



Kohl Breakfast Grant Success Stories Final Report

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Executive Summary

During the 2004-5 school year, 14 grantees who had received Kohl School Breakfast Program Improvement funding met an established “success” criteria by increasing participation in their school breakfast programs by at least 15% of their school lunch participation rates. In the fall of 2005, University of Wisconsin-Extension, Family Living Programs hired an outside consultant to design and conduct standardized interviews with each of the 14 food service directors in an effort to distill their success stories into practical guidance for other schools endeavoring to begin or improve school breakfast programs in Wisconsin.

Program Improvement grants were awarded to school districts to aid in reviving or extending a pre-existing School Breakfast Program (SBP). The majority of successful School Breakfast Programs offered a combination of before school, with an alternative to this such as Grab and Go. Offering these kinds of options was the mainstay to successful programs. Many alternatives were also introduced into the menus, particularly balancing hot and cold food choices. Food items were often tailored according to input received from students and were quick and easy for students to access. Overall, the successful SBPs were student-focused, incorporating comments and insights from student/clients. The majority of food service directors used some type of promotion to get students interested in school breakfast. Promotions included raffles, playing students’ music choices during breakfast, announcements, posters, banners, and even local news coverage.

Food service directors described facing many challenges to implementing successful SBPs. The challenges reflected the variability between different school cultures, school relationships, and school administration. The majority of food service directors pointed to lack of support as one of their challenges to implementing a successful breakfast program. The food service directors interviewed showed tenacity with regard to their commitment to their school breakfast programs. Many described in detail the creative solutions they employed to meet the challenges head on.

When asked to describe their greatest school breakfast program success, food service directors gave varied and unique answers. However, over one-third of the food service directors did converge on the increase in participation and student buy-in of the school breakfast program as their greatest success. Everyone felt they could replicate their 2004-5 program success during this school year (2005-6). In fact, as of January 2006, the majority had already met or surpassed their participation rates from last year.

Students, parents, teachers and staff largely had positive comments about the SBPs. When asked to articulate the important components of a successful school breakfast program in WI, these food service directors indicated that the program must be student-focused, quick and easy to participate in, and have great staff.

Kohl Breakfast Grant Success Stories

I. Introduction

The state of Wisconsin serves school breakfast to less than one in three low-income students who qualify to receive it, and foregoes nearly 13 million in Federal funds that could be used for this purpose each year (Food Research and Action Center, 2005). Due to the advocacy efforts of U.S. Senator Herb Kohl, beginning with the 2001-02 school year, the State of Wisconsin is now in its fifth year of U.S. Congressional funding to assist Wisconsin schools with the start-up of School Breakfast Programs (Hunger Task Force of Milwaukee, 2002; State of Wisconsin, Division of Public Instruction, 2005).

Beginning in 2004, University of Wisconsin – Extension, Family Living Programs and the Department of Public Instruction, School Nutrition Team began collaborating to increase the number of Wisconsin students who participate in the School Breakfast Program (SBP). In the 2004-5 school year, WI schools demonstrated an 11.2% increase in the number of children receiving a free or reduced price breakfast over the previous year. While this increase is noteworthy, WI still ranks the lowest in the percent of low-income children who participate in the SBP (Food Research and Action Center, 2005).

In November 2005, the University of Wisconsin – Extension, Family Living Programs contracted Bonita Westover Consulting to conduct interviews with food service directors (FSDs) from fourteen school food service authorities that had successfully increased school breakfast program participation by 15% of their school lunch program participation with the help of Kohl School Breakfast Program Improvement Grant funding during the 2004-2005 school year.

II. Sample and Methods

An interview instrument consisting of 12 questions was developed and pilot tested with food service directors. The interview questions specifically attempted to uncover reasons for each school's increase in school breakfast participation. Figure 1 contains the interview questions asked of each participant.

UW-Extension contacted school principals and FSDs via a letter in December 2005 to invite them to participate in an interview. All FSDs (or their designees) agreed to participate¹. Bonita Westover conducted telephone interviews with participants from January 3-27, 2006. Interviews ranged from 25 – 59 minutes to conduct, with the average being approximately 35 minutes.

