

# Importance of School Breakfast Program

## ¿WHAT IS THE SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM?

A federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. At Federal level, this program is regulated by Food and Nutrition Service. At State level, this program is regulated by State education agencies. School participates in the breakfast program will receive subsidies from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) if the school serves free or reduced price breakfasts to eligible children. The school breakfast must meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Meaning, more whole grains will be offered, appropriate calories according to grades, more fruits will be provided, and reduction of sodium. Meanwhile, USDA will provide the school with nutrition team to provide assistance to help school food service staff to prepare healthy meals and nutrition education for children.

## *Roles of the School Breakfast Program*

- ❖ *To prevent obesity and decrease food insecurity.*  
Public health and nutrition experts claim increase participation in the federal nutrition can promote healthy eating and prevent obesity. A recent study shows that comparing low-income students who do not eat school meals, to low-income students who have both school breakfast and lunch have better overall diet quality. Access to school breakfast decreases food insecurity. Multiple studies show that students who participate in school breakfast are associated to lower chance of getting overweight and obesity.
- ❖ *To improve academic performance.*  
Children who have breakfast at school perform better at standardized test than those who skip breakfast.
- ❖ *To improve student behavior and learning environments.*  
Participating in school breakfast is shown to improve concentration, attention, and performance on intense mental tasks. Also, students demonstrate improvement in attendance, punctuality, depression, anxiety, and hyperactivity compared to children with lower breakfast program participation.