



# **BREAKFAST** in the classroom

[www.BreakfastintheClassroom.org](http://www.BreakfastintheClassroom.org)

Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom: Food Research and Action Center | National Association of Elementary School Principals Foundation  
National Education Association Health Information Network | School Nutrition Foundation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **\$3 MILLION BREAKFAST IN THE CLASSROOM INITIATIVE ALTERS THE RECIPE OF TRADITIONAL SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAMS**

***Funding from the Walmart Foundation Creates a School Breakfast Model Designed to  
Improve Academics and Health of Schoolchildren in Dallas, Little Rock,  
Memphis, Orlando and Prince George's County, MD***

Washington, DC (January 13, 2011) – Four leading hunger, nutrition and education nonprofit organizations are serving up *Breakfast in the Classroom*, a new project funded by the Walmart Foundation. Through the \$3 million initiative, the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), National Association of Elementary School Principals Foundation, National Education Association Health Information Network, and School Nutrition Foundation – collectively known as Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom – aim to increase breakfast consumption among schoolchildren and spark the academic and nutritional gains associated with the morning meal.

Five public school districts demonstrating exceptional need and potential for success have been chosen to participate in *Breakfast in the Classroom*: Dallas Independent School District, Texas; Little Rock School District, Arkansas; Memphis City Schools, Tennessee; Orange County Public Schools, Florida (including Orlando); and Prince George's County Public Schools, Maryland (outside Washington, DC). By expanding free breakfast to all students and moving it from the cafeteria to the classroom at many high-need schools in these districts, *Breakfast in the Classroom* will substantially improve participation in federal School Breakfast Programs. Funds from the Walmart Foundation will be re-granted by the Partners to schools for start-up and related costs.

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“Simply eating a healthy breakfast can reap very substantial improvements to academic performance and health, but too many children miss out on breakfast and start the school day hungry,” said Barbara A. Chester, National Association of Elementary School Principals president, speaking on behalf of the Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom. “*Breakfast in the Classroom* puts a fresh spin on the traditional school breakfast program by offering the morning meal to everyone in the classroom after the opening bell – a change that ensures every child can start the day with a healthy, well-balanced breakfast and be ready to learn.”

“Providing children with a healthy breakfast every day is critical to ensuring that they have the nutrition they need to grow, learn and play,” said Margaret McKenna, president of the Walmart Foundation. “The Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom bring diverse expertise in working with community leaders, principals, teachers, education support professionals, school food service specialists, and anti-hunger advocates. We are proud to support this initiative as part of our commitment to fight hunger in America.”

*Breakfast in the Classroom* is based on proven strategies for increasing school breakfast participation, particularly among low-income students, according to *School Breakfast in America’s Big Cities 2011*, a report released today by the Food Research and Action Center that examines school breakfast programs in 29 large urban school districts in the United States.

Most U.S. schools participate in the School Breakfast Program, but less than half of the low-income children who are eligible for a free or reduced-price breakfast are eating it, according to Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom. Bus schedules, late arrivals to school and reluctance to be labeled “low income” are among the reasons that many students don’t partake in cafeteria-based school breakfast.

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The benefits of eating breakfast at school are well documented and expansive, including:

- Improvements to math and reading achievement, performance on standardized tests, and vocabulary;
- Improvements to concentration, alertness, comprehension, and memory;
- Reduced absenteeism and school nurse visits;
- Reduced obesity and improved eating habits, including increased consumption of fruit, milk and a wider variety of foods; and
- Improved behavior, decreased tardiness and fewer referrals to the disciplinary office.

According to the Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom, as more schools move to the *Breakfast in the Classroom* approach, federal School Breakfast Program participation will increase, thereby reducing hunger and improving educational achievement nationwide. In fact, the FRAC report released today shows that many of the top-performing schools serve breakfast in the classroom.

*Breakfast in the Classroom* stems from Walmart and the Walmart Foundation's \$2 billion commitment to help fight hunger in America through 2015 that was announced last May. For more information, visit [www.breakfastintheclassroom.org](http://www.breakfastintheclassroom.org).

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