

# The District of Columbia's School Breakfast Scorecard

for School Year 2017–2018



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## **About D.C. Hunger Solutions**

D.C. Hunger Solutions, founded in 2002 as an initiative of the Food Research & Action Center, seeks to create a hunger-free community and improve the nutrition, health, economic security, and well-being of low-income residents in the District of Columbia. To learn more about D.C. Hunger Solutions, visit www.dchunger.org.

## Introduction

On an average day during the 2017–2018 school year, more than 30,000 low-income students in the nation's capital ate school breakfast. With 69.1 low-income students participating in school breakfast for every 100 who received school lunch, D.C. placed fourth in the nation for school breakfast participation, according to the Food Research & Action Center.<sup>1</sup>

Participation in the federal School Breakfast Program is vital to the health and well-being of students and the school community. School breakfast provides students with the nutrition they need to learn and thrive, and minimizes classroom distractions throughout the morning. Additionally, school breakfast programs are vital components of the federal safety net for low-income families, as they help households stretch limited budgets and provide assurances for parents that their children receive healthy meals at school each day.

In addition to reducing hunger and stretching family budgets, school breakfast has been linked with improved academic performance, healthier diets, lower rates of student overweight and obesity, fewer visits to the school nurse, and lower occurrences of tardiness, absenteeism, and disciplinary problems.<sup>2</sup>

Nationally, D.C. has ranked high in school breakfast participation for the past decade,

but the District has been losing ground in the last few years. In the 2010–2011 school year, D.C. ranked first in the nation, but has since fallen in the rankings as other states have prioritized expanding access to school breakfast by taking aggressive steps to increase participation.

When compared to similar jurisdictions, D.C. lags behind. For example, in school year 2017–2018, Dallas Independent School District served 81 low-income students school breakfast for every 100 who ate school lunch, and San Diego Unified School District served 80.8 students school breakfast for every 100 who received school lunch.<sup>3</sup> The District must increase its efforts to reach more low-income children with school breakfast.

The early school breakfast success that D.C. experienced can be attributed in large part to the passage of the D.C. Healthy Schools Act of 2010.4 The Act requires all D.C. public schools — both traditional and charter schools — to offer breakfast at no cost to all students, and requires high-poverty schools to adopt breakfast after the bell service models to ensure that children can easily access breakfast by making it part of the school day. The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) makes this financially possible for many local education agencies, especially D.C. Public Schools, by providing additional federal reimbursement

<sup>1</sup> Food Research & Action Center. (2019). School Breakfast Scorecard School Year 2017–2018. Available at: http://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/school-breakfast-scorecard-sy-2017-2018.pdf. Accessed on March 12, 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Food Research & Action Center. (2017). *Breakfast Blueprint Breakfast After the Bell Programs Support Learning*. Available at: http://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/breakfast-blueprint-report-july2017.pdf. Accessed on March 12, 2019.

<sup>3</sup> Food Research & Action Center. (2019). School Breakfast: Making it Work in Large School Districts, 2017–2018 School Year. Available at: http://frac.org/research/resource-library/school-breakfast-making-it-work-in-large-school-districts-2017-2018-school-year-february-2019.

<sup>4</sup> Council of the District of Columbia. (2010). Healthy Schools Act of 2010. Available at: http://www.dchunger.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/healthy\_schools\_act\_as\_amended.pdf. Accessed on March 12, 2017.

## **What are Local Education Agencies?**

According to the U.S. Department of Education, a local education agency,<sup>5</sup> or LEA, is a public board of education or a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a state as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools and secondary schools.

Currently, there are 238 schools that are part of 66 LEAs in the District. Of those schools, 115 of them are in the D.C. Public School District and the remaining 123 are public charter schools operated by 65 nonprofit organizations, each of which is an LEA.<sup>6,7</sup> Some charter schools operate independently as an LEA of one school, while other LEAs operate multiple campuses of up to 16 schools.

to high-poverty schools and decreasing administrative costs. These changes yielded significant increases in school breakfast participation, with D.C. moving from 20th in the 2009–2010 school year to first in the nation for school breakfast participation in the 2010–2011 school year.

The decline in participation over the past several years can be attributed to many schools reverting to a traditional model of offering breakfast in the cafeteria before the school day begins, causing participation across D.C. to stagnate or erode.

In response to the decrease in the number of schools implementing breakfast in the classroom and the corresponding decline in school breakfast participation, the D.C. Council passed the Healthy Students Amendment Act in December 2018. This legislation strengthens the Healthy Schools Act by

 creating an annual subsidy from local funds for schools implementing breakfast in the classroom to offset costs and incentivize its use across the District;

- maintaining the mandate for breakfast after the bell in all schools with at least 40 percent of the student body eligible for free and reduced-price meals;
- enhancing nutrition guidelines through additional sodium limits, restrictions on flavored milk, and whole-grain requirements not in the federal rules; and
- increasing meal reimbursements for meals that meet the higher nutrition standards.

However, the D.C. Healthy Students
Amendment Act is not yet funded.
Without funding, implementation of the annual subsidies and increased meal reimbursements will be delayed, and it will be difficult for D.C. to prioritize expanding access to school breakfast to ensure that all children and families in the District receive the nutritional, educational, and financial benefits of school breakfast.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). Definitions (from Race to the Top District competition draft). Available at: https://www.ed.gov/race-top/district-competition/definitions. Accessed on March 12, 2019.

<sup>6</sup> DC Public Charter School Board. (n.d.). DC Public Charter School Board homepage. Available at: https://www.dcpcsb.org/. Accessed on March 12, 2019.

<sup>7</sup> DC Public Schools. (n.d.). Our Schools. Available at: https://dcps.dc.gov/page/our-schools. Accessed on March 12, 2019.

