

School Lunch and Breakfast

The National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs reimburse participating schools and institutions that serve lunches and breakfasts to students in an educational setting of a high school grade or under. Students may qualify for free or reduced price meals; households may submit applications at any time during the school year.

School meals must meet established nutrient standards and comply with the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. The USDA's Team Nutrition projects have provided many resources and training opportunities to help school staff serve healthier meals. It is well accepted that " a hungry child cannot learn." Multiple studies document that School Breakfast Programs increase student test scores and reduce tardiness and absences.

Approximately 35-40% of Wyoming's schools participate in the School Breakfast Program. In contrast to the 8,753,599 school lunches that were served to Wyoming students in School Year 1998-99, only 1,361,149 school breakfasts were served. According to data from the nutrition advocacy group, Food Research Action Center (FRAC), Wyoming ranks 46th in the nation for the number of schools that offer school lunch that also offer breakfast.

"The School Breakfast Program is a nutrition and education program for all school children. It is not a welfare program for poor kids. As the call for higher education standards continues to be met, we educators will be placing more demands on our students. It is our responsibility to help them succeed. We must start by encouraging every school to make breakfast available to all students, to ensure their health and well being, and to prepare them adequately for their school day, their future, and the future of this country."

Bob Chase, President, National Education Association

Federal reimbursement for the school meals programs totaled \$9,241,901 in School Year 1998-99.

[Staff](#)