

Enroll Every Eligible Student!

YOUR KEY TO HEALTHY, FOCUSED STUDENTS

AND A

SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAM

School Meal Application Campaign: Every Student. Every Year.

- School Meals are a tool to address hunger; 1 in 5 Vermont children are food insecure
- School meals helps your struggling families put more and better food on the table at home
- The higher the number of students enrolled in your school meal program, the higher your Title I funding
- The more students who are enrolled and participate, the more financially stable your school meal program
- Once 50% or more of your students are enrolled in your school meal program, you can provide free summer and afterschool meals to ALL children in your community



How to Increase Enrollment **EXAMPLES FROM VERMONT SCHOOLS**

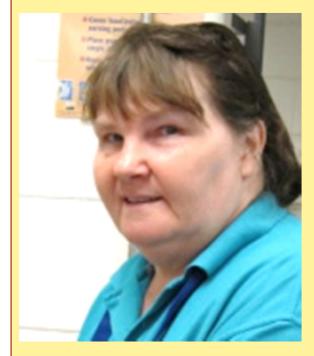
The Personal Touch



"What made the biggest difference was reaching out personally to families we knew were in need and who couldn't pay for their school meal bills."

> - Steve Marinelli, Food Service Director, Milton Town Schools

Mail the Application home Separately



"I mail the school meals application home with a letter about the program, and I ask every family to fill it out. Even if they are certain they don't qualify, I ask that they sign it and send it in. A mailing costs more up front, but the increased participation makes up for it in the long run"

- Carol Brill, Food Service Director St Johnsbury

Other Effective Strategies

- Make the form mandatory for all families. When everyone is turning in the form, there is less stigma, and many families who assume they don't qualify discover they do!
- Make September or October free breakfast month for parents. Invite parents in for breakfast and a cup of coffee, and help them complete their school meal application at the same time that you promote your school breakfast program!



Change the message associated with applying for school meals. Let people know that they are <u>helping</u> their school by applying. Their application is a contribution to the community!

Build an Enrollment Team

SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE STAFF

+ SUPERINTENDENT BUSINESS MANAGER PRINCIPAL TEACHERS SCHOOL NURSE COUNSELORS SCHOOL BOARD PTO

Who Is Doing What?

- Does everyone on the team understand how important this is?
- What is your team goal? Why are you expanding enrollment?
- Who is managing the applications? Should this role be shifted somewhere else?
- How will you get the word out?
- Who do families trust? Who should reach out?



www.SchoolMealsVT.com

schoolmealsvt.com

An informational resource and community forum for school food service directors, administrators, parents, and concerned citizens living in Vermont.

Why Do School Meals Matter?

Enrollment, Participation & Revenue

Meal Quality & Environment

Summer, Afterschool & FFVP

Farm to School

School Boards, Professional & Administrators & Program Development Parents

Sign up for our School **Nutrition E-Update:**

school/organization

email address

name

Submit

Partner Organizations School Nutrition

Association-VT





AMP up Afterschool!



For All You Need To Enroll Every Student in School Meals, Click Here



Read Steve Marinelli's tips for getting students to eat fruits and veggies on Letsmove gov

What Can You Get on SchoolMealsVT?

- Customizable Poster, Cover Letter, Web Blurb, and Article
- Tips for implementing the new reduced-price meal policy
- Help explaining the elimination of reduced-price meals to parents, principals, school boards, etc.
- Many other resources for breakfast, summer meals, afterschool meals, farm to school, and much more!

Increase Breakfast Participation!

THE MOST IMPORTANT MEAL OF THE DAY FOR <u>ALL</u> STUDENTS!

Breakfast is <u>Really</u> Important

- Fewer absences
- Fewer tardies
- Fewer illnesses, headaches, stomach pain
- Improved behavior
- Improved focus
- Increased math scores (up to an 18% increase / year)
- Improved graduation rate

*AND, 1 in 5 children are food insecure in Vermont

How / Where / When Do YOU Serve Breakfast?

Your Breakfast Participation

Are

YOU

Satisfied

With WHO is eating breakfast

&

With how many are eating?

- Only the low income students?
- Reaching those who need it every day?
- A match for your lunch numbers?
- How about the teachers and administrators?