## What is Community Eligibility?

Authorized by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, and phased in first in select states and then nationwide, the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) allows high-poverty schools or groups of schools to offer breakfast and lunch free of charge to all students and to realize significant administrative savings by eliminating school meal applications. Any local education agency (LEA), group of schools in an LEA, or school with 40 percent or more "identified students" — children who are eligible for free school meals and have been identified as such by means other than an individual household application — can choose to participate.

#### "Identified students" include

- children who are directly certified for free school meals through data matching because their households receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations benefits, or, in some states, Medicaid benefits;
- children who are certified for free meals without an application because they are homeless, migrant, enrolled in Head Start, or in foster care.

CEP schools are reimbursed for meals served, based on a formula. Because of evidence that the ratio of all free meal eligible children-to-children in these identified categories would be 1.6-to-1, Congress built that into the formula. Reimbursements to the school are calculated by multiplying the percentage of identified students by 1.6 to determine the percentage of meals that will be reimbursed at the federal free rate. For example, a school with 50 percent identified students would be reimbursed at the free rate for 80 percent of the meals eaten (50 multiplied by 1.6 = 80), and 20 percent at the paid rate.

LEAs also may choose to participate districtwide or group schools however they choose if the LEA or group has an overall identified student percentage of 40 percent or higher. In D.C., 37 of the 61 LEAs included in this report implemented community eligibility in the 2017–2018 school year.

## **About This Report**

D.C. Hunger Solutions produced this report to help local education agencies (LEAs), school administrators, principals, and teachers identify opportunities to connect more low-income students to school breakfast. The report also provides recommendations for local officials to support schools in these efforts.

This report analyzes the School Breakfast Program's reach during the 2017–2018 school year among 61 of the District's 66 LEAs — or school districts — that operate in the nation's capital. It does not include private or residential care LEAs. The report compares low-income students' School Breakfast Program participation to National School Lunch Program participation. Broad participation in the school lunch program by low-income students across LEAs makes lunch participation a useful benchmark by which to measure how many students could and should be accessing school breakfast each day.

## **How the School Breakfast Program Works**

#### **Who Operates the School Breakfast Program?**

Any public school, public charter school, nonprofit private school, or residential child care institution can participate in the national School Breakfast Program and receive federal funds for each breakfast served. The program is administered at the federal level by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and in the District of Columbia through the Office of the State Superintendent of Education.

#### Who can Participate in the School Breakfast Program?

Any student attending a school that offers the program can eat breakfast. As mandated by the Healthy Schools Act of 2010, every student in the District of Columbia receives school breakfast for free. However, schools are reimbursed based on if that child qualifies for a free, reduced-priced, or paid meal per the child's household income or the school's CEP participation.

#### **How are Children Certified for Free or Reduced-Price Meals?**

Many children are certified for free or reduced-price meals via applications collected by the school district at the beginning of the school year or during the year. However, children in households participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, as well as foster youth, migrant, homeless, or runaway youth, and Head Start participants are "categorically eligible" (automatically eligible) for free school meals and can be certified without submitting a school meal application. Also, all children in CEP schools.

School districts are required to "directly certify" children in households participating in SNAP for free school meals through data matching of SNAP records with school enrollment lists. School districts also have the option of directly certifying other categorically eligible children as well. D.C. schools also should use data from the District to certify categorically eligible students. They can coordinate with other personnel, such as the school district's homeless and migrant education liaisons, to obtain documentation to certify children for free school meals. Some categorically eligible children may be missed in this process, requiring the household to submit a school meals application. However, these households are not required to complete the income information section of the application.

#### **How are School Districts Reimbursed?**

The federal reimbursement rate schools receive for each meal served depends on whether a student qualifies for free, reduced-price, or paid meals.

For the 2017–2018 school year, schools received

- = \$1.75 per free breakfast;
- \$1.45 per reduced-price breakfast; and
- = \$0.30 per "paid" breakfast.

"Severe-need" schools received an additional 34 cents for each free or reduced-price breakfast served. Schools are considered severe need if at least 40 percent of the lunches served during the second preceding school year were free or reduced-price.

This report includes data on D.C. Public Schools as well as public charter schools. During this period, more than 48,000 students were enrolled in D.C. Public Schools, and more than 43,000 students attended public charter schools in the District. For a complete list of LEAs included in this analysis, see Table A in the Appendix.

D.C. Hunger Solutions uses the Food Research & Action Center's ambitious, but achievable, goal of reaching 70 free and reduced-price eligible students with school breakfast for every 100 participating in school lunch. This report then calculates the number of additional children who would have received a school breakfast, and the federal dollars an LEA would have received if it had met this goal. The report also uses data from the 2016–2017 school year as a comparison and measure of progress.

## Key Findings Among Local Education Agencies (LEA) for the 2017–2018 School Year

### Less Than Half of D.C.'s LEAs Reached the School Breakfast Participation Goal

Overall, the District's 61 LEAs included in this report for school year 2017–2018 were just shy of the 70-to-100 goal, with citywide participation at 69.1 low-income children eating school breakfast for every 100 participating in school lunch. This is the fourth year in a row that D.C. has not met the Food Research & Action Center's goal. Of the 61 LEAs included in this report, only

28 met the goal of reaching 70 low-income children with school breakfast for every 100 participating in school lunch. The District's largest LEA — D.C. Public Schools — was not one of the 28. The top five LEAs reached 99 or more low-income children with school breakfast for every 100 who participated in school lunch, with three LEAs having higher school breakfast participation among low-income children than school lunch participation. See Table A in the Appendix for a full list of LEAs and their breakfast participation.

"The top five LEAs in the District reached 99 or more lowincome children with school breakfast for every 100 who participated in school lunch, with three LEAs having higher school breakfast participation among low-income children than school lunch participation."