¹ While all respondents were not FSDs, their positions were similar to this or they were designated by the food service director to participate in this interview. For the sake of clarity, all respondents to the interview will be referred to as food service directors.

Figure 1: Kohl Breakfast Grant Success Story Interview Questions

1. Did all the schools in your district experience an increase in School Breakfast Program (SBP) participation? How many showed an increase?

For this interview, please focus only on those schools that showed an increase in SBP participation.

2. Please briefly summarize what your School Breakfast Program consists of - include what you were doing before the Grant and what you added with the Kohl Grant funding.
3. Did you implement new or different strategies this past year in your efforts to increase SBP participation? If so, what were they?
4. Were you already doing some things that you think helped to increase participation? What were these things?
5. Was there anything unintended that happened in your district, state or nationally, that you think inadvertently led to your increases? Please describe.
6. Is there anything specific to your district, that might not be the case in other districts, which helped you achieve this increase?
7. What challenges did you face in your efforts to increase School Breakfast Program Participation? What did you do to overcome those challenges?
8. What would you say was your greatest success? Do you think you could replicate this (i.e. do it again next year?)
9. Is there anything you think could/would have increased your participation even more if you had been able to do it? Please describe.
10. Have you received feedback on the SBP from students? parents? staff or teachers? Please describe.
11. Please tell me what you think the most important components of a successful School Breakfast Program are in Wisconsin.
12. Would you be willing to be contacted by someone from another district who might need your advice on increasing their School Breakfast Program rates?

Interview respondents were instructed to discuss only those schools in which there had been at least a 15% increase in SBP participation of the school lunch participation. Table 1 lists the schools in each food service authority funded through the Kohl Program Improvement grant and those meeting the target participation increase of 15%.

Table 1: Study schools, funding, and those demonstrating the targeted increase

School/District	Schools Funded	Schools Meeting Participation Target*
<i>Arbor Vitae-Woodruff Jt1 School District</i>	K-8	Yes
<i>Birchwood Public Schools</i>	Elementary Middle school	No Yes
<i>Boscobel Area School District</i>	Elementary Middle school High school	Yes Yes Yes
<i>Kewaunee School District</i>	K-8 High school	Yes Yes
<i>Ladysmith Hawkins Schools</i>	Elementary A Elementary B Middle school High school	No Yes Yes Yes
<i>Marion School District</i>	Elementary High school	Yes Yes
<i>Milwaukee Public Schools</i>	10 Middle schools	7 Middle Schools
<i>Operation Fresh Start</i>	High school	Yes
<i>Our Lady of Sorrows School</i>	Elementary	Yes
<i>River Ridge School District</i>	Elementary Middle school High school	No Yes No
<i>St. Anthony School</i>	K-12	Yes
<i>Viroqua Area Schools</i>	Middle school	Yes
<i>West Bend School District</i>	Elementary 2 Middle schools High school	No No Yes
<i>Westby Area School District</i>	K-2 3-6 Elementary Middle school High school	No Yes No No No

* Must have been at least 15% of school lunch program participation rate.

III. Insights by Interview Question

Discussion of the data and insights follow according to the order in which questions were presented in the interview. A point of caution is that because interviewees were

unprompted in their responses to each interview question it is possible that schools did more than is reflected in the interview data simply because the interviewee didn't think to mention it at the time of the interview.

The majority of schools that demonstrated the targeted increase in SBP participation did so in all of the schools for which they were funded. However, the fact that some schools in a district could demonstrate the 15% targeted increase and others not, given the same geographic location, likely similar socio-economic status, and same food service director, points to the important "personality" differences among schools. These personality differences may be a result of the staff, students' ages, building layout, past history of breakfast programs, among other factors that must be adeptly addressed to ensure the success of a School Breakfast Program in a given school.

Please briefly summarize what your School Breakfast Program consists of - include what you were doing before the Grant and what you added with the Kohl Grant funding. Did you implement new or different strategies this past year in your efforts to increase SBP participation? If so, what were they?

