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GRADING OUR SCHOOLS ON BREAKFAST
Pennsylvania Hunger Action Releases Annual School Breakfast Report Card

Harrisburg (December 19, 2008). What schools make the grade when it comes to school breakfast in Pennsylvania? The Pennsylvania Hunger Action Center today released the **Pennsylvania School Breakfast Report Card**, a comprehensive review and rating of school districts in Pennsylvania based on their participation in the federal school breakfast program. The report covers the 2007-2008 school year.

"Research has continually shown that eating breakfast at school can help a child's academic performance, improve their behavior, and reduce the risk of obesity," said Chad Newton, Communications Coordinator for the Pennsylvania Hunger Action Center. "That's why it's important to look at these results and see who's getting the job done in our state and who isn't."

This year's School Breakfast Report Card does show some encouraging trends, such as the fact that 28 schools started school breakfast programs in Pennsylvania in 2007-08, up from just nine in 2006-07. But overall school breakfast participation in the state has increased only slightly since last year, ranking Pennsylvania still near the bottom nationally.

A national report scheduled for release next month by the Food Research Action Center (FRAC) will most likely indicate Pennsylvania still ranks 41st nationally among all states in school breakfast participation. Neighboring states such as Maryland, New York, Ohio and West Virginia all have breakfast mandates and rank well ahead of the Commonwealth.

"The bottom line is, there is major room for improvement in the state of Pennsylvania when it comes to school breakfast," said Newton. "We have been taking baby steps, while our neighboring states seem to have made giant leaps forward."

The **Pennsylvania School Breakfast Report Card** includes six categories that feature exemplary schools as well as those schools that are not providing necessary nutritional support. Local highlights within each category follow. Also attached are the category tables from the complete **Report Card**. For a list of **all** school districts and their school breakfast performance, go to www.pahunger.org.

Locally one school district received the **Star Performer** distinction for successfully incorporating breakfast into the school day, as well as for reaching large numbers of children. Towanda Area School District made the list at 53 percent, the percentage indicating the ratio of students eating lunch who are also eating breakfast.

Towanda Area School District also made the **Getting the Job Done** category for serving breakfast to high percentages of low-income children, with 50 percent of their low-income children participating in the school breakfast program.

Two local school districts were noted for **Starting Breakfast** programs in 2007-08: Jim Thorpe Area School District and Wilson Area School District.

Seven area districts made the **Moving Up** category, for significant increases in overall breakfast participation: East Stroudsburg Area School District grew their program by over 500 percent, Greater Johnstown, Easton Area, Towanda Area, Stroudsburg Area, and Pocono Mountain all grew by over 275 percent, while Athens Area and Pleasant Valley grew by over 150 percent.

The **Improvement Needed** category highlights districts that have low breakfast participation among low-income students. Two local districts made the list this year: Mountain View has less than 13 percent of low-income students participating in the school breakfast program, leaving 464 low-income children without the assurance of a morning meal. Wilson Area also has a participation rate of 13 percent, with 469 low-income children not taking part in the program.

Two local districts are on the report's **Failing the Children** list for the 2007-08 year – Weatherly Area School District and Whitehall-Coplay School District. These districts offer no breakfast and have high percentages of low-income students: Weatherly (33 percent) and Whitehall-Coplay (30 percent).

The state-wide leaders in the six categories are as follows:

Star Performers

"Star Performers" are school districts that integrate breakfast into the school day (much as they do lunch) and encourage all students to participate. Selected for recognition this year are districts in which average daily breakfast participation was at least 50 percent of average daily lunch participation. Topping the list in 2007-08, and for the third consecutive year, was Midland School District in Beaver County. Midland had a nearly 85 percent breakfast participation rate. Farrell Area School District in Mercer County ranked second with 82 percent of students participating in the School Breakfast Program.

Newly recognized in this category for the 2007-08 report are the following school districts: Pittsburgh School District (Allegheny), Conemaugh Valley School District (Cambria), Mahanoy Area School District (Schuylkill), and Monessen City School District (Westmoreland).

Getting the Job Done

Schools with many children from low-income families have a special responsibility to implement successful breakfast programs due to the likelihood that some of those children come from homes where there is no food available for breakfast. Recognized here are schools that do a commendable job at reaching high-risk children.

Among school districts in which at least 20 percent of the children came from low-income families, seventeen stood out for serving breakfast to at least half of those students each day. Emerging as the leader for 2007-08 was Farrell Area School District; over 82 percent of its low-income students had breakfast at school.

Schools newly recognized in this year's report are the Harrisburg City School District (Dauphin) and Upper Darby School District (Delaware).