#### TABLE 1:

## Breakfast Participation in the Top 10 Local Education Agencies (LEA) in the District of Columbia, School Year 2017–2018

LEA	Ratio of Low-Income Children Participating in School Breakfast per 100 Participating in School Lunch
Bridges Public Charter School	115.2
Eagle Academy Public Charter School	107.0
Sustainable Futures Public Charter School	102.3
The Children's Guild Public Charter School	99.4
Mary McLeod Bethune Public Charter School	99.1
Perry Street Prep Public Charter School	97.5
Democracy Prep Public Charter School	96.9
Breakthrough Montessori Public Charter School	95.9
Monument Academy Public Charter School	92.0
Roots Public Charter School	91.2



## **SPOTLIGHT: D.C. Public Schools**

Fifty-five percent of D.C. students attend the 113 D.C. Public Schools (DCPS) across the District. Given DCPS is by far the largest LEA in D.C., it has the opportunity to make the most impact in connecting students with school breakfast across the District. It would take an additional 615 students eating breakfast for DCPS to meet the Food Research & Action Center's goal of 70 low-income students eating breakfast for every 100 who participate in school lunch. This increase in participation would bring in an additional \$193,442 in federal funding to the District.

While many DCPS schools succeed in connecting their students with nutritious breakfasts, there is significant room for improvement in the majority of DCPS schools. Sixty-six DCPS schools (or 58 percent) did not meet the Food Research & Action Center's 70-to-100 benchmark in the 2017–2018 school year. In fact, 27 schools failed to reach event one-third of low-income students with school breakfast. Enrollment at many of these low-performing schools primarily consists of students from low-income households where access to school breakfast is of even greater importance.

While DCPS consists of 113 schools, the Food and Nutrition Services team is centralized, and meals are contracted through two major vendors, SodexoMAGIC and DC Central Kitchen. This centralized control gives DCPS the power to conduct oversight in their schools to address any barriers to school breakfast participation. DCPS can use lessons learned from site visits, focus groups, and student input to analyze why school breakfast participation is low in some schools, and use schools with high participation as models for improvement. Co-convened between DCPS Food and Nutrition Services and local nonprofit, DC Greens, the School Food Advisory Board meets quarterly and consists of parents, teachers, students, school personnel, and community partners interested in school food issues. DCPS can further leverage these relationships by elevating school breakfast through the School Food Advisory Board's collaborative space. Modifications to DCPS's school breakfast program may need to be both generalized and school-specific, and DCPS has both the power and flexibility to make these improvements to their meal program.

## Participation Varied Significantly Across LEAs

The top-performing LEA in this report, Bridges Public Charter School, served 115.2 low-income children school breakfast for every 100 who participated in school lunch. The lowest-performing LEA, National Collegiate Prep Public Charter School, served just 16.1 per 100. While 28 LEAs met the goal of 70 per 100, 11 LEAs did not reach even one-third of the low-income children who participated in school lunch with school breakfast. Moreover, a number of these low-performing LEAs — including National Collegiate Prep, Somerset Preparatory Academy, Thurgood Marshall

Academy Public Charter High School, Cesar Chavez Public Charter School, and Washington Global Public Charter School are high-poverty schools with a vast majority (over 75 percent) of students eligible for free and reduced-price school meals. In all, 23 LEAs failed to serve school breakfast to even half of the low-income students who participated in school lunch.

## **School Breakfast Success Story**

**Bridges Public Charter School — Ward 5** 

In school year 2017–2018, Bridges Public Charter School (PCS) ranked first in the District of Columbia for school breakfast participation, reaching 115 low-income students with breakfast for every 100 who ate school lunch. Bridges PCS is located in the Fort Totten neighborhood of Ward 5, and serves students in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. For the over 400 students enrolled, breakfast is served every morning in the classroom.

Bridges PCS has been serving breakfast in the classroom since the school's opening in 2005. The meals are brought to the door of each classroom in insulated bags, then picked up by teachers and placed on each student's desk so that students can begin eating their breakfast as soon as they arrive to the classroom. Most importantly, meals are served to students before and after the bell rings so that every student has the opportunity to eat. Teachers play a key role in encouraging their students to eat breakfast; they use meal time to gauge how their students are feeling that morning.

Bridges PCS, like all schools in the District of Columbia, offers breakfast at no charge to all students, and creates a welcoming environment, where, regardless of income, a nutritious breakfast is waiting for every student each morning. "Bridges is committed to the School Breakfast Program to assist in removing potential barriers to academic readiness and healthy eating habits. Presently, 66.4 percent of enrolled students at Bridges are identified as economically disadvantaged, and this program assures that all students are served a nutritious breakfast that promotes health and wellness," says Georgia Vergos, the school's Chief Operating Officer.

Bridges PCS is dedicated to serving nutritious, quality meals that their students love. Monique Mitchell, Business Manager for Bridges PCS, uses surveys to identify what food items the students like and dislike. She along with Ana Castro, Food Service Assistant, then uses this information to make sure the menu includes healthy foods that students are excited about and enjoy eating. Along with the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program, Bridges PCS participates in the Fresh Fruits and Vegetable Program and D.C. Free Summer Meals Program, which gives students access to fresh and local produce and meals year-round.

The dedication that Bridges PCS has for serving nutritious and appealing meals allows more of their students to experience the health and educational benefits linked to participating in school breakfast. Bridges PCS illustrates how breakfast in the classroom can be a success for the entire school community.

The size of an LEA is not a predictor of school breakfast participation. Large LEAs had varied success in reaching low-income students with school breakfast. For example, KIPP DC (over 6,100 students) and Friendship Public Charter School (over 4,100 students) reached a majority of their low-income

students, with 75.3 and 74.3 low-income students eating breakfast for every 100 participating in school lunch, respectively. Similarly, DC Preparatory Academy, with nearly 1,900 students, reached an impressive 83.9 low-income children with school breakfast for every 100 participating in

lunch. However, large LEAs such as Cesar Chavez Public Charter School (nearly 1,200 students), Capital City Public Charter School (nearly 1,000 students), and E.L. Haynes Public Charter School (over 1,100 students) were less successful in reaching low-income students with school breakfast. School breakfast participation among low-income students at these schools was 31.7, 47.1, and 54.6, respectively, for every 100 students participating in lunch.

