

Project Bread 2025–26 School Breakfast Grant Programs

Project Bread is pleased to offer two grant opportunities for Massachusetts schools to improve and expand their School Breakfast programs to enable increased participation and quality of breakfast programs during the 2025–26 school year.

Serving School Breakfast via an alternative breakfast model that extends breakfast “After the Bell” is a proven way to improve access for students. As such, these grants will prioritize schools looking to begin or significantly expand Breakfast After the Bell (BATB). BATB models include Grab & Go from a kiosk or from the cafeteria, Breakfast in the Classroom, Second Chance Breakfast, or other innovative models.

- **School Breakfast Collaboration Grant**
 - In close collaboration with Project Bread’s Child Nutrition staff, this grant program will support schools in designing and implementing a new or significantly expanded breakfast strategy. Schools should choose this option if they are seeking increased consultation from Project Bread throughout the grant period to support the development and execution of an alternative breakfast model, implement the BATB strategy, and/or address specific challenges hindering breakfast program improvements.
 - [Find full details and application instructions here.](#)
- **Breakfast After the Bell Implementation Grant**
 - This grant program will support schools in implementing a new or significantly expanded breakfast program strategy. Schools should select this option if they have a clear plan developed, know the alternative breakfast model / BATB strategies they would like to implement and the items they would like to include in their budget, and do not feel they need much consultation support with their program strategy.
 - [Find full details and application instructions here](#)

Breakfast After the Bell – Alternative Breakfast Models

Breakfast After the Bell models include Breakfast in the Classroom, Grab & Go Breakfast, Second Chance Breakfast, and hybrid combinations of these three models. These models are alternatives to traditional breakfast served in the cafeteria only available before the start of the school day, and are intended to allow all students to access a healthy morning meal, no matter when they arrive at school. It is important that each school chooses the model that fits their specific situation and the needs of their student body. The flexibility of alternative breakfast models makes it possible to cater to the needs of any type of school. More information and specifics on BATB models can be found at: <https://projectbread.org/resource-directory/breakfast-after-the-bell-resources> and at <https://projectbread.org/start-or-expand-school-breakfast>.

The intent of a robust Breakfast After the Bell program is to maximize access to School Breakfast for all students in the school. Programs that make BATB available to tardy students only or to a subset of the student body do not meet the intent of this grant program. With its School Breakfast Grants, Project Bread seeks to support school nutrition programs to implement robust BATB programming that is accessible daily to all students in the school, breaking down barriers to access and creating an environment where eating school breakfast is a routine part of each school day. Examples include but are not limited to:

- A school implementing Breakfast in the Classroom (BIC) for the first time needs start-up equipment such as insulated bags, transport carts, or other equipment to launch the program.
- A school implementing Grab & Go Breakfast (G&G) for the first time needs start-up equipment such as a Grab & Go Breakfast Cart, or other equipment to launch the program.
- A large HS or MS is looking to add a Second Chance Breakfast after 1st period, but the passing period is short and multiple G&G locations would be needed in order to serve students quickly and allow them to get to the next class on time. This grant could help with the equipment (and/or staffing start-up costs) needed to launch several 2nd Chance Breakfast locations.
- A school has previously allowed students to take breakfast from the cafeteria before the bell rings, and kids take food to class. This grant could help implement G&G cart locations that are more accessible in high-traffic locations outside of the cafeteria, provided the timing of breakfast is extended to be served After the Bell, in addition to before the bell.
- A school has been operating G&G carts but is struggling with participation and students growing tired of the pre-packaged options served. This grant could help with the equipment (and/or staffing start-up costs) to begin prepping more breakfast items in-

house (such as breakfast sandwiches/wraps, smoothies, baked items, etc.) to be served from the carts that appeal more to students.

- A school is serving hot breakfast in the cafeteria (serving both before and after the bell rings), but is struggling to reach students who don't come to the cafeteria. This grant could help the school add a hybrid model to their existing program (such as G&G cart or service from another location) to pull in students who don't eat in the cafeteria.
- A school is struggling to promote their breakfast program to students & families. Along with using the grant to expand the BATB program, up to 40% of grant funds could be used for promotion activities, such as: covering costs associated with promoting breakfast in the school/cafeteria, developing a breakfast marketing/activity booklet to send home with students, purchasing paid social media advertisements to boost the reach of breakfast marketing online, etc.

Background

Project Bread is a statewide organization that ensures reliable access to food for Massachusetts residents through policy and programmatic solutions. For over twenty years, Project Bread has worked with Massachusetts communities to increase participation in school and summer child nutrition programs, in partnership with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Project Bread's Child Nutrition team provides one-on-one assistance, outreach and marketing, grants, and innovative solutions to support schools that are implementing and expanding their breakfast programs. Each year, we work with school districts to help them start new programs or expand existing programs through adopting alternative breakfast models, engaging key stakeholders, and implementing strategic promotional tactics to increase student engagement and participation. Our goal is to ensure that all children in Massachusetts have reliable access to food, and start the day nourished and ready to learn.

Starting the day with a nutritious meal is important for every student--no matter their family's income level--but for children who don't eat breakfast at home, school breakfast is especially important. Children who eat a healthy breakfast are more likely to retain what they learn in class, behave better, and experience better health outcomes. With free school meals now available for all students in MA, access to school breakfast is greatly improved. Pairing free breakfast with an After the Bell breakfast model served outside of the cafeteria can increase access even more. Offering Breakfast After the Bell (BATB) is an effective way to reduce barriers or stigma associated with traditional cafeteria breakfast, increase breakfast access to all students, and achieve higher participation rates.