

Boosting Breakfast

WINNER: ARAMARK EDUCATION

ENTRY: AMP-UP WITH BREAKFAST

THE BIG IDEA: While every public and private school in the U.S. is eligible to get federal funds to serve breakfast to students, less than a third of children eligible for free/reduced meals get breakfast at school. The reasons are many but logistics are often a big hurdle. Unlike lunch, for which there are set — if sometimes overly limited — times in the school day, breakfast must cope with the near chaos of a typical morning. Finding a way to deliver breakfast to students effectively is a major challenge.



Aramark's AMP-Up With Breakfast program provides a flexible solution that is customizable to multiple types of environments within the more than 420 districts in which the company manages school meal programs. It menus more than 400 grab-and-go products ranging from fruits, yogurt, smoothies and juice beverages to cereals, breakfast snacks and even hot foods to satisfy the tastes of students from kindergarten to high school seniors.

The result of careful research and development by the chefs in Aramark's Innovation Center in Philadelphia, all the selections are designed to comply both with current USDA regulations and dietary guidelines (and thus for federal reimbursement) as well as sometimes more stringent state and local standards, while also appealing to the tastes of young customers.

The quick, portable, hand-held selections can be served in a variety of ways, from breakfast in the classroom to a variety of grab-and-go delivery methods using portable carts, kiosks, tables and service windows. The program can also be adapted to serving a complete breakfast meal in a cafeteria.

At one of the pilot schools the program was introduced, the breakfast in the classroom model increased participation from 36 to 85 percent, accompanied by lowered tardiness and increased attention — something research has shown is one of the benefits of children getting a nutritious morning meal.

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