Similar to large LEAs, small LEAs vary widely in school breakfast participation. Some of the smallest LEAs had the highest

participation, with Sustainable Futures
Public Charter School (45 students) ranking
third and reaching 102.3 low-income
students with school breakfast per 100 who
participated in school lunch. Monument
Academy Public Charter School (115
students) ranked ninth, with a ratio of 92
per 100. However, comparably small LEAs,
like Lee Montessori Public Charter School
(177 students) and Washington Global
Public Charter School (nearly 200 students),
reached just 23.7 and 30.1 low-income
students, respectively, with school breakfast
per 100 students participating in school
lunch.

TABLE 2:  Breakfast Participation in the Bottom 10 Local Education Agencies  (LEA) in the District of Columbia, School Year 2017–2018							
LEA	Ratio of Low-Income Children Participating in School Breakfast per 100 Participating in School Lunch						
Cesar Chavez Public Charter School	31.7						
DC International School	30.8						
Washington Global Public Charter School	30.1						
Paul Public Charter School	28.7						
Latin American Montessori Bilingual Public Cha	arter School 27.0						
Howard Univ. Middle School	26.9						
Thurgood Marshall Academy Public Charter Hi	gh School 26.6						
Lee Montessori Public Charter School	23.7						
Somerset Preparatory Academy DC	19.7						
National Collegiate Prep Public Charter School	16.1						

## Participation Varied From Year to Year

For many LEAs, participation also varied significantly from school year 2016–2017 to 2017–2018. See Table B in the Appendix for a year-to-year comparison of all LEAs included in this report. Overall, 18 LEAs increased their participation by 10 percentage points or more, and five increased participation by 30 percentage points or more.

Seven LEAs saw a decrease in participation by 10 percentage points or more. Most concerning was Washington Global Public Charter School, which had a 40 percentagepoint drop in breakfast participation from school year 2016–2017 to 2017–2018.

## Children and the District are Missing the Benefits of School Breakfast

The D.C. Healthy Schools Act of 2010 has improved access to a healthy school breakfast, but many more children attending D.C. public schools — both traditional and charter — should be eating school breakfast on a regular basis. The low participation in a number of LEAs with schools that are required to implement breakfast after the bell indicates that these schools are likely no longer in compliance with the Healthy Schools Act.

Increasing the average daily participation in school breakfast would benefit the entire school community. Schools that are not complying with the requirements of the Healthy Schools Act, thus being negligent in ensuring access to school breakfast, are missing vital opportunities to reduce food insecurity and increase access to nutritious food for students; these schools are also missing out on additional federal funding to support their school meals programs.

If all D.C. public schools — both traditional and charter — had met the benchmark of reaching 70 low-income students with school breakfast for every 100 who participated in school lunch, an additional 2,120 D.C. students would have eaten breakfast every school day. As a result, D.C. schools would have received an additional \$663,091 in federal reimbursements during school year 2017–2018.

See Table C in the Appendix for the number of additional children served in each LEA necessary to achieve the 70 out of 100 benchmark and annual federal funding that would be received if these additional children were served school breakfast.

Several LEAs stand to gain the most if they were to meet the 70-to-100 benchmark. As the largest LEA by far, D.C. Public Schools would have reached 615 additional students with school breakfast, and would have received an additional \$193,442 to support its school meals programs. More than 250 additional students would have been served by Cesar Chavez Public Charter School, resulting in an additional \$81,652 in federal funding, and more than 130 additional students from Somerset Preparatory Academy Public Charter School would have participated in school breakfast, resulting in an additional \$43,150 in federal funding.

TABLE 3:

## Additional Funding and Students Served if Each Local Education Agency (LEA) met the 70-per-100 Goal, School Year 2017–2018

Local Education Agency(s)	Additional Funding if 70 Low-Income Students Were Served School Breakfast per 100 Served School Lunch in Each LEA	Additional Students Served if 70 Low-Income Students ate School Breakfast per 100 who ate School Lunch in Each LEA
D.C. Public Schools	\$193,442	615
Public Charter Schools (All)	\$469,650	1506
Total	\$663,092	2121

### **How Can Breakfast After the Bell Increase Participation?**

Implementing a breakfast after the bell service model that moves breakfast out of the school cafeteria served before school starts — making it more accessible and a part of the regular school day — has proven to be the most successful strategy for increasing school breakfast participation. Breakfast after the bell overcomes timing, convenience, and stigma barriers that get in the way of children participating in school breakfast and are even more impactful when they are combined with offering breakfast at no charge to all students. Schools generally use one or more of three options when offering breakfast after the bell.

#### **Alternative Breakfast Models for Breakfast After the Bell**

## Breakfast in the Classroom

Students eat breakfast in their classrooms, either at the beginning of the school day or early during the day. Often, breakfast is brought to classrooms from the cafeteria in containers or served from carts in the hallways by food service staff.

#### "Grab and Go"

All components of school breakfast are conveniently packaged so students can easily grab a reimbursable meal quickly from the cafeteria line or from carts elsewhere on school grounds. Depending on the school's rules, students can eat in the classroom, or somewhere else on campus.

#### **Second Chance**

Usually implemented in middle and high schools, this method allows students time after first period to obtain breakfast from the cafeteria or carts in the hallway, or to eat in the classroom, cafeteria, or other common areas. Computerized systems ensure that children receive only one breakfast each day.

