

# Breakfast After the Bell



**Please co-sponsor Senator DiDomenico and Representative Vega's bill to support Breakfast After the Bell (HD.1046 and SD.1986)**

*To co-sponsor contact Pat Duffy ([patricia.duffy@mahouse.gov](mailto:patricia.duffy@mahouse.gov)) or Ingrid Freire ([Ingrid.freire@masenate.gov](mailto:Ingrid.freire@masenate.gov))*

## **Thousands of children from food insecure households are missing out on breakfast. Their morning hunger is an impediment to learning, and it doesn't have to be.**

While 80-90% of students in high poverty Massachusetts schools participate in school lunch, less than 40% eat school breakfast. Consequently, our state's most at risk communities are leaving \$25M+ in USDA reimbursements on the table each year<sup>1</sup>.

Massachusetts already requires that high need schools offer breakfast. Moving breakfast from before the bell and in the cafeteria, to after the bell where it can be eaten in the classroom, is a simple strategy to boost breakfast participation to ensure that *all* students are ready to learn each school day.

### **This legislation will:**

- Direct approximately 600 high poverty schools educating over 260,000 students to use a breakfast after the bell delivery model if they are not already doing so.
- Provide flexibility in the delivery model (i.e., breakfast in the classroom, grab & go, second chance breakfast).
- Help close the achievement gap by closing the hunger gap.
- Increase federal funding to high poverty schools.
- Create jobs in our high need communities.



### **Benefits of increased school breakfast participation:**

- Improved academic achievement. One study reports math scores increase 17.5% among regular school breakfast eaters<sup>2</sup>.
- Increased time on learning: attendance goes up while tardiness goes down, and there are fewer visits to the nurse.
- Drawing down millions in federal USDA funds to support school nutrition departments.
- Creating cafeteria jobs with benefits in our high poverty communities.

### **Why this bill works:**

- **Students are prepared to learn:** No one can focus when they are hungry. By ensuring that every child has access to a stigma-free nutritious breakfast, the playing field is made level, students are fed and ready to learn.
- **It gives schools flexibility:** Schools can choose the after the bell breakfast model that works best for them.
- **It draws down federal USDA funds:** Increased participation corresponds to an increase in USDA funding which can be reinvested into school nutrition programming.

### **Massachusetts examples:**

Over 100 high poverty schools across the Commonwealth are already operating after the bell breakfast programs and seeing the benefits listed above. Some of these schools are in Adams-Cheshire, Boston, Brockton, Chicopee, Greenfield, Lawrence, Malden, Pittsfield, Salem, Springfield, Taunton, Wareham, Webster, and Worcester.

These schools have proven that after the bell programs can run in the black and cover requisite start-up costs. Additional foundation and nonprofit funding and technical assistance is available to support start-up costs, leaving districts in even stronger financial positions.

For more information:

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<sup>1</sup>Breakfast and Lunch Participation in Massachusetts Schools; 2012. MassBudget, MLRI, UMass Boston Center for Social Policy.

<sup>2</sup>Ending childhood hunger: A social impact analysis; 2013. Deloitte. <http://www.nokidhungry.org/pdfs/school-breakfast-white-paper.pdf>