Starting Breakfast
Twenty-eight school districts began offering the School Breakfast Program in 2007-08, up from only nine that started breakfast in 2006-07. This list includes Chartiers Valley School District (Allegheny), Forbes Road School District (Fulton), and Pottsgrove School District (Montgomery), each of which were written up as "Failing the Students" in last year's **Pennsylvania School Breakfast Report Card**. By starting breakfast, these 28 school districts joined others that have made the crucial link between nutrition, health, and academics.

Moving Up!
Also meriting special recognition for making a beneficial change are 23 districts that increased their breakfast participation by more than 150 percent. In fact, ten districts grew their programs by over 500 percent in 2007-08. Lake-Lehman School District in Luzerne County had the highest percentage increase in breakfast program participation, while the Altoona Area School District (Blair) had the highest increase in the number of students participating in their program compared to 2006-07.

Improvement Needed
Fifteen school districts with at least 20 percent low-income students reached only a small fraction of those students with breakfast. Nine of those school districts were on the "Improvement Needed" list last year as well. Kennett Consolidated School District (Chester), with 1,266 low-income students, leads this category; only 6.2 percent of its low-income students received school breakfast on a typical school day. That leaves 1,187 low-income students in the district who are not participating in the School Breakfast Program.

Failing the Children
Ten districts with at least 20 percent low-income students did not offer breakfast in its schools. Johnsonburg School District (Elk), with 41 percent low-income students and no breakfast program, has the unfortunate distinction of leading this category for the second consecutive year.

On the positive side, two of the districts from the list have begun breakfast in the current school year and will not be on next year's list of those districts failing their students! Those districts are Interboro School District (Delaware) and Riverside School District (Lackawanna). Conewago Valley School District is starting a breakfast program in January of 2009 as well.

"These districts are to be commended helping their students start the academic day with the sustenance they need to succeed," said Newton. "Hopefully others on the Failing the Children list will follow their lead!

For more information regarding school breakfast contact Chad Newton at (717)233-6705 or email at info@pahunger.org.

Celebrating 30 years as the statewide leader in anti-hunger advocacy, the Pennsylvania Hunger Action Center works every day for the day when all Pennsylvanians will have access to enough nutritious food for an active and healthy life. Beyond federal and state advocacy around food and nutrition programs, Hunger Action provides Food Stamp outreach, as well as School Breakfast/Summer Feeding outreach.

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Star Performers
Making Breakfast a Regular Part of the School Day

County	School District	NSLP-SBP Ratio	Low-Income	% Low-Income
Beaver	MIDLAND BOROUGH SD	84.8%	225	65.0%
Mercer	FARRELL AREA SD	82.0%	820	82.1%
Indiana	HOMER-CENTER SD	80.2%	402	41.2%
Beaver	ALIQUIPPA SD	71.6%	999	83.8%
Mercer	REYNOLDS SD	70.3%	570	42.6%
Beaver	WESTERN BEAVER COUNTY SD	66.1%	280	34.3%
Allegheny	CORNELL SD	63.6%	366	56.3%
Dauphin	HARRISBURG CITY SD	63.6%	7,277	86.0%
Indiana	PURCHASE LINE SD	61.1%	632	55.9%
Westmoreland	JEANNETTE CITY SD	57.4%	675	57.5%
Cambria	CONEMAUGH VALLEY SD	55.0%	464	46.5%
Clarion	UNION SD	55.0%	362	50.4%
Potter	GALETON AREA SD	54.5%	211	54.5%
Somerset	CONEMAUGH TOWNSHIP AREA SD	54.4%	357	33.5%
Allegheny	PITTSBURGH SD	54.2%	19,281	67.3%
Bradford	TOWANDA AREA SD	52.7%	781	42.6%
Schuylkill	MAHANOY AREA SD	52.3%	660	55.5%
Allegheny	STO-ROX SD	51.3%	1,027	73.3%
Westmoreland	MONESSEN CITY SD	50.3%	679	66.2%
Clearfield	HARMONY AREA SD	50.0%	193	53.0%
Bedford	TUSSEY MOUNTAIN SD	49.7%	592	49.6%

Getting the Job Done
Serving Breakfast to Most Low-Income Children

County	School District	Low-Income	% Low-Income	% L-I Participating in SBP
Mercer	FARRELL AREA SD	820	82.1%	73.0%
Beaver	MIDLAND BOROUGH SD	225	65.0%	72.4%
Potter	GALETON AREA SD	211	54.5%	67.3%
Indiana	HOMER-CENTER SD	402	41.2%	66.4%
Beaver	WESTERN BEAVER COUNTY SD	280	34.3%	63.6%
Mercer	REYNOLDS SD	570	42.6%	61.8%
Indiana	PURCHASE LINE SD	632	55.9%	57.4%
Westmoreland	JEANNETTE CITY SD	675	57.5%	57.2%
Somerset	SD	357	33.5%	55.5%
Beaver	ALIQUIPPA SD	999	83.8%	54.8%
Dauphin	HARRISBURG CITY SD	7,277	86.0%	53.6%
Clarion	UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT	362	50.4%	53.6%
Allegheny	CORNELL SD	366	56.3%	52.2%
Clearfield	HARMONY AREA SD	193	53.0%	51.3%
Lawrence	UNION AREA SD	311	35.7%	51.1%
Delaware	UPPER DARBY SD	5,045	44.3%	49.9%
Bradford	TOWANDA AREA SD	781	42.6%	49.6%

