

# WHY INCREASE SCHOOL BREAKFAST FUNDING?

## School Breakfast Program Background

School nutrition programs, such as the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program, are critical to the academic performance of Wisconsin K-12 students. Studies have shown a nutritious breakfast and lunch help improve a child's mood, behavior and ability to concentrate in the classroom. According to data, students who eat school breakfast attend 1.5 more days of school, perform 17.5% better on math tests, and are 20% more likely to graduate.

The School Breakfast Program is a federal and state assisted meal program for public and private schools. While the program is primarily funded by the federal government, the State of Wisconsin provides \$2,510,500 in annual funding for reimbursement to participating schools for each breakfast served. As a result of current funding, Wisconsin schools receive approximately 8-cents per breakfast despite the fact state law calls for a 15-cent per meal reimbursement rate. The combination of a flat state appropriation and continued growth in the School Breakfast Program has resulted in lower reimbursement rates each year for participating schools.

## School Breakfast Quick Facts

- Since the 2008-2009 school year, participation in the program has increased by over 42% in Wisconsin.
- More than 8.1 million children across the United States start their day with the School Breakfast Program.

## School Breakfast Key Points

- State funding for the School Breakfast Program declined by 10% in 2012 and has remained flat ever since, even as demand for the program has increased. Participation in the School Breakfast Program in Wisconsin has more than tripled since 2000.
- According to the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), Wisconsin ranked last in participation in the School Breakfast Program during the 2016-2017 school year.
- Since the 2008-09 school year, an additional 347 schools are now participating in the School Breakfast Program, bringing the total to 1,978 schools (including 85% of all eligible public schools and 10% of eligible private schools).
- During the 2016-17 school year, the average number of students who participated daily was 179,542 in rural and urban areas alike.
- This initiative is supported by the School Nutrition Association of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Hunger Taskforce, Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance, American Heart Association, Wisconsin Public Health Association, Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards, School Choice Wisconsin Action, and the Wisconsin Council of Religious and Independent Schools.

## Legislative Request

SNA-WI and WAND are seeking full funding for the School Breakfast Program in each year of the 2019-2021 biennial budget. The investment of an additional \$2,789,500 in 2020 and \$2,889,500 in 2021 will bring funding in line with state law and help alleviate food service budget stress currently experienced by school districts.

## Contact

For more information, please do not hesitate to contact SNA-WI & WAND's government affairs consultants Erik Kanter 608-310-8833 or Tim Hoven 414-305-2011.



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