While each school/district implemented their SBP a little differently from others in order to meet the needs of their particular location, many elements were similar. Variety and options were the hallmarks of these successful SBPs. In addition, changes that were administrative, promotional, educational, increased the ambiance, and involved the purchase of new equipment were also implemented.

Nearly 80% (11 of 14 schools) of interviewed FSDs specifically mentioned adding a greater variety of food options to their breakfast offerings in an effort to increase program participation. At least half of the FSDs mentioned having hot food options available was a very big draw for students. Yogurt and/or fruit smoothies were also popular. One school found them to be such a compelling incentive to SBP participation that they limited the availability of fruit smoothies to only those students participating in school breakfast; smoothies were not available for a la carte purchase.

Students also had options in how and when breakfast was served. New serving options implemented by schools with successful SBPs included buffets, Grab and Go, food carts, and serving breakfast in classrooms. Timing of the program was also important for increasing participation. While over 70% of persons interviewed described their SBP as being offered before school started, most also offered at least one other option such as Grab and Go or breakfast hours that extended later into the morning.

Improving the ambiance of breakfast was an important quality of successful programs. Four of the 14 "successful" SBPs served breakfast in the classroom to students in at least one grade each day, and two served breakfast in their Commons area in an effort to bring breakfast to the students. Breakfast in the classroom creates a more familiar, comfortable and inviting atmosphere for younger students to eat breakfast in. The schools that moved breakfast to the Commons areas were interested in improving the ambiance of the breakfast experience for students. Other methods used to improve

ambiance included playing popular music in the cafeteria; doing away with the use of cafeteria trays; decorations; and allowing kids who weren't eating school breakfast to hang out with their friends who were rather than limiting the breakfast space to only those eating breakfast.

Over 60% of schools interviewed (9 of 14) described a variety of methods used for promoting their SBP to students and families. Promotions included raffles, trivia contests, daily announcements over the schools' public address (PA) systems, banners, flyers, word of mouth, personal invitations, inviting parents to have breakfast with students, menu postings, and more. One school had their local newspaper staff join them for breakfast. At another school, the Principal went out to the playground and rallied kids to come in for breakfast. Many promotional methods served dual purposes. For example, education to families about the benefits of eating breakfast and the reduced/free options available to them served to promote the program. The schools that did away with reduced price breakfasts, and offered free breakfast to all students that qualified for free and reduced price breakfasts, found this step to act both as a promotion of their SBP but also as a time-saving administrative change.

Half of the schools who reached the targeted increase in SBP participation made administrative changes in an effort to get more kids to eat school breakfast. To ease the paperwork burden sometimes associated with SBPs and to attract more reduced price students to the program, a number of schools eliminated their reduced price program, substituting instead free breakfasts for those students who qualified for reduced price meals. A handful of schools discovered they could cover the cost of offering Universal Free breakfast to either all students, certain grades of students, or for a specific period of time due to the Federal reimbursement funds brought in by a high percentage of participating low-income families. Schools also increased the hours and/or hired additional staff. Two schools addressed the short amount of time available to eat breakfast in two different ways. One school hired a "breakfast aide" whose job it was to get younger students from the buses to the cafeteria for breakfast, and to write "hall passes" to any kids who might be tardy to class because of breakfast. This same school was also successful in getting buses to arrive 5 minutes earlier each day. Another school implemented a policy where attendance was not taken until 8:10 am, thereby giving students who arrive on 8 am buses a better opportunity to get a breakfast without being marked late or absent.

At least three of the 14 successful schools used their grant funding to purchase equipment they felt might make their SBP more successful. Equipment purchases included toasters, blenders, food carts, and a laptop computer to name a few.

At least two schools solicited student input and involvement to increase SBP participation. In fact, for one school, the basis of their Kohl funding was to support a student survey project with the sole objective of increasing their current SBP participation. The survey was designed, implemented, analyzed, and presented with recommendations by students. Another school served more Mexican food, since a majority of students were of Mexican origin.