# Recommendations to Increase Breakfast Participation and Ensure Successful and Sustainable Implementation of the D.C. Healthy Schools Act and the Healthy Students Amendment Act

#### Increase Accountability for Schools Required to Offer Breakfast After the Bell

Breakfast after the bell service models dramatically increase participation by making breakfast convenient, accessible, and stigma-free for all students because they are offered after the official start of the school day. That is why a key provision of the D.C. Healthy Schools Act requires schools with 40 percent or more free and reducedpriced eligible students to implement one of these models. Specifically, it requires elementary schools to offer breakfast in the classroom and middle and high schools to offer alternative serving models, but does not specify that they be offered after the start of the school day. This provision has been strengthened through the recently passed Healthy Students Amendment Act, which requires all schools to serve breakfast after the bell, with elementary schools required to serve breakfast in the classroom and middle and high schools to implement either breakfast in the classroom or another approved alternative service model, such as "grab and go," or second chance.

The new legislation also strengthens oversight to ensure effective implementation. For those schools unable to implement a breakfast after the bell model, the Office of the State Superintendent for Education (OSSE) may grant waivers to schools that have submitted an action plan to ensure a breakfast participation rate of 75 percent. However, elementary schools with

waivers have just one year to demonstrate incremental progress toward this goal before they are required to serve breakfast in the classroom once again. OSSE must provide ongoing oversight and enforcement to ensure schools are in compliance with the breakfast after the bell requirement, and should work with schools and provide technical support so that all classrooms are able to stay in compliance and serve breakfast after the start of the school day.

#### Breakfast After the Bell Time Should Count as Instructional Time

Some schools that have not yet implemented breakfast in the classroom service models have raised the concern that the time it takes for students to eat breakfast would take away from instructional time. However, breakfast typically takes 10–15 minutes at the start of the day, and can be eaten during morning announcements, morning meetings, a quiet reading session, or can be incorporated into lessons. In addition, once breakfast after the bell models have been implemented, teachers frequently report that their students' productivity and ability to focus increase dramatically, and they spend less time dealing with distractions, such as behavioral problems or illnesses caused by hunger. Many schools report fewer disciplinary referrals, visits to the nurse, and cases of tardiness and absenteeism because students are motivated to arrive on time to eat breakfast. As a result, teachers are able to spend more time teaching and less time on classroom management issues.

Several states have developed policies that explicitly allow for breakfast in the classroom to count towards instructional time. California, Indiana, Michigan, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania have accomplished this through memoranda from their state agencies. To support compliance with the Healthy Schools Act and Healthy Students Amendment Act, OSSE should adopt a policy that makes clear breakfast in the classroom counts as instructional time. Guidance and best practices from these states are available via D.C. Hunger Solutions, and can be adapted to D.C.'s unique needs.

## Fund and Implement Revised Breakfast in the Classroom Subsidy

The recently passed Healthy Students Amendment Act provides high-poverty public schools and participating private schools (that are using an approved breakfast after the bell model) with an annual subsidy of \$2 per student. This funding should be used on equipment and supplies that are necessary to implement a successful breakfast after the bell program. In the 2010–2011 school year, per the Healthy Schools Act, schools had received a onetime subsidy of \$7 per student to purchase equipment to implement a breakfast in the classroom program. However, since this one-time subsidy, schools have not received funding to purchase new or replace the equipment no longer functioning, making it difficult to sustain a breakfast in the classroom program. The new annual subsidy is important for effective implementation of breakfast after the bell. The D.C. Council and OSSE must ensure that this provision is fully funded, promoted, and implemented. With new funding on an annual basis for breakfast after the bell programs, schools will be able to operate successful alternative breakfast models and remain in compliance with the Healthy Schools Act and Healthy Students Amendment Act.

## **Conclusion**

The School Breakfast Program supports students' health and academic success by providing them with the nutrition they need to learn and thrive in the classroom and beyond. Despite the many benefits of school breakfast, too many low-income children in the District of Columbia are missing out on this important meal and the benefits that school breakfast provides to health, well-being, and academic achievement.

Incorporating breakfast into the school day using breakfast after the bell service models, such as breakfast in the classroom, "grab and go," and second chance breakfast, is a proven strategy for increasing and expanding school breakfast participation. For success, schools must comply with the Healthy Schools Act and the Healthy Students Amendment Act, which require high-poverty schools to offer breakfast for free to all students through a breakfast after the bell service model. In addition, schools should receive support to implement these best practice models successfully. The provisions in the Healthy Students Amendment Act greatly strengthen the Healthy Schools Act by transitioning a one-time subsidy for implementing a breakfast after the bell service model to an annual subsidy to support program sustainability and growth. Since the newly passed Act also strengthens the mandate to implement breakfast after the bell service models, the D.C. council should prioritize fully funding this legislation in the coming year. By implementing these strategies, it is possible for D.C. to once again regain first place in the nation for school breakfast participation.

## **Technical Notes**

Data for this report were provided by the D.C. Office of the State Superintendent of Education. This report only includes data for participation in the federal School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program in public schools and public charter schools in D.C. It does not include data for private schools, religious schools, or alternative programs. Sixty-one out of the 66 local education agencies (LEA) in the District of Columbia met these criteria and were analyzed in this report. The average daily student participation data for the 2016–2017 and 2017–2018 school years were calculated by dividing the number of breakfasts and lunches served by the number of school days from September through May. This report compares the average daily free and reduced-price school breakfast participation to the average daily free and reduced-price school lunch.