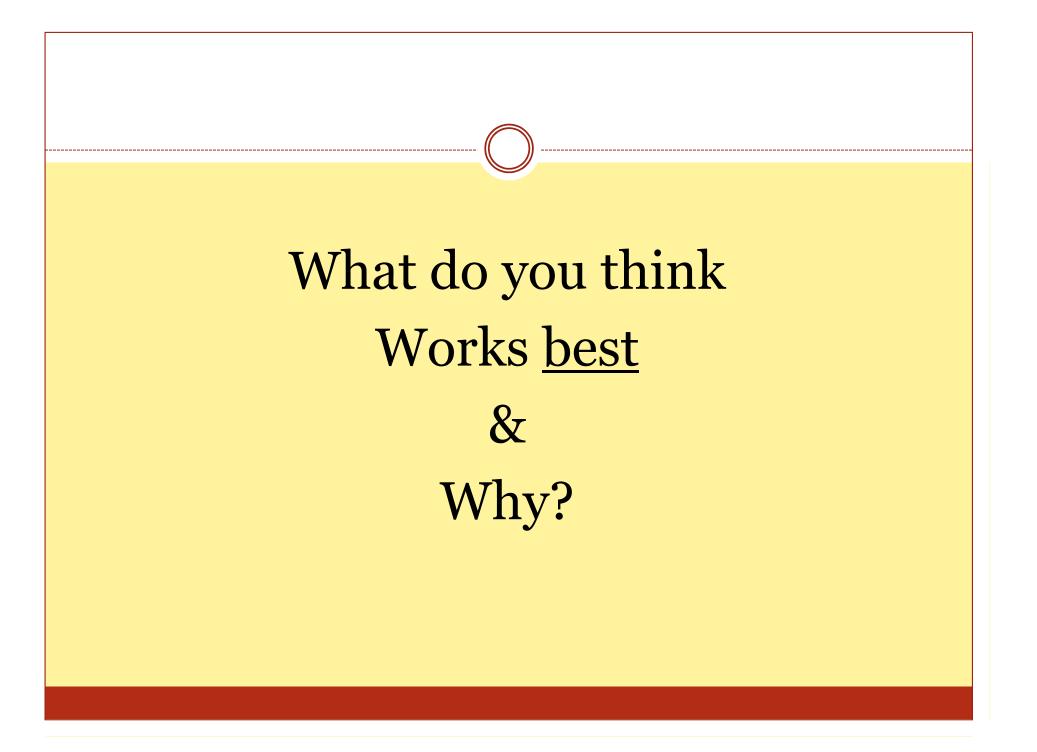
Many Breakfast Times & Places

Location Options:

- Cafeteria
- Classroom
- Hallways
- Busses

Timing Options:

- Before school
- In the classroom at the start of the first class
- Grab 'n go before the bell, with the option to take it into class
- After first period
- At snack time



After the Bell = More Participation

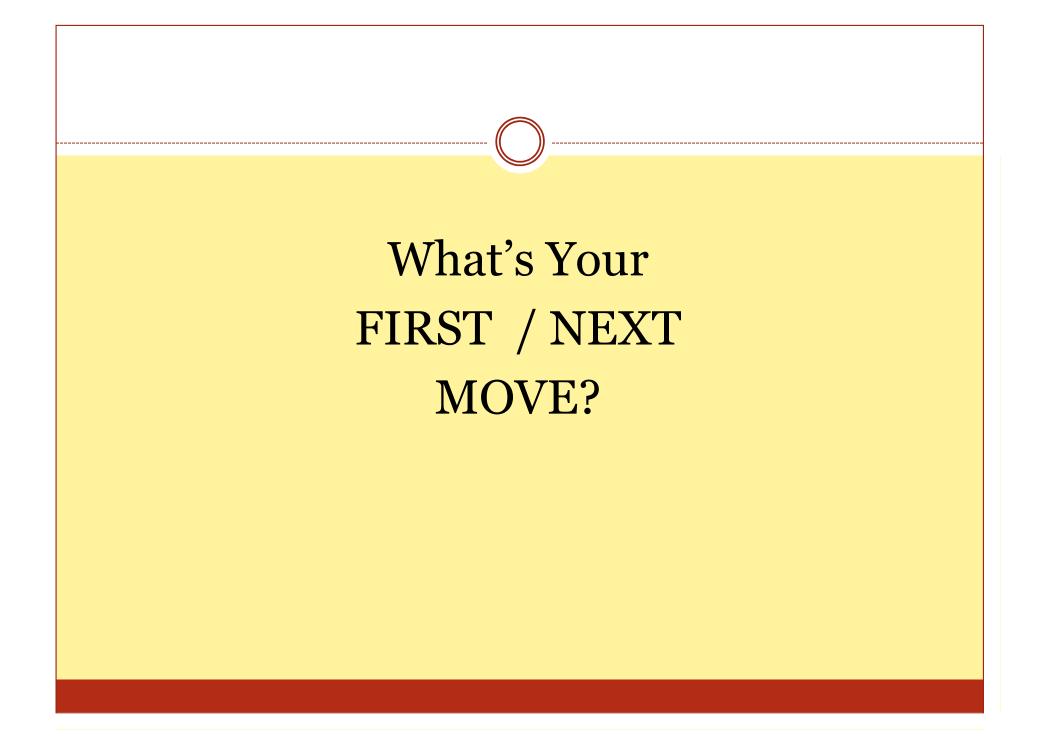
- Serving breakfast after the bell is the most sure-fire way to increase participation
- Serving breakfast at multiple times and in multiple locations is also very effective
- Increased participation helps to stabilize your program's finances
- Stronger finances will help you meet the new breakfast regulations and increase quality and variety

