



WSPTA acknowledges that school breakfast is associated with a variety of positive outcomes, such as improved health, increased school attendance, reduced behavioral problems, and increased academic achievement. Unfortunately, a majority of Washington students who qualify for free or reduced-price breakfasts do not currently receive one at school, with many students eating no breakfast at all.^{1, 2}

Background

Food insecurity is an issue for one in four students in Washington State. However, **for students with access to free and reduced lunch, there is only a 33% utilization rate for breakfast**, well short of the Food Research and Action Center goal of 70%. In fact, only 10% of school districts in Washington State have reached that goal.^{1,3}

Issues surrounding food insecurity sneak into many aspects of students' school success. In schools that are meeting national breakfast participation goals (70%) there are fewer suspensions and expulsions (17.7%), fewer missed school days (40%) and an increase in student test scores.¹

Washington state ranks 45th in the nation for utilization of school breakfast. Implementing Breakfast After the Bell programs in Washington's 400 high needs schools would help reduce barriers to school breakfast such as bus schedules and stigma by making it a seamless part of the school day, just like lunch. **Breakfast After the Bell is estimated to result in 25,000 more free and reduced-price eligible students participating in breakfast each day, totaling 5.25 million additional breakfasts served each year.**^{1,4,5}

WSPTA has been a supporter of this legislation since it was introduced to the legislature in the 2013 session (HB 1295). **In the 2017 Legislative Session, ESHB 1508⁶ passed the House 90-8;** a companion bill, SB 5696⁷ stalled.

Proposed Solutions

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that:

- **Institute and fund a Breakfast After the Bell Program in high needs schools**, provide adequate time for students to consume the offered food⁶, and provide that student participation in breakfast after the beginning of the school day must be considered instructional hours if students are provided the opportunity to engage in educational activity.⁷
- **Encourage early adoption of Breakfast After the Bell Programs at the district level.**

For More Information

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Citations

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2. Food Research and Action Center (2014) Research Brief: Breakfast for Learning. <http://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/breakfastforlearning-1.pdf>
3. Washington Appleseed (2017). Retrieved from <http://www.waappleseed.org/school-breakfast>
4. Breakfast After the Bell Coalition (2016) Fact Sheet for HB 1295. https://www.nokidhungry.org/sites/default/files/2016_BAB_Fact_Sheet.pdf
5. Washington State Board of Health (2017) Health Impact Review of HB 1508. <http://sboh.wa.gov/Portals/7/Doc/HealthImpactReviews/HIR-2017-07-HB1508.pdf?ver=2017-02-01-142730-990>.
6. House Bill 1508 (2017-18). <http://app.leg.wa.gov/billssummary?BillNumber=1508&Year=2017>
7. Senate Bill 5696 (2017-18). <http://app.leg.wa.gov/billssummary?BillNumber=5696&Year=2017>

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