Based on the top-performing states and school districts, the Food Research & Action Center set an attainable benchmark for every state and school district to reach 70 free and reduced-price eligible students with school breakfast for every 100 participating in school lunch. D.C. Hunger Solutions then calculated the number of additional children by LEA and districtwide that would have been reached if the 70-to-100 ratio had been reached. Because D.C. Hunger Solutions does

not include private schools or Residential Child Care Institutions in calculations, the reported citywide breakfast participation rates may differ slightly from calculated rates published in the Food Research & Action Center's annual School Breakfast Scorecard. The amount of federal funding left uncaptured by LEAs was calculated by first determining the average daily participation of low-income children that would be met if an LEA were to serve 70 low-income students school breakfast for every 100 who received school lunch. The LEA's actual free and reduced-price average daily participation was subtracted from this number to determine the number of unreached children. The number of children not reached was then multiplied by the reimbursement rate and the number of serving days. D.C. Hunger Solutions assumed that each LEA's proportion of students qualifying for free and reduced-price meals would remain the same. D.C. Hunger Solutions also conservatively estimated that no additional student meals would qualify for the higher "severe need" rate and therefore used the "non-severe need" or "regular" reimbursement rate. For school year 2017–2018, the federal reimbursement rate for each free school breakfast was \$1.75 and \$1.45 for each reduced-price school breakfast.

## **Appendix**



**TABLE A:** 

Ratio of Students Eligible for Free and Reduced Meals (FARM) in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) per 100 in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) for all Reported D.C. Local Education Agencies (LEA), School Year 2017–2018

				D: I O			RATIO	
LEA	Student Enrollment	Number of Certified FARM Students	FARM Rate	Did Some or All Schools Participate in Community Eligibility	FARM Average Daily Participation for SBP	FARM Average Daily Participation for NSLP	FARM Students in SBP per 100 in NSLP	Rani
Achievement Preparatory Academy PCS	962	843	87.6%	Υ	455	542	83.9	18
Apple Tree Early Learning Public Charter School	653	506	77.5%	Υ	215	324	66.5	31
Basis DC PCS	596	102	17.1%	_	9	29	32.4	5
Breakthrough Montessori PCS	129	0	0.0%	_	20	21	95.9	
Bridges PCS	399	249	62.4%	_	185	161	115.2	
Briya PCS	673	43	6.4%	_	21	34	60.9	3
Capital City Public Charter School	993	650	65.5%	-	209	444	47.1	4:
Cedar Tree Academy PCS	381	381	100.0%	Υ	217	268	81.0	2
Center City PCS	1469	1128	76.8%	Υ	602	814	73.9	2
Cesar Chavez PCS	1177	1047	89.0%	Υ	215	677	31.7	5
City Arts & Prep	499	438	87.8%	Υ	249	304	81.7	2
Creative Minds International PCS	441	143	32.4%	-	38	98	38.2	4
DC Bilingual Public Charter School	440	294	66.8%	_	130	229	56.7	3
DC International School	804	240	29.9%	-	41	134	30.8	5
DC Prepatory Academy	1875	1475	78.7%	Υ	610	728	83.9	1
DC Public Schools (DCPS)	47982	33155	69.1%	Υ	15692	23295	67.4	3
DC Scholars PCS	515	515	100.0%	Υ	332	382	87.1	1
Democracy Prep PCS	645	645	100.0%	Υ	525	542	96.9	
Eagle Academy PCS	935	936	100.1%	Υ	886	827	107.0	
Early Childhood Academy PCS	246	246	100.0%	Υ	201	221	90.7	1
EL Haynes Public Charter School	1131	722	63.8%	_	223	408	54.6	3
Elsie Whitlow Stokes PCS	350	164	46.9%	-	44	131	33.6	5
Excel Academy	642	643	100.2%	Υ	359	471	76.1	2
Friendship PCS	4170	3819	91.6%	Υ	2100	2827	74.3	2
Harmony DC PCS	94	83	88.3%	Υ	53	60	88.7	1-
Hope Community PCS	755	479	63.4%	-	207	281	73.5	2
Howard Univ. Middle School	278	205	73.7%	Υ	26	95	26.9	5
Idea PCS	305	306	100.3%	Υ	88	194	45.3	4
Ideal Academy PCS	279	283	101.4%	Υ	117	243	48.3	4

							RATIO	
LEA	Student Enrollment	Number of Certified FARM Students	FARM Rate	Did Some or All Schools Participate in Community Eligibility	FARM Average Daily Participation for SBP	FARM Average Daily Participation for NSLP	FARM Students in SBP per 100 in NSLP	Rank
Ingenuity Prep PCS	496	304	61.0%	Υ	243	355	68.5	29
Inspired Teaching Demonstartion PCS	446	89	20.0%	-	16	38	43.2	44
Kingsman Academy Public Charter School	249	252	101.2%	Υ	58	80	72.6	28
Kipp/DC	6115	5203	85.1%	Υ	3147	4181	75.3	24
Latin American Montessori Bilingual PCS	462	106	22.9%	_	22	80	27.0	56
LAYC Career Academy PCS	136	136	100.0%	_	7	18	36.5	47
Lee Montessori Public Charter School	177	40	22.6%	_	7	28	23.7	59
Mary McLeod Bethune PCS	457	445	97.4%	Υ	367	370	99.1	5
Maya Angelou PCS	306	170	55.6%	Υ	36	66	54.6	36
Meridian PCS	636	486	76.4%	Υ	166	320	52.0	38
Monument Academy Public Charter School	115	116	100.9%	Υ	81	88	92.0	9
Mundo Verde PCS	578	147	25.4%	-	65	113	57.7	33
National Collegiate Prep PCS	276	272	98.6%	Υ	19	116	16.1	61
Next Step PCS	418	326	78.0%	-	31	39	79.8	22
Paul Public Charter School	708	170	24.0%	_	71	246	28.7	55
Perry Street Prep PCS	351	283	80.6%	Υ	199	204	97.5	6
Richard Wright PCS	269	281	104.5%	Υ	98	202	48.8	39
Rocketship Rise Academy PCS	633	633	100.0%	Υ	360	399	90.2	13
Roots PCS	118	79	66.9%	Υ	61	67	91.2	10
Seed Public Charter School	363	325	89.5%	Υ	224	256	87.4	16
SELA PCS	202	86	42.6%	_	40	44	90.8	11
Shining Stars Montessori Academy	272	74	27.2%	-	39	44	88.0	15
Somerset Preparatory Academy DC	375	375	100.0%	Υ	54	272	19.7	60
Sustainable Futures PCS	45	46	102.2%	Υ	15	15	102.3	3
The Children's Guild Public Charter School	375	375	100.0%	Υ	294	296	99.4	4
Thurgood Marshall Academy PCHS	383	298	77.8%	Υ	26	98	26.6	58
Two Rivers PCS	812	318	39.2%	-	111	228	48.5	40
Washington Global Public Charter School	196	196	100.0%	Υ	42	139	30.1	54
Washington Latin PCS	698	141	20.2%	_	17	49	34.0	49
Washington Leadership Academy PCS	204	157	77.0%	-	32	75	42.8	45
Washington Math Science PCHS	228	209	91.7%	Υ	72	199	36.1	48
Overall D.C. LEAs	87496	61172	69.9%		30101	43540	69.1	n/a

