

2023 NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL MEALS

DURHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Kids can't learn if they are hungry. School meals are a powerful tool for increasing academic achievement and fighting child hunger. This profile provides a snapshot of how Durham Public Schools is providing access to healthy school meals for students in Durham County. Use this profile to celebrate successes and identify opportunities to continue the fight against child hunger.

Overview of the Program

- The **National School Lunch Program** and **School Breakfast Program** provide healthy meals that meet federal nutrition guidelines to students.
- School meals have many benefits including improved academic performance and attendance, fewer behavioral issues, reduced food insecurity, and better diet quality.¹
- All students can participate in school meals. Students can qualify for **free or reduced-price (FRP) school meals** if their family's income is below 130% or between 130% and 185% of the federal poverty level, respectively.

October 2022 Facts



34,859 students attended schools in the district that served meals



53 schools served school meals



21,948 (63%) students in the district were eligible for FRP meals.



19 (36%) of schools serving meals participated in the **community eligibility provision (CEP)**, which allows schools in low-income areas to serve breakfast and lunch to all students at no cost.

October 2022 School Meal Participation

| | School Breakfast | School Lunch |
|--------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| All Students | 7,677 (22%) | 11,922 (34%) |
| FRP Students | 5,776 (26%) | 9,430 (43%) |



For more information visit: CarolinaHungerInitiative.org/Profiles

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School Meals During the 2022-23 School Year

- Waivers from the United States Department of Agriculture that allowed meals to be served at no cost to all students during the COVID-19 pandemic expired in June 2022, requiring school districts to return to previous methods for determining eligibility for free and reduced-price meals, which may include collecting household applications.
- State legislation in North Carolina provides funding for students eligible for reduced-price meals to receive free school meals during the 2022-23 school year. The funding for breakfast will continue in future school years, but additional policy action is needed to continue the funding for lunch.

Number of FRP eligible children who participate in school breakfast for every 100 participating in school lunch

| District | Statewide Average | FRAC Goal |
|----------|-------------------|-----------|
| 61 | 62 | 70 |

[The Breakfast Gap]

- Both breakfast and lunch are critical for learning and health, yet participation in school breakfast is generally lower than lunch.
- The **breakfast gap** is the number of FRP eligible students who participate in school lunch who do not participate in school breakfast. There was a breakfast gap of **3,654** students.
- The number of FRP eligible children who participate in school breakfast for every 100 participating in school lunch is used nationally by the Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) as an indicator of how much of the need for school breakfast is being met.

Innovative Breakfast Models

Students may have difficulty participating in school breakfast when it is served before school in the cafeteria. Many schools across North Carolina use innovative breakfast serving models such as **breakfast in the classroom, second chance breakfast, or grab n' go breakfast** to make it easier for students to participate. Learn more about breakfast serving models here: bit.ly/3AI5lnp