally, Heather believes that a key to the success has been making school breakfast fun. She has done this through promotions during which students who participate in school breakfast are eligible for raffles where items such as streaming cameras, ear buds, and tickets to a local jump park were awarded. At the elementary school an upbeat, fun atmosphere has been created around school breakfast: the breakfast cart was decorated to make it look like a train; music is played during breakfast.

Heather has also made the breakfast program fun and a source of competition for the school administrators. She purchased a small chef figurine (nicknamed "Breakfast Bob") from a local thrift store and challenged her schools to increase participation in school breakfast. At the end of each month, "Breakfast Bob" was awarded to the principal of the school that had the highest percentage increase in participation. This created a friendly, but intense competition among the principals as they all wanted to be the school that was awarded "Breakfast Bob." As Heather stated, "It's amazing how competitive school administrators can be!" She drew upon this competitive spirit to engage school administrators, create buy-in for school breakfast, and increase school breakfast participation.



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