



NEWS RELEASE

New Jersey Department of Agriculture



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NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE CELEBRATES SCHOOL BREAKFAST WEEK IN PATERSON

School District Has Large Increase In Student Breakfast Participation

(PATERSON) – The New Jersey Department of Agriculture, the New Jersey Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service, today celebrated National School Breakfast Week by visiting two schools in the Paterson School District.

Paterson has seen its participation in the school breakfast program rise from 5,700 students during the 2011-2012 school year to 17,600 students during the 2016-2017 school year. The district has had a yearly increase in student participation since beginning the Breakfast After the Bell program during the 2012-2013 school year.

“Serving breakfast in the classroom means more students eating this important meal each morning,” said NJDA Secretary Douglas Fisher. “We applaud Paterson’s success in making breakfast accessible to more students and encourage other districts to strive for the kind of progress that has been made here.”

Secretary Fisher, New Jersey Department of Education Acting Commissioner Dr. Lamont Repollet, NJDA Food and Nutrition Division Director Rose Tricario, NJDA School Nutrition Program Coordinator Arleen Ramos-Szatmary, USDA Deputy Regional Administrator Diana Limbacher, and other officials visited classrooms at Paterson School No. 1 and Paterson School No. 26.

“Starting each day with a balanced breakfast gives children the energy and nutrition they need to learn and strengthen their future,” Tricario said. “Their ability to achieve in the classroom depends on their access to healthy meals each morning.”

New Jersey has seen one of the largest increases in the nation in breakfast participation in recent years. New Jersey is now ranked 19th in the nation in percentage of eligible students who receive breakfast through the School Breakfast Program, improving from 48th in 2011.

“Consuming a healthy breakfast in the classroom helps students focus on the many tasks they have during a day,” said David Buchholtz, Director of Food Services for Paterson School District. “It’s important for them academically as well as socially to not have to worry about where they are getting breakfast.”

Fewer New Jersey students have that concern compared to recent years. During the 2010-11 school year just over 173,000 New Jersey students received breakfast. That number has increased to more than 307,000 for the 2017-18 school year.

School Breakfast Week is an initiative of the School Nutrition Association. The week was launched in 1989 to raise awareness about the availability of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's School Breakfast Program and increase participation by schools and students. School breakfast is a federally funded program administered locally by the New Jersey Department of Agriculture's Division of Food and Nutrition.

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