

STATE OF ARKANSAS
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

PROCLAMATION

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS COME – GREETINGS:

WHEREAS: The School Breakfast Program plays a key role in ensuring that Arkansas students are healthy, active, and ready to learn every day so they can reach their full academic potential. According to the Food Research and Action Center, school breakfast leads to improved dietary intake, reduced food insecurity, better test scores, improved student health, fewer distractions in the classroom throughout the morning, and fewer missed days of school; and

WHEREAS: According to the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE), more than 284,000 Arkansas students (60 percent) qualified for free or reduced priced school meals in the 2017-2018 school year; and

WHEREAS: Breakfast After the Bell programs, which make breakfast part of the school day, have been shown to be effective ways of ensuring more students realize the benefits of breakfast. Since Breakfast After the Bell programs were introduced in Arkansas schools in the 2011-2012 school year, the number of breakfast meals served to students has increased by 4.4 million; and

WHEREAS: Offering breakfast as part of the school day improves children's diets and allows students to begin their days focused and ready to learn. The benefits of these models are maximized when eligible schools offer free meals to all students at no cost. Since Breakfast After the Bell programs were introduced in Arkansas schools in the 2011-2012 school year, USDA school breakfast reimbursements have increased by more than \$13.5 million dollars. In the 2017-2018 school year, Arkansas schools realized \$54.5 million in federal reimbursements for breakfast meals; and

WHEREAS: Student nutrition is an important part of Arkansas's plan under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, which is centered around a student-focused vision of providing access and opportunities that value each student's success; and

WHEREAS: R.I.S.E. Arkansas (Reading Initiative for Student Excellence) through ADE seeks to establish a culture of reading in Arkansas by coordinating with community partners to promote this year's School Breakfast Month theme of Books and Breakfast, which encourages healthy eating and reading habits for all students;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ASA HUTCHINSON, Governor of the State of Arkansas, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the laws of the State of Arkansas, do hereby proclaim March 2019, as

ARKANSAS SCHOOL BREAKFAST MONTH

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Arkansas to be affixed this 16th day of January, in the year of our Lord 2019.



Asa Hutchinson, Governor

John Thurston, Secretary Of State