



# Harlandale ISD: Serves Universal Free School Breakfast

## Snapshot of Harlandale ISD in 2012/2013

Students Enrolled in District <sup>1</sup>		Campuses in District <sup>1</sup>	
Total Students	15,300	Total Campuses	29
Eligible for Free/Reduced Price	13,251 (87%)	Over 90% Free/Reduced Price Eligible	2 (7%)
Eating Breakfast (2012-2013)	14,159 (93%)	Over 80% Free/Reduced Price Eligible	29 (100%)

### The Harlandale ISD Breakfast Program...

**Background.** Harlandale Independent School District in San Antonio consists of 22 campuses and more than 14,800 students. Harlandale ISD serves Breakfast in the Classroom at each campus, elementary to high school, and routinely has more than 90% of its students participate in breakfast daily! Last year, nine schools had an average daily school breakfast participation of at least 95%. During the 2012/2013 school year, 87% of the students in Harlandale ISD qualified for free or reduced price meals.

**Breakfast Champion.** Both Ray Madrigal, Superintendent of Schools, and Richard Hernandez, Assistant Superintendent of Business, serve as champions for the Harlandale ISD Breakfast in the Classroom program.

#### Breakfast at a Glance

- **Breakfast in the Classroom** at all campuses
- 93% school breakfast participation across the district
- Provision 2 school district
- Self-sustaining program

Both realize the importance of this meal for their students and want them to take advantage of the opportunity to eat a free breakfast in their classroom every day. Whether it is to parents, teachers, students, or principals, both Mr. Madrigal and Mr. Hernandez are vocal in their support of the program. Their support has been vital in sustaining the program for nearly 10 years!

**Sustaining Buy-In.** In order to sustain buy in for this long running program, Child Nutrition Director, Shelly Sheppard routinely visits faculty and staff meetings, student advisory groups and parent groups to speak about the benefits of school breakfast for students. These meetings also serve to increase awareness of the school breakfast program. Maintaining high

breakfast participation is essential to a successful program, and increasing awareness of key stakeholders through these meetings has been a factor in retaining high breakfast participation numbers year after year.

**Provision 2.** Harlandale ISD is a Provision 2 school district. With this designation, Sheppard stated it made sense to serve breakfast in the classroom as they were already serving a free breakfast to all students and the classroom service model ensures an increase in participation. With this provision no rosters or student ID's are needed, rather only a head count is required for each classroom. This reduction in paperwork helps to keep administrative costs low and eases the responsibilities of classroom teachers.

1. NSLP and SBP Meal Data for 9/2012 through 5/2013, Texas Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition, 2013.

**Program Cost.** Harlandale ISD’s Breakfast in the Classroom program is a self-sustaining operation. The cost of operating the program is offset by the increased breakfast participation seen with this service model. By taking breakfast to students in the classroom, Sheppard found that her department is able to reach every student, every day. While the program is currently self-sustaining, new USDA regulations could increase meal program costs, causing concern within the district. These regulations will require an increase in the amount of fruits or vegetables served with breakfast. To counteract this cost increase, Sheppard is looking into collaborative partnership opportunities with area organizations

*Breakfast in the Classroom:  
Implementation Tips*

- Consistency is key!
- Establish a contact person at the administration level for each campus to create an efficient communication model between the Nutrition Department and campuses.
- Have a standardized process at each campus, this includes standardized procedures and equipment.

**Challenges and Solutions.** The biggest challenge faced by the Harlandale ISD nutrition team is consistency of procedures and paperwork in the classroom. When breakfast is served in the classroom, non-food employees are asked to perform food service duties. Standardized procedures are utilized throughout the district, which allows for a smooth transition when employees and students transfer to new schools. Sheppard states that frequent maintenance is needed to ensure faculty

and staff properly serve breakfast, and that these procedures are followed daily. Sheppard is constantly looking for ways to provide information to the breakfast partners at each campus, and is working to create an instructional video that will detail the procedures for breakfast service. This video would be made available to all district employees, specifically those who might be unfamiliar with the program procedures, as well as used for new employee orientation. This will allow for continual education of the procedures necessary for a successful program.

*In the Spotlight:*

*Harlandale High School<sup>1</sup>*

Total Students	1,983
Eligible for Free/ Reduced Price	87% (1,717)
Total Eating Breakfast	90% (1,792)
Free/Reduced Eating Breakfast	92% (1,572)



**For More Information** about Harlandale ISD’s breakfast program, please contact Shelly Sheppard, Child Nutrition Director, at (210) 989-4252. Visit Harlandale ISD’s website at [www.harlandale.net](http://www.harlandale.net) 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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