

## Hunger still exists for California students – New county and school district data

School breakfast programs in California's public school districts fail to reach 70 percent of the state's 3.4 million low-income students. Seventy percent of low-income students in California participate in the National School Lunch Program, but only 30 percent participate in the federal School Breakfast Program. This low participation rate translates to more than \$365 million in untapped federal meal reimbursements for the state.

While the vast majority of public schools in California operate the School Breakfast Program, many students are unable to access school breakfast because of when and where it's served: in the cafeteria before the school day begins. That traditional service model excludes students who, due to transportation or family schedules, are not able to arrive to school early. That traditional service model can also exacerbate the stigma associated with receiving free or low-cost school meals.

Fortunately, there are school districts across California successfully supporting their students with innovative, cost-effective service models such as Classroom Breakfast, Second Chance Breakfast, and Grab-n-Go that increase school breakfast participation. Serving breakfast after the school day begins or from multiple locations around campus helps connect more students to the health and academic benefits of a morning meal.

Legislators, administrators, educators, parents, students and concerned community members can take immediate action to help close the school breakfast gap:

- **Find out how schools in your community serve breakfast.**
- **Encourage school and district leaders to serve breakfast at times and places that reach all students in need.**
- **Learn more about how schools can put students and breakfast first at [BreakfastFirst.org](http://BreakfastFirst.org).**

**For more information, including your county or school district's data tables, visit California Food Policy Advocates' webpage at <http://cfpa.net/school-meal-analysis10-11>**