#### **TABLE B:**

Change in Ratio of Students Eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Meals (FARM) in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) per 100 in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) for all Reported D.C. Local Education Agencies (LEA), School Years (SY) 2016–2017 & 2017–2018

SCHOOL DISTRICT	SY 2017- 2018 Enroll- ment	Number of Certified FARM Students	Percent Enrolled in FARM	SY 2016- 2017 FARM Students in SBP per 100 in NSLP	SY 2016- 2017 Rank	SY 2017- 2018 FARM Students in SBP per 100 in NSLP	SY 2017- 2018 Rank	Change in Ranking	Change in FARM SBP per 100 NLSP
Achievement Preparatory Academy PCS	962	843	87.6%	73.1	22	83.9	18	4	10.8
Apple Tree Early Learning Public Charter School	653	506	77.5%	65.5	26	66.5	31	-5	0.9
Basis DC PCS	596	102	17.1%	33.5	43	32.4	51	-8	-1.1
Breakthrough Montessori PCS	129	0	0.0%	47.0	33	95.9	8	25	48.9
Bridges PCS	399	249	62.4%	107.3	3	115.2	1	2	7.8
Briya PCS	673	43	6.4%	44.3	36	60.9	32	4	16.6
Capital City Public Charter School	993	650	65.5%	39.3	38	47.1	42	-4	7.8
Cedar Tree Academy PCS	381	381	100.0%	65.7	25	81.0	21	4	15.3
Center City PCS	1469	1128	76.8%	78.0	17	73.9	26	-9	-4.0
Cesar Chavez PCS	1177	1047	89.0%	39.6	37	31.7	52	-15	-7.9
City Arts & Prep	499	438	87.8%	-	_	81.7	20	_	_
Creative Minds International PCS	441	143	32.4%	27.9	49	38.2	46	3	10.3
DC Bilingual Public Charter School	440	294	66.8%	54.4	30	56.7	34	-4	2.3
DC International School	804	240	29.9%	10.5	59	30.8	53	6	20.3
DC Prepatory Academy	1875	1475	78.7%	18.1	57	83.9	19	38	65.8
DC Public Schools (DCPS)	47,982	33,155	69.1%	73.4	21	67.4	30	-9	-6.1
DC Scholars PCS	515	515	100.0%	84.2	14	87.1	17	-3	2.8
Democracy Prep PCS	645	645	100.0%	95.4	8	96.9	7	1	1.5
Eagle Academy PCS	935	936	100.1%	115.6	1	107.0	2	-1	-8.6
Early Childhood Academy PCS	246	246	100.0%	82.5	15	90.7	12	3	8.2
EL Haynes Public Charter School	1131	722	63.8%	64.3	28	54.6	35	-7	-9.7
Elsie Whitlow Stokes PCS	350	164	46.9%	25.0	51	33.6	50	1	8.6
Excel Academy	642	643	100.2%	87.7	11	76.1	23	-12	-11.5
Friendship PCS	4170	3819	91.6%	87.5	12	74.3	25	-13	-13.2
Harmony DC PCS	94	83	88.3%	44.6	34	88.7	14	20	44.1
Hope Community PCS	755	479	63.4%	85.9	13	73.5	27	-14	-12.4
Howard Univ. Middle School	278	205	73.7%	23.3	53	26.9	57	-4	3.7
Idea PCS	305	306	100.3%	37.0	41	45.3	43	-2	8.3
Ideal Academy PCS	279	283	101.4%	31.5	45	48.3	41	4	16.8