Were you already doing some things that you think helped to increase participation? What were these things?

Five of the 14 successful SBPs (35%) were already doing some type of SBP promotion or education at the time of receiving Kohl funding. This ranged from posting menus in advance at the school and in the school newsletter to advertising in local papers. Some schools were providing ongoing education to students and families about the importance of breakfast and the availability of free/reduced meals.

Four of the 14 successful SBPs were reported by the FSD to already have good food and/or good food choices available in their SBP. One FSD felt it was their frequent offerings of “comfort” food (specifically, pancakes and French toast) that kept their SBP viable.

Three FSDs touted staff support as having provided a foundation upon which to build a successful SBP in their schools. Two schools mentioned ongoing student involvement in their SBP that may have contributed to their overall success. Two FSDs had previously looked into changing bus schedules to accommodate school breakfast – neither was successful in their attempts, but instead found creative ways to work around the late arrival of buses. One of these schools now delivers breakfast to the classrooms.

Was there anything unintended that happened in your district, state or nationally, that you think inadvertently led to your increases? Please describe.

This question was asked in an effort to account for any possibility that SBP participation may have increased because of something completely unrelated to Kohl funding and/or beyond the control of FSDs. Half of FSDs interviewed indicated there was nothing unintended that may have led to their school’s increased participation in the SBP.

The most often cited unexpected events that may have had an influence on SBP participation were:

- media coverage, specifically that dealing with childhood obesity and with Wisconsin’s low SBP participation;
- research studies indicating school breakfast can affect test scores; and
- a new or larger than expected group of low-income students;

It is most likely accurate to assume that the first two events were equally available to all schools that showed an increase in SBP participation. Not all schools may have accessed this information, but these factors alone would not set one successful SBP apart from the others. The three schools that had an increase in the enrollment of low-income students, however, may have experienced an unintended “benefit” leading to increased SBP participation rates.

Is there anything specific to your district that might not be the case in other districts, which helped you achieve this increase?

High poverty rate was the most often cited characteristic, cited by 5 FSDs, that FSDs felt may have set at least five successful SBPs apart from others. A high poverty rate would increase the number of students eligible for free and reduced price meals. Free and reduced price students form the majority of students who utilize the breakfast program in WI. The more free and reduced price students that use the program, the larger the federal reimbursement to the School Breakfast Program to schools.

According to the FSDs interviewed, four schools benefited from having “great staff” that were supportive of SBPs. In one case, the principal was particularly supportive; in another, it was a teacher who supported the program. Two other FSDs cited the overall school culture as a factor that may have accounted for the success of their SBPs. In one case, the school was very open to different methods of learning and had supported a group of students in conducting a survey surrounding ways to improve participation in their SBP. In the other case, the school was non-traditional in that the students both took classes and held jobs. These students apparently felt one improvement would be participation in a school breakfast program. This particular SBP was entirely student promoted and also allowed students to take breakfast “to go” on the way to their worksites.

What challenges did you face in your efforts to increase School Breakfast Program Participation? What did you do to overcome those challenges?

A wide variety of challenges were expressed by interviewees including support, limited staff, bus schedules, limited time, lack of space and the cost of breakfast to students. The challenge expressed most often (8 of 14 SBPs) was lack of support. There was anywhere from one to four major groups of persons who were initially unsupportive of the program – teachers/staff, administrators, cook staff, and parents. Key themes to gaining support from these groups were education, open communication and relationship building, and the ability to problem solve. Gaining the support of the School Board appeared to be one of the most powerful methods of gaining the buy-in of those unsupportive of SBPs. One school specifically promoted the program to School Board members. As a result, School Board members realized the benefits of the program and were more willing to support SBP efforts. Some FSDs negotiated a pilot SBP to see how it worked. In each case, the pilots were successful and the FSDs gained the support they needed to go forward with a more comprehensive SBP. One FSD described the school maintenance engineer as unsupportive of breakfast in the classroom, feeling it would create a lot of trash. In this case, the FSD met with the maintenance engineer and agreed that an extra garbage bag would be placed in each classroom to contain any additional breakfast trash.

