

## TIPS AND STRATEGIES

The following list is some tips and strategies from existing breakfast programs to help you get started:

- Make the breakfast program available to every student (universal).
- Get the school staff on board with the program.
- Make the program known to the community. One way of doing this is by sending heartfelt letters to local community resources to demonstrate the needs and benefits of having a breakfast program in your school.
- Applying for any funding and grants you qualify for is an asset to your program. Even being rewarded the minimum amount is worth the effort of applying. For an example, Breakfast for Learning's minimum donation is \$500.
- A parent can apply for Breakfast for Learning funding; it does not have to be a teacher or administrator.
- Contact local grocery stores for new food items they have available. The items may be donated for free in order to promote their product.
- Inform local volunteer groups of the program and get them involved.
- Keep **all** receipts.
- If possible, assign one volunteer to do the grocery shopping to keep things simple. This person would be responsible for keeping receipts, looking for deals, and being informed of which products need replenished therefore, it must be someone who is dedicated.
- Have useful websites, phone numbers, contact names, and other relevant information posted around where the program is located for students as a resource.
- Allocate a portion of the funding towards the purchase of supplies (forks, knives, spoon, napkins, cups, plates, etc).
- Ensure food and drink items are fully stocked by taking regular inventory of supplies.

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- To be sure those students who miss the breakfast program in the morning (i.e. late buses, etc) still receive something to eat the morning, “Grab and go” bags of non-perishable foods can be made and left discretely in a location of the school where students can pick them up before going to class.
  - Increase fundraising in the spring to ensure the budget is met for the fall; this allows the breakfast program to successfully start on the first day of school.
  - For breakfast programs that are not “grab and go”, have students remain in the location designated for the program to avoid messes throughout the building.
  - Look into a local “Adopt a Cop” program to see if the volunteer fee for the criminal record check could be waved.
  - Only industrial toasters are allowed in schools, local food chains (i.e. Tim Horton’s) update theirs often and may have a used one to donate to your breakfast program.
  - Alternative Education and Transition Learning Centres are eligible to apply for Breakfast for Learning funding and grants.
  - Buy supplies (i.e. napkins) in bulk to save on money and the amount of trips to replenish them.
  - If you are in an elementary school or middle school you qualify to apply for provincial fruit and vegetable grants. These healthy foods could be used towards your breakfast program.
  - A breakfast program committee can assist in distributing the responsibility of a breakfast program more evenly. Such roles may include; a community liaison, a coordinator, an administrator, and committed parent volunteers.
  - It is essential to show appreciation for and reward the volunteers. For an example; one school has a BBQ run by the students in which they invite volunteers and community sponsors to attend, as a way to thank them for making their breakfast program possible.

- It is important for your breakfast program's success to give back to your community sponsors. This can be done in a number of ways. Some examples are: having a company like Sobeys come into the school to discuss with students things like dress codes and accountability for a personal development career planning day; advertise for the company around the breakfast program location; have a volunteer each day come in from the company to volunteer with the breakfast program; allow them to advertise for summer student employment at their company; allow them to have scholarships for your students.
- Some grocery stores offer a "Cash back for gas" receipt in which you can take your receipt to a gas station and receive money off of your gas purchase. Arrange to have a box at the grocery store in which people who do not save their receipts can donate them. At the end of each month add up the amount of money to save on gas on the receipts, and trade them into the grocery store for gift cards instead of gas savings. Use these gift cards to purchase food for your breakfast program.

