

OPERATOR SPOTLIGHT

Working at the Heart of Your Menu™
School



Someone you should know: Jim Hemmen, CNS Supervisor Roosevelt School District, Phoenix, AZ

Tyson Foodservice: How large is your school district and what sort of breakfast program do you currently utilize?

Jim Hemmen: The Roosevelt School District has 21 K-8 schools. Over 90% of the students in our district qualify for free breakfast. As a result, we offer universal free breakfast to all students. We have cold breakfast in every classroom, including cereal, pastries, muffins and pancakes. Soon we will be introducing hot breakfast.

TFS: How time-efficient is the breakfast preparation process?

JH: Our providers assemble all the meals themselves and ship them in insulated bags to the schools. It's a very comprehensive system. The main point of a breakfast program is to keep students fed with nutritiously sound products. It also helps when the breakfast program coincides with record keeping. For example, we've integrated attendance with breakfast participation, ensuring our records are more accurate and complete. The connection between record keeping and funding is significant and apparent to teachers and administrators. That's why it's so important to menu products that increase ADP and student participation.

TFS: How do you keep teachers, administrators and especially students excited about your breakfast program?

JH: You have to sell the breakfast program to the teachers and the administrators first. Once it's sold, you have to keep reinforcing the program and supporting it regularly in order for everyone to be really enthusiastic about it.

TFS: The Tyson K-12 foodservice program offers plenty of programs, insights and support for operators. How are tools like these beneficial when maintaining a student feeding program?

JH: The superintendent and principals will be under pressure from time-to-time to revert back to a previous feeding program, but FSDs have to be prepared to answer their most challenging questions by having the resources from their providers.

TFS: What is the biggest incentive for having a quality feeding program?

JH: When you know every child starts their day off right with a good, balanced meal in them, that's the best feeling in the world. They're prepared to work hard and stay motivated throughout the school day.

