

Kansas Legal Services

A non-profit law firm and community education organization helping low and moderate income people in Kansas

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Kansas School Bre

Kansas School Breakfast Report - from Kansas Appleseed

Access to breakfast is critical to the healthy development and academic achievement of students, and in Kansas, School Breakfast Program participation continues to rise, ensuring more students get the nutrition they need.

On May 15, Kansas Appleseed released the **Kansas School Breakfast Report**, analyzing participation rates by school district and outlining best practices proven to increase participation. In the 2016-2017 school year, 110,000 students received a healthy morning meal through the School Breakfast Program each school day, reaching a daily average of nearly 90,000 low-income students.

“Eating school breakfast puts Kansas students in the best place to succeed in the classroom with proven behavioral and academic benefits,” said Joey Hentzler, Kansas Appleseed campaign director. “It can significantly address childhood hunger in Kansas school districts, big and small.”

Breakfast participation rose by approximately 0.5 percent in Kansas, which is comparable to the national increase of 0.6 percent. There is room for improvement, though, especially among low-income students’ participation.

In the most recent Food Research and Action Center report, Kansas ranked 40th for the ratio of low-income students eating school breakfast compared to those who ate school lunch.

The most successful strategy for increasing school breakfast participation is implementing Breakfast after the Bell models including Grab and Go, Breakfast in the Classroom and Second Chance Breakfast. By moving breakfast out of the cafeteria and making it a part of the regular school day, these models overcome timing, convenience and stigma barriers.

High-poverty schools can increase participation by offering free meals to all students through options like the Community Eligibility Provision, Provision 2 and Nonpricing, but these programs have low take-up rates in Kansas. For example, 68 schools participated in the Community Eligibility Provision, though 239 additional schools across 61 districts were eligible.

The School Breakfast Program is a USDA program providing cash assistance to states operating

breakfast programs. The program is administered by the Kansas State Department of Education. The USDA, the Kansas State Department of Education, school districts, and even policy makers and anti-hunger advocates should continue to collaborate to expand the use of best practices to ensure all students can start the day with a meal.

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Kansas Appleseed is a nonprofit organization working on issues facing Kansans including hunger, foster care reform, voter engagement and more. Kansas Appleseed works to understand the root causes of problems, support grassroots coalitions and advocate for comprehensive solutions so all Kansans can reach their full potential.

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