Those who said they experienced a lack of support from Administrators generally felt they were able to bridge the differences if they already had a successful relationship, particularly with principals. Those FSDs who described a more collegial relationship

with the school principal felt in a better position to negotiate on behalf of the SBP. Certainly, one of the unspoken methods for overcoming the many challenges faced by successful FSDs was their sheer tenacity. Another FSD described her “don’t take no for an answer” approach to getting the support she needs asking the Principal first, then the Superintendent, then the Board, until she gets the help she needs.

Parents were described as being unsupportive in a handful of schools. In those cases, educational materials outlining the academic benefits of eating a healthy breakfast were enough to sway parents to embrace the idea of SBPs. Cook staff who were initially unsupportive of SBPs, generally ended up embracing the programs in the end, after seeing how a SBP could work. In general, FSDs said they spent a lot of time reassuring their detractors that the problems could be worked out and a SBP would be a good thing.

Separate from the challenge of unsupportive cook staff, was the issue of limited cook staff. Many schools had a very small cook staff working limited hours. In these cases, the solutions often revolved around increasing cook staff hours and bringing in more staff. In one situation, the FSD described using more disposable items and serving more ready-made food to cut down on cook staff work. In another school, the major concerns of the cook staff revolved around uncertainty about the number of students to expect for breakfast each day. In response to this concern, the FSD chose menus that required little prep time so that if they ran low, they could quickly recoup and get food to the students quickly.

Busing and limited time to eat were two related issues cited by at least four FSDs. A number of solutions addressed these challenges. In one case the bus schedules were able to be changed, resulting in a 5 minute earlier arrival time. Other solutions included providing Grab and Go options, serving breakfast in the classroom, and having a morning nutrition break.

Two FSDs mentioned the fact that even a reduced price school breakfast could become expensive for a low-income family with a number of children enrolled in school. However, an “unintended solution” to this issue occurred in those schools that rolled their reduced price program into their free breakfast program, thereby offering free breakfast to more families and relieving reduced price families of the monetary burden of breakfast.

Two FSDs mentioned that students preferred eating together, but lacked the space to accomplish this. At one school where that had been a challenge, breakfast was moved from the cafeteria to a Commons area and they allowed both students who were eating and those who were not eating to hang out together. The other FSD facing this challenge felt the best solution for their school was to deliver breakfast directly to the classrooms.

What would you say was your greatest success? Do you think you could replicate this (i.e. do it again next year?)

Food service directors cited a range of answers to this question. Six of the 14 interviewed FSDs indicated their greatest success was in actually gaining participation and student involvement in the SBP. Specifically, one FSD felt her greatest success was having increased participation in grades where participation was previously the lowest.

Select, significant successes include an increase in the number of adult staff eating breakfast with the students and winning over previously unsupportive staff. At another school, the FSD heard positive comments from the school nurse and teachers. The teachers said after breakfast the students settled down to learning more quickly than in the past. The nurse indicated receiving fewer visits from students, particularly those complaining of stomachaches.

One FSD felt her greatest success was of a marketing nature – she had found the “wow” factor that kept her students interested and returning to the SBP. For her school, the “wow” factor was the availability of smoothies for breakfast. The FSD maintained the “wow” by introducing new flavors every 3 months.

Finally, one FSD was able to keep the SBP “in the black” as a result of increased Federal reimbursements due to increased participation. As a result, she was able to purchase new equipment with the added revenue.

All FSDs interviewed felt they could replicate their current SBP successes the following year. Eight of the 14 FSDs with successful SBPs specifically indicated they had been tracking participation rates and had already reached or surpassed participation rates from the previous year. Two FSDs marveled that they were able to maintain high rates of participation the following year with no promotion. One school was applying for a second year of Kohl funding to expand their SBP into the high school. Another FSD indicated her school would be unlikely to ever start charging elementary students for breakfast again – “it’s just too positive a program now”, she said.

