

Grab and Go Breakfast

Standard Operating Procedures

Serving Grab and Go breakfast in high-traffic areas – such as student drop-off or main hallways – provides equitable access to breakfast for all students, reduces serving time and has proven to increase breakfast participation. This means more students start their day nourished and prepared to learn, and it increases revenue for school nutrition departments.

Creating a strategy for Grab and Go Breakfast (also known as Second Chance Breakfast) helps ensure a smooth transition from traditional cafeteria breakfast and fosters a sustainable program. To assist with implementation, National Dairy Council has prepared this comprehensive list of Standard Operating Procedures.

Roles and Responsibilities

While there must be a champion or a team championing expanding breakfast, a successful Grab and Go Breakfast Program involves multiple stakeholders, all playing different but equally important roles, outlined below.

- **School Nutrition Director:**

The school nutrition director is typically the key player in getting a Grab and Go Breakfast Program started (The Champion). Typically, a school nutrition director will present the concept to district administration and principals and obtain critical buy-in. They are also responsible for training the rest of their school nutrition staff, teachers and janitorial staff on new policies/procedures. Additional responsibilities include equipment purchasing, food and equipment storage, and completion of grant applications.

- **Superintendent:**

Superintendents can be powerful partners in school nutrition initiatives, including Grab and Go Breakfast. When implementing district-wide breakfast expansion programs, a superintendent should be involved in the early discussions. Their buy-in is valuable when presenting the concept to individual school principals and critical to ensuring streamlined, district-wide implementation.

- **Principals:**

A principal's support of Grab and Go Breakfast is crucial to the longevity and success of the program in their school. They can help obtain buy-in from teachers and janitorial staff and help promote Grab and Go with students and parents.

- **Teachers:**

Widespread teacher support of Grab and Go Breakfast helps ensure each classroom follows the plan. Teachers should be provided with training on the benefits and procedures of Grab and Go service, especially if students will be allowed to bring Grab and Go items into their classrooms.

- **Custodians:**
Custodians play one of the most important roles in any food service model. Initial buy-in should be obtained from the district's lead custodian and campus' lead custodian to ensure appropriate staff coverage is available. They can also provide valuable input when designing the program procedures, such as trash pickup locations and times and what, if any, additional custodial supplies are needed.
- **School Nutrition Supervisors:**
School nutrition supervisors can help deliver teacher and staff trainings and help create promotion plans for students and parents. During the initial rollout, they can play an important role in monitoring campus-wide/district-wide food prep, cart placement and service, teacher/student reception and cleanup.
- **School Nutrition Menu Planner:**
Grab and Go Breakfast cycle menus should be carefully thought out to capitalize on the model's strengths and decrease potential accidents. For example, menu planners should consider choosing foods less likely to cause spillage and foods that travel well in a mobile breakfast cart.
- **School Nutrition Managers:**
School nutrition managers will oversee food prep of Grab and Go items as well as initial distribution in mobile carts. They will also be responsible for entering all information into point of sale (POS) systems.
- **Students:**
Involve students at an early stage to get them excited about the new service model. Set expectations regarding where they will be allowed to eat the Grab and Go items and dispose of their trash. This will help limit additional work from the custodial staff.
- **Parents:**
Parents should receive educational resources on any new food service model, especially Grab and Go Breakfast. They can also support by ensuring children arrive at school on time.

Additional Resources:

[FRAC - School Breakfast Expansion Strategies](#)

[FRAC - How it works factsheet](#)

[USDA - School Breakfast Program Overview](#)

[Find Your Local Dairy Council](#)

[No Kid Hungry - Breakfast After the Bell Logistics](#)

Implementation and Logistics

Rollout Timeline:

3-6 Months Prior to Rollout

School Nutrition Staff:

- Solicit buy-in from superintendent, principals, custodians, and school campuses.
- Visit local districts successfully implementing Grab and Go to observe best practices and ask school nutrition director for training materials.
- Consider potential opportunities to work with your local dairy council or other partners to uncover potential grant opportunities.
- Develop a task force of school stakeholders to discuss the model change and provide feedback/input.
 - Include the principal, teachers, custodians, school nutrition staff and student representative.
 - Discuss food pickup schedule, trash disposal areas and insulated bag storage areas.
- Determine what additional equipment will be needed and initiate purchase.
- Confirm rollout timeline with principal.
- Do a walk-through of facilities to determine best location(s) for a Grab and Go Breakfast cart and any additional storage locations needed to increase efficiency.
- Determine point of sale, counting, and claiming method.
- Determine training resources needed and coordinate Grab and Go Breakfast training schedule leading up to launch date.
- Begin developing cycle menus and exploring menu items for service.

District Administration / Principals:

- Agree to Grab and Go Breakfast implementation, support district/campus transition to new model.
- Accompany school nutrition director on visits to local districts successfully implementing Grab and Go to observe best practices.
- Approve equipment purchases, if necessary.
- Inform office staff of rollout progress, including training schedules, and supply them with all necessary breakfast expansion information to field questions from staff, parents and students.

