

# Illinois School Breakfast Mandates

## **School Breakfast Program**

- Public schools in which at least **40 percent** of the students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunches in October of the preceding year\* must operate a school breakfast program. Time and venue determined by school/district.

## **Breakfast After the Bell Program**

- Public schools in which at least **70 percent** of the students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunches in October of the preceding year\* must operate a breakfast after the bell program. Breakfast must be provided to children after the instructional day has officially begun. This mandate does not prohibit schools from additionally providing breakfast before instructional day begins.

\* October data is posted annually at <https://www.isbe.net/pages/Seamless-Summer-Option-Eligibility-Information.aspx>

## **Delivery Options:**

Schools may choose whatever delivery model that best suits the students, such as:

- **Breakfast in the Classroom**  
Food is delivered (by staff, students or volunteers) to each classroom after school begins and students are permitted to eat breakfast in the classroom.
- **Grab and Go**  
Students pick-up bagged or boxed breakfast from carts or specified areas and are permitted to eat in either designated areas or the classroom.
- **Breakfast After First**  
An extended passing or breakfast period is offered in the cafeteria, following the first or second period of the day.
- **Other options**  
Including serving breakfast during an early recess or outdoor lesson. As long as breakfast is offered to all students after the instructional day has begun, schools and districts have great flexibility in serving breakfast after-the-bell.

## **Notification:**

Schools must inform families of the availability of breakfasts just prior to the beginning of the school year and throughout the school year via routine methods of communicating with families, such as website posting, weekly messages, public address system, etc.

## **Reimbursement:**

To offset the cost, or a portion thereof, of the breakfast:

- State reimbursement is available through *IL Free Breakfast Program*.
- Federal (including state) reimbursement is available through *School Breakfast Program*.

**Opt-Out Provision - School Breakfast Program:**

- District must submit cost analysis to their regional superintendent of education no later than February 15 of the current school year.
- By March 15 of the current school year, Regional Superintendent holds public hearing.
- If the regional superintendent does not grant an exemption, school district must operate a breakfast program in the upcoming school year in the school(s) noted - OR - the district (or a resident of the district) may appeal the decision to the State Superintendent of Education by April 15. If appealed, State Superintendent must hold hearing and state conclusion by May 15.

**Opt-Out Provision – Breakfast After the Bell Mandate:**

District must show either:

- they are already delivering a school breakfast effectively with 70% or more of the free and reduced-price students participating in the School Breakfast Program  
- or -
- due to circumstances specific to that school district, the expense reimbursement would not fully cover the costs of implementing and operating a breakfast after the bell program.
  - District must submit cost analysis to district's board of education
  - District board holds public hearing - must post date, time, place, and subject matter of meeting on its website and notifies ISBE by emailing [cnp@isbe.net](mailto:cnp@isbe.net) at least 14 days prior to the hearing
  - If board passes a resolution that district cannot afford to operate a breakfast after the bell program, district submits final resolution approving the breakfast after the bell exemption to ISBE by emailing [cnp@isbe.net](mailto:cnp@isbe.net) upon passage.

For additional information or assistance, please email [cnp@isbe.net](mailto:cnp@isbe.net) or visit [https://www.isbe.net/Documents/schools\\_mandated\\_operate\\_sbp.pdf](https://www.isbe.net/Documents/schools_mandated_operate_sbp.pdf)