Is there anything you think could/would have increased your participation even more if you had been able to do it? Please describe.

Three FSDs also felt if they had been able to offer another method of serving breakfast, they could have further increased participation – one interviewee wanted to offer Grab and Go; one wanted breakfast in the classroom; the third wanted to offer a morning nutrition break. Two FSDs felt participation rates would have increased even further had the school offered universal free breakfast. Three schools may have been able to increase participation further if they had more staff to help with school breakfast. In one case, the FSD simply needed someone to supervise the students who were not having school breakfast. Two SBPs might have shown greater participation had differences in busing been implemented. In one case, the FSD wanted buses to drop students by the

Commons area where breakfast was served, rather than on the other side of the school. In the other case, the FSD wanted buses to arrive by 7:30 a.m. so students had time to eat before class.

Have you received feedback on the SBP from: students? parents? staff or teachers? Please describe.

All Food service directors reported either hearing positive comments from students and/or surmising that the rates of student participation in the SBP reflected a general happiness with the program. In five schools, the FSDs often heard comments from students on the menu selections – what they liked/did not like, surprise at the variety available etc. Schools tried to incorporate these into their programs. One FSD recalled hearing students say eating breakfast made them feel better. In one school that restricted their SBP to specific grades, the students requested that SBP be provided when they move to the next grade as well. The school was able to accommodate this request.

Over 70% of FSDs (10 of 14) reported hearing comments from parents regarding the SBP. Of those who heard comments from parents, only one FSD heard a negative comment. In this case, parent(s) were concerned that having breakfast in the classroom took away from instructional time. However, other parents in that district were supportive of the SBP. Overall, nine out of ten FSDs who heard comments from parents heard very positive comments. In one school, it was the parents who requested the SBP be implemented.

Over 90% (13 of 14) of FSDs heard positive comments from teachers and/or staff surrounding their SBP. The other FSD reported hearing no comments from the teachers or staff. In at least six cases, teachers commented to the FSDs about student's positive behavior and performance in class after eating breakfast. One teacher commented that she could tell when certain of her students ate breakfast. In at least three schools, teachers and staff joined the students for breakfast.

Please tell me what you think the most important components of a successful School Breakfast Program are in Wisconsin.

Student-focused. Over 60% (9 of 14) of persons interviewed felt one of the important components of a successful SBP was that it was student-focused. For example, five FSDs felt successful SBPs needed to be quick and easy for students to participate in; four said a successful program needs to focus on foods that students like; and one said she felt SBPs should view students as customers and that food service staff should provide good customer service.

Great staff. Six of the 14 persons interviewed expressed the conviction that in order for a SBP to be successful, you need good staff. Staff need to be adaptable, have good communication skills, and a willingness to balance student needs for instructional time and healthy breakfast. Staff need to be cooperative – “everyone needs to be working

together” and persistent. Another FSD stressed the importance of teaching staff and administrative staff being willing to work with food service staff with a positive attitude. In addition, a SBP will benefit from at least one person who is very organized and can communicate well.

Open-minded. Four food service directors described open-mindedness as an important characteristic underpinning a successful SBP. One FSD described this concept as the staff and teachers needing to find a balance between the nutritional needs and academic needs of students. Another simply said one needed to “think outside the box” in order to implement a successful SBP. “It doesn’t need to be before school, like so many people think”, was one comment that reflected this FSD’s open-minded approach to her SBP.

Choices/Variety. According to at least four FSDs, having some choices and variety available in your SBP is more likely to make it a successful one. Both food choices (hot versus cold) and food delivery choices should be available. For example, if a student does not have time to eat breakfast before classes, they could have the option of taking a Grab and Go breakfast.

Set Aside Time. Three FSDs included time among their most important components of a successful SBP in WI. The sentiment shared among these three is that a specific period and amount of time needs to be designated to the School Breakfast Program each day. The recommended minimum amount of time is 10 minutes once the students have received their meal. One FSD, whose SBP is currently offered before school, felt a break in the regular school day would be a better time to offer their SBP.

