

It's not just school breakfast. It's bigger than that. It's starting the day off right at West Burlington Independent School District.

You've probably heard it before—**breakfast is the most important meal of the day**. This tried-and-true saying is supported by years of research that show the important health benefits of eating a well-rounded breakfast in the morning. For instance, breakfast eaters are more likely to maintain a healthy weight¹, are less likely to be hungry later in the day², and consume more nutrients than those who rarely eat breakfast³.

Breakfast is important for your student's success, both in and out of school. Eating breakfast can help improve math, reading, and standardized test scores², improve memory and focus in the classroom⁴, and establish healthy habits for later in life.

Eating school breakfast is easier than ever! School breakfast cuts down on the morning rush to get your child ready for the day. It means you have one less thing to worry about in the morning!

Breakfast at West Burlington Elementary starts at 7:30 and 7:45 at Jr/Sr high school.



1. Timlin, M., Pereira, M., Story, M., & Neumark-Sztainer, D. (2008). Breakfast eating and weight change in a 5-year prospective analysis of adolescents: Project EAT (Eating Among Teens). *Pediatrics*, 121, e638-645.

2. Rampersaud, G.C., Pereira, M., Girard, P., Adams, J., Metz, J. (2005). Breakfast habits, nutritional status, body weight, and academic performance in children and adolescents. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, 105(5), 743-60.

3. Min, C. et al. (2011). Skipping breakfast is associated with diet quality and metabolic syndrome risk factors of adults. *Nutrition Research and Practice*, 5(5), 455-463.

4. Wesnes, K.A., Pincock, C., Richardson, D., Helm, G., & Halls, S. (2003). Breakfast reduces declines in attention and memory over the morning in schoolchildren. *Appetite*, 41(3), 329-331.

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It's not just school lunch. It's bigger than that. It's getting the facts about lunchtime in West Burlington Independent School District .

School lunch at West Burlington is always a great choice. The cafeteria staff works hard each and every day to prepare healthy and tasty meals for students. ["At *West Burlington*], we want students to feel good throughout the day and perform the best they can in the classroom," says Patty McPherson, Food Service Director. Meals served in your child's school make it easier than ever before to build a healthy plate full of the nutrients kids need to grow and succeed, throughout the school day and beyond.

Listed below are some common myths about school lunch. Learn the facts about school lunch by visiting schoolmeals.educateiowa.gov and take a look at the "School Lunch Myths" or "FAQ" sections of the website.

Myth #1: School cafeterias only serve prepackaged food.

Truth: The Iowa Department of Education's Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program (FFVP) and the Iowa Department of Agriculture's Farm-to-School Program work to make sure that children eating school lunch have access to a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. Many of these foods are grown by Iowa farmers!

Myth #2: Frozen and canned fruits and vegetables are not as healthy as fresh.

Truth: In the winter months, fresh produce can be hard to find or expensive and sometimes doesn't taste great. Luckily, frozen fruits and vegetables provide the same nutrients as fresh. In fact, flash-freezing fruits and vegetables when they are ripe preserves their nutritional value, so they are actually more nutritious than fresh fruits and veggies that have been sitting around for a while. Same for most canned fruits and veggies—when these foods are canned, they keep those nutrients longer than fresh fruits and vegetables.

Myth #3: School lunch guidelines do not provide enough calories for active, growing children.

Truth: The new meal rules were developed to make sure that students are getting enough to eat—even if they are very active outside of school. Remember that school meals provide only one part of a child's nutrition and energy needs over the course of the day. School lunch should meet just one-third of the daily calorie needs of school children.

For more information and tips to keep your growing child feeling satisfied throughout the school day, or specific tips for fueling your student-athlete, visit the It's Not Just School Lunch website at schoolmeals.educateiowa.gov.

The bottom line: School lunch is not only a healthy and nutritious part of your child's day—it's a step in the right direction towards a healthier West Burlington School District.

It's not just school lunch. It's choosing to support your school.

Have you ever wondered where the money you pay for school lunch goes? It's not as simple as you might think. Let's say your child spends \$2.50 on school lunch. That money doesn't necessarily add to your school's income. School meals cost more to prepare than what students pay for them. Most of this difference is covered by reimbursements from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Schools automatically receive a certain amount of money from the USDA for each meal served at the school. **Schools that meet the federal rules for school lunch receive an additional 6 cents of reimbursement per school lunch sold.**

However, if your student buys food through the a la carte line instead of school lunch, the school does **not** receive money from the USDA for these purchases. In addition, the money from vending machine sales often gets split between the school and the vendor, resulting in a **loss of profit** for the school.

What if my child qualifies for free or reduced lunch?

Our school gets money from the federal government to help cover the cost of providing free or reduced price meals. Schools where more than 60% of lunches served are free or reduced price receive an additional \$.02 reimbursement per lunch served.

¹University of Iowa Public Policy Center. (2013). *Iowa parent school lunch survey: Formative research for communication about school meal pattern changes* [White Paper].

²School Nutrition Association. (2008). School lunch: Good for kids and good for your wallet. Retrieved from http://schoolnutrition.org/uploadedFiles/School_Nutrition/102_ResourceCenter/MarketingYourProgram/PRToolkit/ValueofLunch08.pdf

³School Nutrition and Fitness. "Bagged Lunch vs. School Lunch." Available from http://district.schoolnutritionandfitness.com/sublettecsd1/files/Bagged_Lunch_Vs_School_Lunch_combined.pdf

It's not just school lunch. It's making sure every student gets enough food to last the school day.

You have probably heard about the national standards for school lunch that include a limit on calories served per school lunch. Since these new standards were passed, some parents have complained that their child is not getting enough to eat at school lunch.

In fact, the new meal standards are there to make sure that students are getting enough to eat—even if they are very active outside of school. Remember that school meals provide only one part of a child's nutrition and energy needs over the course of the day. School lunch is supposed to meet just one-third of the daily calorie needs of school children.

"We want every kid to leave the lunch room feeling satisfied and energetic". To make sure that your child gets the most out of school lunch and doesn't leave hungry, try the following tips:

Educate your student about the meal standards

Your child may not be choosing to take all the food available to him or her in the cafeteria line. Understanding the amount of food that can be selected the first time through the cafeteria line can help ensure that active kids are getting the greatest energy benefit from their meal. Help your child understand what the calorie maximums really mean—going by the new standards, a school lunch must include fruit, vegetables, a whole grain item, a meat product, and milk.

Consider your options

Schools and families have options to help meet the energy needs of highly active students, such as student-athletes. If your child is active before and/or after school and needs extra food to get through the day, consider packing a small, high energy snack such as apples and peanut butter, trail mix or granola, or a cheese stick or two. Parents can also work with school coaches or extracurricular supervisors to coordinate bringing snacks for extra fuel during after-school activities. Contact your child's school for more information about these options.

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