SCHOOL DISTRICT	SY 2017- 2018 Enroll- ment	Number of Certified FARM Students	Percent Enrolled in FARM	SY 2016- 2017 FARM Students in SBP per 100 in NSLP	SY 2016- 2017 Rank	SY 2017- 2018 FARM Students in SBP per 100 in NSLP	SY 2017- 2018 Rank	Change in Ranking	Change in FARM SBP per 100 NLSP
Ingenuity Prep PCS	496	304	61.3%	76.1	18	68.5	29	-11	-7.6
Inspired Teaching Demonstartion PCS	446	89	20.0%	37.2	40	43.2	44	-4	6.0
Kingsman Academy Public Charter School	249	252	101.2%	5.6	60	72.6	28	32	67.0
Kipp/DC	6115	5203	85.1%	89.1	10	75.3	24	-14	-13.8
Latin American Montessori Bilingual PCS	462	106	22.9%	29.7	47	27.0	56	-9	-2.7
LAYC Career Academy PCS	136	-	-	39.2	39	36.5	47	-8	-2.7
Lee Montessori Public Charter School	177	40	22.6%	29.5	48	23.7	59	-11	-5.8
Mary McLeod Bethune PCS	457	445	97.4%	106.1	4	99.1	5	-1	-6.9
Maya Angelou PCS	306	170	56%	32.2	44	54.6	36	8	22.4
Meridian PCS	636	486	76.4%	57.7	29	52.0	38	-9	-5.7
Monument Academy Public Charter School	115	116	100.9%	80.0	16	92.0	9	7	11.9
Mundo Verde PCS	578	147	25.4%	64.6	27	57.7	33	-6	-6.9
National Collegiate Prep PCS	276	272	98.6%	17.2	58	16.1	61	-3	-1.1
Next Step PCS	418	-	-	50.9	31	79.8	22	9	28.9
Paul Public Charter School	708	170	24.0%	29.8	46	28.7	55	-9	-1.1
Perry Street Prep PCS	351	283	80.6%	93.1	9	97.5	6	3	4.4
Richard Wright PCS	269	281	104.5%	44.5	35	48.8	39	-4	4.3
Rocketship Rise Academy PCS	633	633	100.0%	99.4	5	90.2	13	-8	-9.2
Roots PCS	118	79	66.9%	75.6	19	91.2	10	9	15.7
Seed Public Charter School	363	325	89.5%	98.3	6	87.4	16	-10	-10.8
SELA PCS	202	86	42.6%	107.4	2	90.8	11	-9	-16.6
Shining Stars Montessori Academy	272	74	27.2%	72.1	23	88.0	15	8	15.9
Somerset Preparatory Academy DC	375	375	100.0%	20.4	55	19.7	60	-5	-0.7
Sustainable Futures PCS	45	46	102.2%	-	-	102.3	3	-	_
The Children's Guild Public Charter School	375	375	100.0%	97.8	7	99.4	4	3	1.6
Thurgood Marshall Academy PCHS	383	298	77.8%	22.1	54	26.6	58	-4	4.4
Two Rivers PCS	812	318	39.2%	48.1	32	48.5	40	-8	0.4
Washington Global Public Charter School	196	196	100.0%	71.0	24	30.1	54	-30	-40.9
Washington Latin PCS	698	141	20.2%	23.6	52	34.0	49	3	10.4
Washington Leadership Academy PCS	204	157	77.0%	25.8	50	42.8	45	5	17.0
Washington Math Science PCHS	228	209	91.7%	35.1	42	36.1	48	-6	1.0
Washington Yu Ying PCS	579	60	10.4%	20.1	56	52.4	37	19	32.4
Overall D.C. LEAs	87.496	61,172	69.9%	69.0	n/a	69.1	n/a	n/a	0.2

#### **TABLE C:**

Additional Average Daily Participation (ADP) and Funding if 70 Students Eligible for Free and Reduced Meals (FARM) Were Served Through the School Breakfast Program (SBP) per 100 in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) for all Reported D.C. Local Education Agencies (LEA) That did not Meet the 70-to-100 Goal, School Year 2017–2018

SCHOOL DISTRICT	Number of Certified FARM Students	Actual FARM ADP for SLP	FARM Students in SBP per 100 in NSLP	Additional FARM ADP if met Goal (70 per 100)	Additional FARM Students That Would Be Served if met Goal (70 SBP per 100 NSLP)	Additional Funding if met Goal (70 FARM SBP per 100 NSLP)
Apple Tree Early Learning Public Charter School	506	215	66	227	11	\$3,602
Basis DC PCS	102	9	32	21	11	\$3,327
Briya PCS	43	21	61	24	3	\$924
Capital City Public Charter School	650	209	47	311	102	\$31,204
Cesar Chavez PCS	1047	215	32	474	259	\$81,652
Creative Minds International PCS	143	38	38	69	31	\$9,419
DC Bilingual Public Charter School	294	130	57	160	30	\$9,413
DC International School	240	41	31	94	53	\$16,043
DC Public Schools (DCPS)	33,155	15692	67	16307	615	\$193,442
EL Haynes Public Charter School	722	223	55	285	63	\$19,438
Elsie Whitlow Stokes PCS	164	44	34	91	48	\$14,812
Howard Univ. Middle School	205	26	27	66	41	\$12,844
Idea PCS	306	88	45	136	48	\$15,116
Ideal Academy PCS	283	117	48	170	53	\$16,598
Ingenuity Prep PCS	304	243	68	249	5	\$1,683
Inspired Teaching Demonstartion PCS	89	16	43	27	10	\$3,189
Latin American Montessori Bilingual PCS	106	22	27	56	34	\$10,262
LAYC Career Academy PCS	0	7	36	13	6	\$1,940
Lee Montessori Public Charter School	40	7	24	20	13	\$4,007
Maya Angelou PCS	170	36	55	46	10	\$3,199
Meridian PCS	486	166	52	224	58	\$18,123
Mundo Verde PCS	147	65	58	79	14	\$4,333
National Collegiate Prep PCS	272	19	16	81	62	\$19,682
Paul Public Charter School	170	71	29	172	102	\$31,561
Richard Wright PCS	281	98	49	141	43	\$13,455
Somerset Preparatory Academy DC	375	54	20	191	137	\$43,150
Thurgood Marshall Academy PCHS	298	26	27	69	43	\$13,406
Two Rivers PCS	318	111	48	160	49	\$15,178
Washington Global Public Charter School	196	42	30	98	56	\$17,491

SCHOOL DISTRICT	Number of Certified FARM Students	Actual FARM ADP for SLP	FARM Students in SBP per 100 in NSLP	Additional FARM ADP if met Goal (70 per 100)	Additional FARM Students That Would Be Served if met Goal (70 SBP per 100 NSLP)	Additional Funding if met Goal (70 FARM SBP per 100 NSLP)
Washington Latin PCS	141	17	34	34	18	\$5,365
Washington Leadership Academy PCS	157	32	43	53	20	\$6,236
Washington Math Science PCHS	209	72	36	139	67	\$21,251
Washington Yu Ying PCS	60	17	52	23	6	\$1,747
Overall D.C. LEAs	61,172	30,101	69	30,478	2120 \$	663,091.48



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