



Aldine ISD: CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meal

Snapshot of Aldine ISD

Students Enrolled in District ¹		Campuses in District ¹	
Total Students	69,800	Total Campuses	75
Eligible for Free Meal <small>(AIDSD is a CEP district, there is no reduced rate)</small>	57,316 (85%)	Campuses eligible for CACFP	75
Average daily participation in CACFP "at risk" Supper program	3,500	Campuses Serving Supper	23 (31%)

The Aldine ISD At-Risk Afterschool Meal Program...

Background. Aldine ISD, located in North Harris County in Texas, is the 11th largest school district in the state with over 69,800 students across its 75 campuses. Currently, Aldine ISD serves breakfast and lunch to 58% and 86% of its students respectively. Furthermore, Aldine ISD has been recognized statewide as a leader in nutrition by adopting the newly established Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) At-Risk Afterschool Meal program. This meal program is designed for schools located in areas where 50% of the student population qualify for free or reduced price meals. These schools are allowed to serve a reimbursable dinner in conjunction with an afterschool enrichment program.

Currently, Aldine ISD serves supper at 23 schools—all of its middle and high schools—to approximately 3,500 students/day.

Supper at a Glance

- Free supper provided to 23 campuses district-wide
- Daily average participation of 3,500 students
- Students choose appropriate food items in a self-serve system
- The At-Risk Afterschool Meal Program is self-sustaining

Getting Started. The district saw a need for students to receive a meal while participating in afterschool programs. This need arose as the majority of students had an early lunch, some as early as 10:30 in the morning. If these students were participating in afterschool programs, they might not eat another meal until late at night, or for some not until breakfast the next day. As the district began to research possible options for an afterschool meal service, the United States Department of Agriculture announced the creation of the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meal Program. In 2012, Aldine ISD became one of the first Texas school districts to implement a pilot supper program at one of its middle schools. After the success of the pilot program, Aldine ISD decided to expand its supper program from one middle school to all of its middle and high schools.

Awareness about the new program was communicated to the community via media outlets, postings on the district website, signs in the cafeteria, and letters sent home to parents.

Supper Champion. The administration, both at the district level and individual campus level, was a champion in both the genesis and ongoing success of the supper program. It was the administration that first saw the need for nutritious meals in conjunction with afterschool programs, and their support helped to grow the program in the district.

1. *NSLP and SBP Meal Data for 9/2013 through 5/2014*, Texas Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition, 2014.
 2. *The Curious Case of No-Charge School Breakfast*. Center for Public Policy Priorities, 2013. Retrieved from <http://forabettertexas.org/>

Program Structure: When deciding the logistical structure of the Afterschool Meal Program, the nutrition department gave the district two options: first, a hot meal could be served district-wide at a universal time, or, second, the principals at each school could select the meal serving time where a cold, boxed meal would be served. The latter option was chosen by the district, which allowed for more flexibility at each campus. Currently, the district's registered dietician plans the menu according to the Afterschool Meal Nutrition Guidelines, and menus are frequently rotated. Supper is available to students every afternoon, Monday thru Thursday. The meal is served by the campus nutrition manager, who stays behind after school ends until the meals are served. All meals are prepared during the school day in order to minimize the staff needed for the afterschool meal service. Meals are served in a self-serve manner, and students may eat in the cafeteria or in the classrooms, but are not allowed to leave campus with their meal. To streamline the service process, meals are tracked as they would be for breakfast or lunch, through the normal Point of Sale System.

At-Risk Afterschool Meal Challenges and Solutions: When the Afterschool Meal Program first began, Aldine ISD served meals in a "grab and go" style where all the required meal components were packed in a box. This method created significant waste, and in an effort to circumvent this, Aldine ISD switched to using an offer vs. serve model replacing the boxes with trays. This serving model allows students to choose the food items that they want to eat, and has significantly reduced food waste.

Strategies for Successful Implementation: To ensure success, the child nutrition director, Ms. Dani Sheffield, stresses the importance of involving key stakeholders such as principals, cafeteria staff, students, and afterschool program managers. The application for the CACFP At-Risk Supper Program may appear challenging at first glance, but Sheffield points to the assistance from the Education Service Center as a valuable resource during the application process. Use the ESC's resources! Even after completing the application process, you must continue to monitor the program and cost. The nutrition staff that will stay for the extra few hours to serve the meals will need to be paid overtime. Most importantly, ensure that the excitement the staff have at the beginning of the school year is maintained throughout the year.

For More Information about Aldine ISD's supper program, please contact Dani Sheffield, Director of Child Nutrition, Phone: 281-985-6450
Email: dsheffield@aldine.k12.tx.us
Visit Aldine ISD's website at www.aldine.k12.tx.us to learn more about the district.

Tips for Successful Implementation

- **Keep the menu simple**
- **Monitor costs**
- **Involve key stakeholders**
- **Use the Education Service Center as a resource**



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.

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