



# Corsicana ISD: Serves Universal Free School Breakfast

## Snapshot of Corsicana ISD in 2015/2016

Students Enrolled in District <sup>1</sup>		Campuses in District <sup>1</sup>	
Total Students	6,017	Total Campuses	8
Eligible for Free/Reduced Price	4,662 (77%)	Over 80% Free/Reduced Price Eligible	4
Eating Breakfast (2015-2016)	4,513 (75%)	Over 70% Free/Reduced Price Eligible	6

### Corsicana ISD's Breakfast Program...

**Background.** Corsicana ISD consists of 8 campuses and just over 6,000 students. Currently, Corsicana ISD has a high percentage of free and reduced price students, with 77% qualifying overall. All campuses offer Universal Free School Breakfast, with Breakfast in the Classroom (BIC) in all elementary schools (6) and a normal cafeteria line in the middle and high school campuses. A true champion of breakfast, Corsicana ISD has been using BIC since 2009.

#### Corsicana ISD at a Glance

- All campuses offer Universal Free School Breakfast.
- The elementary school campuses (6) serve Breakfast in the Classroom.
- The middle and high school campuses serve breakfast in regular cafeteria lines.

**Breakfast Champions.** Although Breakfast in Classroom started under a management company in 2008, Superintendent Dr. Diane Frost has been a consistently strong advocate for Corsicana ISD's breakfast program. Chris Gibbs, Executive of Operations, has been a champion of the Universal Free Breakfast Program as well. In addition to Dr. Frost and Chris Gibbs, all of the principals have been supportive of the program, as they recognize the important link between adequate nutrition and effective learning. Nutrition Director Shirrell Jessie states that the administration's support and promotion of school meals was essential to the overall success and scope of the nutrition programs at Corsicana ISD.

**The Different Models.** As stated above, Corsicana ISD started BIC in 2009 when the nutrition department was run by a management company. Since 2011, Corsicana ISD has been self-operated. Over the years, BIC has flourished at the elementary school campuses. At the middle and high school campuses, students go through a regular cafeteria line, with an additional snack bar at the high school campus in order to reduce the traffic of students in the cafeteria. After assessing the situation, Corsicana ISD decided to offer Universal Free Breakfast to all campuses in order to keep it consistent for parents who have kids at multiple schools.

**Breakfast Implementation.** In Corsicana ISD's elementary schools, 3 bags are delivered to each classroom for BIC: 1 bag with cold or hot breakfast, 1 bag with the juice and milk, and 1 bag with fruit. Trash bags and silverware are also delivered to each classroom. To ensure that the clean up is easier, the nutrition department offers foods that are less messy. Teachers place the leftover food back in the bag, so that the nutrition staff can track how much food was eaten. Shirrell Jessie says that food waste is not a problem at Corsicana ISD. At the middle and high school campuses, students go through a serving line in the cafeteria and often get a choice of either a cold or a hot meal. Cereal is served twice a week and hot breakfast is served three times a week. Corsicana ISD serves many different breakfast items, including biscuits and sausage, breakfast pizza, waffles, pancakes, cinnamon rolls, pancakes on a stick, blueberry muffins, French toast with chocolate chips, and breakfast burritos. Additionally, even if buses are late, Shirrell Jessie and her team make sure that their students are fed.

### **Implementation Tips**

- Train teachers in order to ease their concerns about Breakfast in the Classroom
- Track meals by counting leftovers
- Offer mess-free meals to reduce clean-up time

**Getting Buy-in.** According to Shirrell Jessie, getting buy-in from Corsicana ISD administration was not difficult. Principals and other school administrators recognized the need for breakfast from the very beginning. Additionally, once teachers learned about the benefits and logistics involved with offering breakfast, they quickly supported the program as well.

**Advice.** When asked what advice she would give to other school nutrition directors looking to expand their breakfast programs, Shirrell Jessie stressed the importance of administrative support, including principals, janitorial staff, and superintendents. Thanks to the support from Corsicana administration and the innovative models being utilized by the nutrition department, the breakfast program is thriving at Corsicana ISD!

**For More Information** about Corsicana ISD's meal programs, please contact Shirrell Jessie, Nutrition Director, at [sjessie@cisd.org](mailto:sjessie@cisd.org) or (903) 641-4140. Visit Corsicana ISD's website at <http://www.cisd.org/> to learn more about the district.



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 transition to Universal Free School Breakfast (USB). As part of our outreach efforts, we are developing a series of case studies featuring the best practices of school districts already implementing USB. These case studies will serve as a reference and guide for districts expanding their breakfast programs.

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