Iowa School Breakfast Challenge: Featuring Dr. Jason Glass

Final Draft 6/10/2011

Hi, I 'm Jason Glass, the director of the Iowa Department of Education and I've got a challenge for schools!

As many of you know, eating breakfast supports academic achievement, child health, and wellness. Something I take a personal interest in because breakfast *is* a student's fuel for school.

Research indicates that students who eat breakfast have fewer absences, improve academic achievement, have fewer health issues and have better grades in their classes. These are goals that we all have for students in Iowa.

To help meet this goal, I am pleased to announce that the Iowa Department of Education, in collaboration with the Midwest Dairy Council, is kicking off the Iowa School Breakfast Challenge.

To ensure our students start each school day ready to learn, I challenge superintendents to work with their child nutrition managers and directors to increase daily school breakfast participation in their districts by 20% by May 2012. Right now only 20% of the students that eat school lunch eat breakfast at school. Therefore, when we reach our goal we'll increase the number to over 17 million breakfasts served during the school year, and help students fuel up for school!

All school districts are automatically enrolled in this program, and I encourage your participation. This is an opportunity for our students to improve not only their academics, but also their health. Districts with the greatest percentage increase to their breakfast program will be rewarded with cash prizes.

While I hope to see lots of enthusiasm and competition, ultimately this program is a win-win for all Iowa school districts and kids.

Good luck. Stay tuned to the Iowa Department of Education website for more information.