Third Party Support:

- Contact your local dairy council to determine if there are programs or support available to help with your breakfast expansion efforts.
- Often grants are available for expanding breakfast through organizations such as No Kid Hungry, Federal and State Departments of Agriculture, FRAC and more. Investigate whether grants are available in your area.

Custodians:

- Provide buy-in to Grab and Go Breakfast model.
- Begin to determine new food pickup schedule, trash disposal areas, etc.
- Consider staff/labor schedules and responsibilities.

Teachers/Staff:

- School Nutrition may select a few teachers to attend visits to local districts successfully implementing Grab and Go Breakfast to observe best practices. This helps with teacher and staff buy-in.

2-3 Months Prior to Rollout

School Nutrition Staff:

- Develop and execute a marketing campaign to educate students, staff, and parents on Grab and Go Breakfast. Consider using:
 - School announcements
 - Direct mail
 - Email
 - School and district website
 - School and district social media
- Finalize cycle menus, considering items that are classroom friendly.
- Finalize what claiming method will be used and whether POS systems used on mobile carts will need access to electrical outlets.
- Coordinate with custodians to finalize a plan for handling trash items to be recycled, and any potential compost. Confirm if any additional trash equipment and containers that are needed and order any additional equipment.
- Develop a plan for late students to obtain breakfast.

- Order any additional Grab and Go supplies (e.g., trash bags, disinfectant wipes, etc.) that carts or classrooms will need.
- Conduct teacher and staff trainings.

District Administration / Principals:

- Support parent education efforts. For instance, a letter to parents providing all essential information about the program and include opt-out information.
- Support staff and teacher trainings.
- Coordinate with School Nutrition on rollout process.

Teachers/Staff:

- Attend Grab and Go Breakfast trainings. Teachers who attended site visits earlier in the year should share their experience during the training.

Custodians:

- Designate areas in school for trash containers and pickup.
- Determine trash pickup times.

Throughout Rollout

School Nutrition Staff:

- Continue marketing efforts: consider running a contest to promote the new service method.
- Observe each campus during first month of rollout.
- Make immediate adjustments to the program as needed to troubleshoot issues.
- Solicit feedback from campus stakeholders to identify areas for improvement.

District Administrators / Principals:

- Support School Nutrition in meeting with school stakeholders to troubleshoot any issues.
- Provide marketing and education support through staff and parent communications.

1-6 Months After Rollout (Ongoing)

School Nutrition Staff:

- Check average daily participation (ADP) numbers for improvements. Evaluate any increases and develop a plan to sustain participation and/or continue increases.
- Check all equipment regularly to ensure performance and any maintenance needs.
- Meet with Grab and Go task force to address any concerns or potential improvements.
- Observe food waste and create a plan to address, if needed. Options to discuss include share tables or revised menu planning.

Additional Resources:

[School Breakfast Program | Food and Nutrition Service \(usda.gov\)](#)

[No Kid Hungry - Breakfast Best Practices](#)

Equipment Guide:

The equipment needed to execute Grab and Go Breakfast varies and your local dairy council can provide more information and direct you to those approved vendors. Prices are approximate. Contact your equipment supplier for a quote.

Grab and Go Carts	\$2,000-\$5,000 per unit, depending on model.
Insulated Cooler Bags	\$100-\$150 per unit depending on size
Cooler Bag Travel Carts	\$50 per unit (approximately)
Cooler Bag Dividers	\$45 per unit (approximately)

Equipment Purchasing Resources:

[Breakfast Cart | Experts in Innovative Food Merchandising Solutions | HUBERT.com](#)

[Sterno Insulated Bags](#)

[School Nutrition - Norris Corp](#)

[Equipment supplier one sheet 092520.pdf | Powered by Box](#)

Staffing and Labor Costs

It is important to understand how a new breakfast service model will affect food service staffing needs. A good way to estimate additional staff hours is to estimate the number of breakfast meals your staff makes per hour and plan for an increase in breakfast by at least 50%. Additionally, look at our current schedule and determine if you will need to adjust the start time of your staff to cover breakfast program preparation and delivery. Use our [Sample Labor Cost Model](#) to help plan for your staffing and labor needs.

Menus and Food Cost

When determining the menus for Grab and Go Breakfast service, keep these items in mind:

- If you are operating under Offer vs. Serve, consider how to communicate menu component requirements to students.
- Think about items that are easy for Grab n Go that will minimize spills or messes such as avoiding items that will require syrup or other sticky sauces.
- Potentially form a student committee to get feedback on menu.
- Will you serve hot and cold meals?
- Are any supplies needed to eat Grab and Go o meals (e.g., sporks, bags, hand wipes, straws, etc.)?

Additional Resource:

[Nat'l Libray of Medicine - Sample Cycle Menus](#)

Financials

There are many organizations with the mission of Expanding Access to School Breakfast that could be resources for funding. Your Local Dairy Council may be able to help identify opportunities for funding.