Two FSDs felt that having a start-up grant available (such as the Kohl funding) was an important component in producing successful SBPs. Individual FSDs mentioned the following important components of a successful SBP in WI: reasonable prices; combining free and reduced to offer all low-income families free breakfast; and having a high percentage of families that qualify for free and reduced meals.

IV. Limitations

Limitations of this study include those that are inherent in any qualitative social science research. Specifically, interviewees may provide socially desirable responses, and data are not generalizable to the population as a whole. Qualitative data does not yield quantifiable results that can be analyzed with traditional quantitative statistical methods. The purpose of qualitative data is to provide depth, insight, and understanding. From qualitative data we can begin to understand not just what is, but also gain some insight into why or how it is.

V. Conclusions

Conclusions for this aggregate report of the experiences of successful school breakfast programs will have been expressed by at least five of the 14 interviewees – or over 35% of respondents.

- The majority of successful SBPs incorporated a variety of food choices into their menus, as well as offering a options in how breakfast was served.
 - For example, while over 70% of schools offered their SBP before school, 50% also offered another option such as Grab and Go.
- The most popular changes made by FSDs using Kohl grant dollars included:
 - Nearly 80% increased the variety of breakfast food options available
 - 50% provided alternatives to breakfast before school
 - Over 60% of schools engaged in promotional activities
 - Half of schools made some type of administrative change in support of the SBP
- When queried about whether there might be anything specific to their district that lead to SBP participation increases, over 35% of respondents felt that high poverty rates may have helped them to achieve higher participation rates.
- The main challenge to implementing a successful SBP experienced by food service directors was support of school administration, teachers, cook staff and parents.
- All FSDs felt they could replicate their SBP success the following school year. In fact, 8 of the 14 indicated they had either reached or surpassed their participation from the year in which they received Kohl funding.
- FSDs reported hearing positive comments from students, parents, teachers and staff about the SBP.
 - Over 40% heard comments from teachers indicating they noticed positive differences in students' behavior and performance in class after eating breakfast.
- Over 60% of FSDs thought that having a student-focused program was an important component for a successful SBP in WI. Within that, over 35% of respondents felt a successful SBP needed to be quick and easy for students to participate in.
- Great staff was cited as a requisite component of a successful by over 40% of FSDs. Some characteristics of great staff included adaptability, good communication skills, willingness to balance needs, and a cooperative spirit.

VI. Recommendations

- *One size does not fit all*
While FSDs from successful SBPs agreed upon a handful of specific components that, if put in place, may greatly increase the success of a SBP in WI, a lot of the success depends upon the “personality” of the school. Persons, schools, and/or districts aspiring to successful SBPs must be flexible and creative in negotiating the challenges and relationships necessary to create and sustain the support needed for a successful SBP.
- *Variety is the spice of life (and SBPs)*
 - Encourage the use of serving methods best suited to the school and students. If possible, offer more than one serving option.
 - Offer a variety of food options, including hot and cold menu options.
 - Don't limit the SBP to only before school breakfast service. Many students particularly those taking buses will not be able to participate.

- *Build support*
Be sure to spend the time building support within the school, School Board, and amongst students and parents before implementing the SBP. Involve the School Board early on, as they appear to be powerful allies.
- *Get student input and involvement*
Not only will this ensure you meet the needs of your students with the SBP, it will create the student buy-in needed to sustain the program, as well as being an effective lobbying tool to reluctant School Boards, teachers, and even parents.
- *Maintain Kohl mini-grant funding*
There is an indication from this study that the monies from the Kohl grants are a very good investment, given that all FSDs felt they could replicate their successes the year following Kohl grant funding, and that 8 out of 14 FSDs interviewed had already reached or surpassed their participation rates achieved during Kohl grant funding.
- *Form a support network for FSD*
DPI and UW-Extension should be certain to follow-up with each of the 14 FSDs interviewed for this study to tap their technical assistance interests, to ensure that these 14 “successful” FSDs form the basis of a state-wide support network for new or struggling SBPs in WI.



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