

# TRAINING for Educators



Experience has shown that the most successful Boost School Breakfast Models incorporate training for classroom teachers, paraprofessionals and other school staff prior to the program's start. Below you'll find a list of helpful topics to cover during training for teachers and paraprofessionals.

**Process and logistics of the Boost School Breakfast Model** -- Consider creating a "breakfast timeline" to walk classroom educators through the daily steps of breakfast service. Steps to outline include: the specifics about the model; timing of the breakfast service; the time teachers allow students into the classroom; the time for eating breakfast and completing the accountability roster; the time to dispose of trash, pack up unused food and return insulated bags and accountability rosters to the cafeteria or hallway; and the expected completion time of all breakfast activities. Remember that the timeline may need to be grade-specific. Younger grades (pre-K and kindergarten) often require more time for breakfast activities.

**Creating student helper teams** -- Encourage educators with older students to create a "Breakfast Squad" to help with breakfast service. Job assignments can include two-person teams for delivery, meal service and cleanup along with one breakfast sheriff to oversee the teams. Elections held periodically allows all kids to try this leadership opportunity.

**Meals accountability** -- Training educators to correctly perform meal accountability is very important to ensuring accurate meal counts and, thus, accurate financial reimbursements to school nutrition staff. Cover topics that include what constitutes a full reimbursable meal and a walkthrough on how to complete the accountability roster. Schools can print alphabetized classroom breakfast rosters by using their meal software program. Use the training to garner educator input on whether they prefer a roster be sent and collected daily with the meals or delivered each Monday for completion during the week.

**Food storage** -- Many classroom educators do not know the ins and outs of school nutrition guidelines, including the significance of keeping food at a specific temperature. Cover topics such as the importance of returning unopened food to the school kitchen for re-use and not keeping food in the classroom or student lockers for students to snack on later in the day.

**Communicating with students about Boost School Breakfast Model** -- Provide a list of talking points for educators to help them introduce the Boost School Breakfast Model to students before the start of the program. Topics to cover can include classroom manners, time to eat and election of student teams for breakfast helper jobs.

**Activity ideas during breakfast time** -- Use the “Student Activities for Breakfast Time” handout in this toolkit under the School Staff tab to start a conversation about activity ideas for students during breakfast time. In Michigan, breakfast time counts as instructional time, making “breakfast-friendly” instructional activity ideas all the more important.

**Classroom cleanliness** -- Maintaining a school and classroom environment that is clean and pest-free is integral to the sustainability of any Boost School Breakfast Model. Consider inviting a member of the custodial staff to speak with educators about best practices for keeping the classroom and other common breakfast areas clean and pest-free.

Most important: Be sure to involve teachers and paraeducators in the planning process! Use the training as an opportunity to gain valuable feedback from school staff about what breakfast models and processes will work best for their classrooms.

- » TIP: Conduct a “mini dress rehearsal” of your new Boost School Breakfast Model prior to launch to work out potential issues in advance. Consider having school nutrition staff prepare and pack meals for a few classrooms to see how the new preparation process will work in the school’s kitchen. Transport the packed meals to a few classrooms to see if any unexpected issues come up (i.e., uneven surfaces, stairwells, narrow doorways, etc.) that need to be addressed before launch day.
- » TIP: It can be helpful to have extra staff or parent volunteers available to help out during the first week of a new Boost School Breakfast Model. Once a routine is developed, the school staff should be able to handle it on their own.

*Adapted from Start Your Day with Breakfast: A Guide to Increase School Breakfast Participation from the NEA Health Information Network and Share Our Strength*