



# KANSAS SCHOOL BREAKFAST REPORT BRIEF: MAY 2018

## DESPITE GROWTH IN BREAKFAST PARTICIPATION, KANSAS HAS ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

In the 2016-2017 school year, school breakfast participation grew nationwide and in Kansas, but Kansas has lower participation than most other states:

A daily average of about 90,000 low-income (free or reduced-price certified) students participated in school breakfast in school year 2016-2017. That's an increase of approximately 400 students, or 0.5 percent, compared to the previous school year. This is comparable to the national increase of 0.6 percent.

The ratio of low-income students participating in school breakfast to low-income students participating in school lunch increased to 50.8 per 100 in school year 2016-2017, up from 49.7 per 100 in the previous school year. Kansas has further room for improvement on this measure compared to other states, ranking 40th in the most recent national report from the Food Research & Action Center (FRAC).

## THE SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM, AND OTHER FEDERAL CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS, ARE BUDGET POSITIVE FOR DISTRICTS

If Kansas met FRAC's goal of reaching 70 low-income children with school breakfast for every 100 participating in school lunch, an additional 34,000 children would start the day with a healthy breakfast at school. Kansas would tap into an additional \$8 million in federal funding to support school food services and local economies.

### The districts with the highest ratios of low-income children receiving school breakfast for every 100 receiving school lunch:

District	Ratio of average daily free & reduced-price breakfast participation per 100 participating in lunch
Northeast Kansas Education Service Center (USD 608)	99.7
Northeast (USD 246)	94.9
Altoona-Midway (USD 387)	87.0
Osawatomie (USD 367)	85.3
Elk Valley (USD 283)	84.3
Kismet-Plains (USD 483)	83.5
Pittsburg Community Schools (USD 250)	83.5
Fort Scott (USD 234)	82.0
Kansas City (USD 500)	80.6
Hamilton (USD 390)	79.5
Statewide	50.8

All 10 of these districts utilized one or more of the following best practices: **Breakfast After the Bell** (through Breakfast in the Classroom, Second Chance Breakfast, or Grab and Go models) and **offering free breakfast to all**, including through the **Community Eligibility Provision**.

## SCHOOL BREAKFAST BOOSTS KANSAS STUDENTS' HEALTH AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

The academic and health benefits of school breakfast are undeniable. Participation in the School Breakfast Program has been linked with: **better test performance; fewer cases of tardiness, absenteeism, and disciplinary problems; fewer visits to the school nurse; improved overall dietary quality; and a lower probability of issues related to being overweight or obese.**

Low-income students in particular benefit from participating in school meal programs. (For more information on the benefits of school breakfast, see FRAC's "Breakfast for Learning," "Breakfast for Health," and "The Connections Between Food Insecurity, the Federal Nutrition Programs, and Student Behavior.")



## LARGEST DISTRICTS

Among the 10 Kansas districts with the most students eligible for free or reduced-price meals, only USD 500 Kansas City reached FRAC’s goal of 70 low-income children receiving school breakfast for every 100 receiving school lunch. USD 501 Topeka and USD 233 Olathe both exceeded the statewide ratio of 50.8.

District	Ratio of Average Daily Free & Reduced Price Breakfast Participation per 100 Participating in Lunch
Kansas City (USD 500)	80.6
Topeka (USD 501)	57.5
Olathe (USD 233)	56.5
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>50.8</b>
Garden City (USD 457)	48.2
Geary County (USD 475)	46.5
Wichita (USD 259)	44.9
Lawrence (USD 497)	43.5
Dodge City (USD 443)	39.8
Salina (USD 305)	38.6
Shawnee Mission (USD 512)	35.5

- Both Kansas City (USD 500) and Topeka (USD 501) utilize the Community Eligibility Provision to provide free meals to all students in certain high-need schools.
- Kansas City (USD 500), Topeka (USD 501), and Olathe (USD 233) all utilize Breakfast After the Bell models at some schools, including Breakfast in the Classroom, Grab and Go, and Second Chance Breakfast.
- Kansas City (USD 500) is among the top 10 districts nationwide featured in FRAC’s report “School Breakfast: Making it Work in Large School Districts.”

## BEST PRACTICE: BREAKFAST AFTER THE BELL

Breakfast After the Bell models move breakfast out of the cafeteria and make it more accessible and a part of the regular school day. They have proven to be the most successful strategy for increasing school breakfast participation. These models overcome timing, convenience, and stigma barriers that get in the way of children participating in school breakfast. Schools have options when offering Breakfast After the Bell:

- **Breakfast in the Classroom:** Meals are delivered to and eaten in the classroom at the start of the school day.
- **Grab and Go:** Children can quickly grab the components of their breakfast from carts or kiosks in the hallway or the cafeteria line to eat in their classroom or in common areas.
- **Second Chance Breakfast:** Students are offered a second chance to eat breakfast after homeroom or first period.

## BEST PRACTICE: OFFERING BREAKFAST FREE TO ALL

Many schools with high numbers of low-income students are able to offer free meals for all students with federal reimbursements based on the proportions of low-income children in the school. Providing breakfast at no charge to all students helps remove the stigma often associated with means-tested school breakfast and streamlines the implementation of Breakfast in the Classroom and other alternative service models. In the 2016–2017 school year, 68 schools across seven districts utilized the Community Eligibility Provision, which offers free breakfast to all students. An additional 239 schools across 61 districts were eligible but did not participate.

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