

SNAP-Ed Toolkit

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Project breakFAST (Fueling Academics and Strengthening Teens)

University of Minnesota Extension

Overview

Project breakFAST is a Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change intervention designed to increase high school breakfast participation. In this intervention, a school breakfast team, made up of students, school food service, administration, teachers, and other key staff is formed to design and implement a grab-and-go breakfast outside the traditional cafeteria setting. School policies are changed to allow students to eat school breakfast in the hallways or classrooms. A student-led marketing campaign is conducted to encourage students to eat school breakfast. With the increased school breakfast participation, most schools are able to recoup start-up costs within one month and make a profit on school breakfast. Project breakFAST promotes healthier eating as high school students ate breakfast more often, ate more fruit servings, and did not have a change in overall calorie intake despite the increase in eating breakfast. Project breakFAST also addresses food insecurity as breakfast participation increased among low-income students and regular pay students. **Target Behavior:** Healthy Eating, Food Insecurity/Food Assistance **Intervention Type:** PSE Change.

Intervention Reach and Adoption

Project breakFAST targets high-school students in the school setting. Project breakFAST included 16 rural Minnesota high schools with free/reduced-price rates ranging from 20-58%. Of the enrolled 9th and 10th graders, 14% indicated they were food insecure. All but one school implemented the program with success and increase in breakfast consumption. **Setting:** School (Learn) **Target Audience:** High School **Race/Ethnicity:** All

Intervention Components

Project breakFAST includes the formation of a school breakfast team, made up of students, school food service, administration, teachers and other key staff. This team is tasked with designing a grab-and-go breakfast option and student-led marketing campaign. These intervention components provide the infrastructure and awareness to increase availability and participation in high school breakfast. Project breakFAST was based on The Social-Ecological Model and The Theory of Planned Behavior. The grab-and-go breakfast cart can be located in high traffic areas or where students congregate. This allows students to grab breakfast in a location where they can still socialize with their classmates. School policies are changed to allow students to eat school breakfast in the hallways or classrooms. The grab-and-go breakfast is offered before school. In addition, it can be offered after first period as a “second chance” breakfast for students who are not hungry before school. A student-led marketing campaign is conducted to encourage students to eat school breakfast.

Intervention Materials

Intervention materials are free and available for download from the [Project breakFAST Toolkit website](#). Available materials include:

- [Tools for Getting Started](#)
 - School breakfast team forms
 - Tools to explore and set school breakfast goals
 - Background videos for school breakfast teams
- [Marketing Resources](#)
 - General marketing resources
 - Free and reduced-meal promotion
 - Breakfast posters and sample breakfast videos
- [Best Practices](#) and Menu Ideas
- [Evaluation Forms](#)

Intervention Costs

Materials available at no cost.

Evidence Summary

Project breakFAST was piloted in two separate studies. Both pilot studies informed the larger Project breakFAST study. In Project breakFAST, partners such as principals and food service staff participated in qualitative interviews on the new breakfast. This input was used to revise the toolkit for the general public. Intervention schools increased participation in the school breakfast by 49% more than comparison schools. Breakfast participation among the student breakfast-skipperers at intervention schools increased by 81% more than the students at comparison schools. Students in intervention schools reported fewer barriers and more support from staff to eat school breakfast. Students in intervention schools reported no change in calorie intake despite the increase in breakfast participation and ate more fruit servings compared to students in the comparison schools. There was no significant change in student body mass index between intervention and comparison schools. A cost-benefit analysis showed daily profits ranging from \$90 to \$489 after recovering up-

front costs. Published research includes:

- [A pilot study to expand the school breakfast program in one middle school](#)
- [Project breakFAST Publications, Reports, Presentations and Other Resources](#)
- [Project breakFAST Final Report](#)

Evidence-based Approach: Research-tested

Evaluation Indicators

Based on the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework, the following outcome indicators can be used to evaluate intervention progress and success.

| | Readiness and Capacity – Short Term (ST) | Changes – Medium Term (MT) | Effectiveness and Maintenance – Long Term (LT) | Population Results (R) |
|------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Individual | | | | |
| Environmental Settings | ST5 , ST7 | MT5 | LT5 , LT7 , LT8 , | |
| Sectors of Influence | | MT9 | | |

- ST5c: 16 of 16 schools indicated readiness for change by agreeing to participate in the Project breakFAST study.
- ST7a: 8 of 8 intervention schools had active school breakfast teams. In the follow-up wave, 8 of 8 control schools had active school breakfast teams.
- ST7b: School breakfast teams met for approximately 9 months to plan, implement, and evaluate a grab and go breakfast. The number of members and meetings varied depending on the schools.
- ST7c: Based on lessons learned in Wave 1, the 4 Wave 2 intervention schools were facilitated by an Extension staff person. An outside facilitator helped keep the team on task and ensured the action plan was being followed.
- MT5a: 8 of 8 intervention schools made at least one change in practice. This was also true in the follow-up wave.
- MT5b: Total number not collected.
- MT5c: 8 of 8 intervention schools changed the foodservice system to bring breakfast out of the cafeteria and into where students congregate and changed systems to allow for a second chance breakfast after first period. This was also true in the follow-up wave.
- MT5d: 8 of 8 intervention schools changed the environment to add a grab and go breakfast cart in student hallways. This was also true in the follow-up wave.

- MT5e: 8 of 8 intervention schools conducted a breakfast marketing campaign to promote the new grab and go breakfast. This was also true in the follow-up wave.
- MT9h: An estimated 7800 students had increased access to school breakfast at the 8 intervention schools. In the follow-up wave an estimated 6300 students had an increased access to school breakfast at the 8 control schools.
- LT5a: 12 of the 16 schools in Project breakFAST continued to offer the grab and go breakfast 2 years later based on information found on the school website.
- LT7a: School Wellness Award from the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (2017). 1st Place Central Region and 1st Place Minnesota for Project BreakFAST: Making a Difference in School Wellness.
- LT8a: 1 [news paper article](#)

Evaluation Materials

Evaluation materials can be found under the Data Collection tab of the [Project breakFAST Research website](#) and include:

- Student survey on participation in school breakfast, attitudes regarding breakfast, and barriers to breakfast
- Manual of Procedures for obtaining height, weight, and BMI measurements
- School provided data: breakfast purchases, attendance, and academic performance, and number of disciplinary events in school for all 9th and 10th graders
- Fidelity checklist
- Qualitative interview questions

Additional Information

Website: The [Project breakFAST website](#) includes information on Project breakFAST, access to the toolkit, and data from the original Project breakFAST research project. **Contact Person:** Mary Schroeder 507-337-2800 hedin007@umn.edu