Before the Bell Challenges

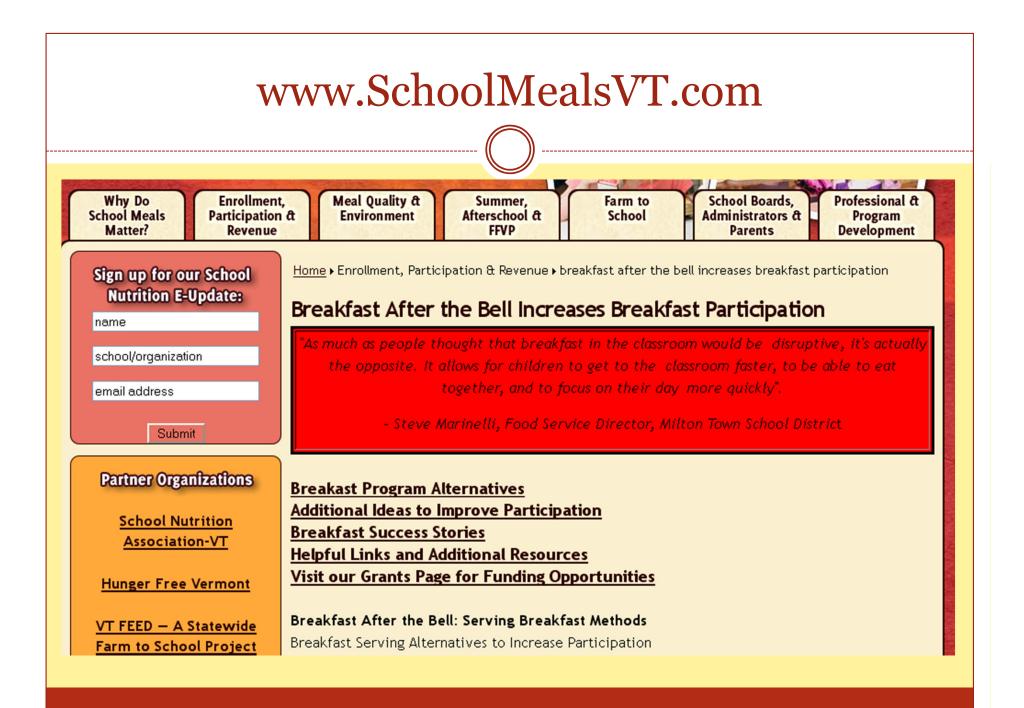
- Busses come late
- Parents drop off late
- Students would rather socialize
- Cafeteria far from classes
- Cafeteria not a "cool" place to hang out
- Students aren't hungry yet (especially teens!)

What (or Who) is in the way of serving breakfast the way you want to?





Remember Your Resources!



Get Personalized Assistance!

- Hunger Free Vermont's Child Nutrition Advocacy Team will help you figure out the best strategy for increasing participation at your school.
- Call or Email us! Anore Horton 802-865-0255 ahorton@HungerFreeVT.org