



# Austin ISD: CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meal Program

## Snapshot of Austin ISD in 2013-2014

Students Enrolled in District		Campuses in District	
Total Students	85,921	Total Campuses	121
Eligible for Free or Reduced Meal	54,363 (63%)	Campuses eligible for CACFP	84 (69%)
Average daily participation in CACFP At Risk Afterschool Meal Program	1,923	Campuses Serving CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meal	32

### The Austin ISD At-Risk Afterschool Meal Program...

**Background.** Austin ISD is the largest school district in Central Texas; serving a student population of more than 85,000. Nearly 65% of these students qualify for a free or reduced meal which allows the school district to take advantage of many great school nutrition programs. One of these programs, the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meal Program (Afterschool Meal Program), allows the district to feed a warm meal to their students every day after school. This program helps the district not only feed their students, but also provide them with the chance to take advantage of an afterschool program.

**Getting Started.** The Afterschool Meal Program is in its second year of implementation, but the district has been serving an afterschool meal to students for the past six years through a partnership with the Capitol Area Food Bank. This program, Kid's Café, is food bank sponsored and allowed the district to provide meals with food supplied by the food bank. Austin ISD was one of the first school districts to participate in this program, and it served as the perfect precursor to the Afterschool Meal Program. The rollout of the Afterschool Meal Program began with the 16 campuses who had been participating in the Kid's Café program, and then the district began to offer it to other qualifying campuses. The nutrition department did not have to do much to convince their school staff to be on board with the transition, as Austin ISD has a very dedicated staff that has a passion for serving students.

**After School Meal Champion.** The transition from the Kid's Café to the Afterschool Meal Program proved seamless due to the work and dedication of Austin ISD nutrition director, Chris Carrillo-Spano. After she researched the benefits of the Afterschool Meal Program, Carrillo-Spano decided the program would offer an opportunity for the district to provide a self-sufficient program that would not only benefit the students, but the district and her nutrition staff as well. In addition to Carrillo-Spano's desire to implement the program, the community was very supportive of this implementation as well!

#### Tips for Implementing Your Program

- Essential to have principals and custodians buy in campus buy in
- Work closely with principals and try to meet all of their wants
- Mainstream menu
- Use locally grown produce
- Having support is key!!

**Logistics and Sustainability** For ease of implementation, every campus in Austin ISD that participates in the Afterschool Meal Program utilizes a uniform serving model. Students come into the cafeteria, pick up a meal, and enter their account number into the POS system, which allows the district to maintain a high rate of accountability. All students eat in the cafeteria, and then move onto their afterschool program. The district serves a hot meal at each offering and uses a very similar meal pattern as is used for lunch. Using a similar pattern and menu allowed the district to ease their school nutrition staff into the Afterschool Meal serving process. While the logistics of the Afterschool Meal Program are overseen by the Austin ISD Nutrition staff, the required educational enrichment component of CACFP has been governed by a variety of afterschool programs such as 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Primetime, ACES, and in some cases the individual campus, which can hold tutoring sessions for their students. The partnership with the district and these afterschool programs has been mutually beneficial, as the district can provide a warm meal for students who attend the afterschool programs, and the programs handle the advertisement of the free warm meal to parents and students. Currently the Austin ISD program operates in elementary schools, but there has been interest from middle schools, and the district is exploring how the program would look in the middle schools in order to ensure a successful implementation.

**Application Process** In order to serve a meal through the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meal Program, all school district must submit an application to the Texas Department of Agriculture. Unfortunately, this application can be frustrating, but it can be done! As one of the earliest adopters of the Afterschool Meal Program, Austin ISD had very few other districts to look to with any questions about the application process. Now though, with their second application under their belt, they hope to serve as a resource for other Texas school districts that are beginning this process!

**Program Cost** Providing the Afterschool Meal Program to students in Austin ISD is cost neutral for the district. Wendi Caudill, an Area Supervisor for Austin ISD who works closely with the Afterschool Meal Program, said that the district has to closely watch labor costs and waste to ensure the program stays cost neutral. The district's exceptional staff also works hard to cut down on extra expenses at the campus level as well. Caudill also mentioned the district makes a strong effort to participate in recycling and composting, which can benefit the district in more ways than one!

**For More Information** about Austin ISD's supper program, please contact:

Wendi Ebbeler-Caudill, Area Supervisor

Phone: 512.414.0251 Email: wendi.caudill@austinisd.org

To learn more about the district, visit Austin ISD's website at :

<http://www.austinisd.org/>

CHILDREN AT RISK is a research and advocacy organization promoting the wellbeing of children in Texas. We are reaching out to school districts across the state encouraging and supporting their participation in the CACFP "AT RISK" supper program. As part of our outreach efforts, we are developing a series of case studies featuring the best practices of school districts already implementing the "At Risk" supper program. These case studies will serve as a reference and guide for districts expanding their meal programs.

**CONTACT:** Jenny Eyer, Assistant Director, Health and Nutrition  
214.599.0072 or jeyer@childrenatrisk.org



Austin ISD

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