Adding Breakfast
Starting Breakfast Programs Last Year

County	School District	Breakfast ADP	Low-Income Students
Allegheny	SOUTH PARK SD	138	379
Allegheny	WEST MIFFLIN AREA SD	451	1,239
Allegheny	CHARTIERS VALLEY SD	156	740
Armstrong	LEECHBURG AREA SD	100	324
Beaver	BIG BEAVER FALLS AREA SD	414	1,130
Beaver	MIDLAND BOROUGH SD	234	225
Berks	GOVERNOR MIFFLIN SD	328	741
Berks	READING SD	4,434	14,568
Berks	WYOMISSING AREA SD	69	355
Bucks	CENTENNIAL SD	739	1,045
Bucks	CENTRAL BUCKS SD	137	874
Bucks	MORRISVILLE BOROUGH SD	120	368
Bucks	PENNRIDGE SD	362	746
Butler	BUTLER AREA SD	373	2,086
Cambria	BLACKLICK VALLEY SD	206	370
Carbon	JIM THORPE AREA SD	259	732
Centre	BALD EAGLE AREA SD	336	660
Chester	UNIONVILLE-CHADDS FORD SD	39	81
Cumberland	BIG SPRING SD	113	588
Fulton	FORBES ROAD SD	113	190
Lebanon	PALMYRA AREA SD	43	311
Mercer	LAKEVIEW SD	117	396
Montgomery	ABINGTON SD	171	951
Montgomery	POTTSGROVE SD	111	701
Northampton	WILSON AREA SD	111	537
Perry	GREENWOOD SD	136	165
Schuylkill	MINERSVILLE AREA SD	247	442
Westmoreland	GREATER LATROBE SD	193	905

Moving Up!
Growing Breakfast Programs Last Year

County	School District	2006-07 Breakfast ADP	2005-06 Breakfast ADP
Schools That Grew Their Breakfast Program By Over 500%			
Luzerne	LAKE-LEHMAN SD	444	3
Blair	ALTOONA AREA SD	1,745	72
Berks	CONRAD WEISER AREA SD	405	17
Allegheny	BALDWIN-WHITEHALL SD	291	13
Monroe	EAST STROUDSBURG AREA SD	1,136	74
Luzerne	PITTSTON AREA SD	575	44
Luzerne	WILKES-BARRE AREA SD	1,744	136
Luzerne	CRESTWOOD SD	275	30
Lycoming	JERSEY SHORE AREA SD	531	61
Bucks	NESHAMINY SD	899	115
Schools That Grew Their Breakfast Program By Over 275%			
Beaver	ALIQUIPPA SD	588	103
Mercer	FARRELL AREA SD	681	123
Cambria	GREATER JOHNSTOWN SD	978	181
Blair	HOLLIDAYSBURG AREA SD	334	65
Beaver	NEW BRIGHTON AREA SD	351	74
Northampton	EASTON AREA SD	816	182
Bucks	BRISTOL TOWNSHIP SD	841	201
Bradford	TOWANDA AREA SD	734	177
Allegheny	WEST ALLEGHENY SD	401	99
Berks	MUHLENBERG SD	325	82
Monroe	STROUDSBURG AREA SD	586	150
Monroe	POCONO MOUNTAIN SD	2,006	517
Luzerne	HAZLETON AREA SD	1,654	439
Schools That Grew Their Breakfast Program By Over 150%			
Bradford	ATHENS AREA SD	408	111
Monroe	PLEASANT VALLEY SD	380	104
Butler	MONITEAU SD	231	66
Berks	TWIN VALLEY SD	493	143
Somerset	NORTH STAR SD	415	123
Beaver	FREEDOM AREA SD	389	120
Lancaster	CONESTOGA VALLEY SD	258	93
Allegheny	SHALER AREA SD	426	154
Schuylkill	POTTSVILLE AREA SD	433	170
Chester	DOWNINGTOWN AREA SD	45	18

Improvement Needed
Lots of Need – Few Breakfasts Served

County	School District	Low-Income Students	Low-Income Students Not Eating Breakfast	% Low-Income Participating in SBP
Chester	KENNETT CONSOLIDATED SD	1,266	1,187	6.2%
Lancaster	EPHRATA AREA SD	871	804	7.7%
Berks	SCHUYLKILL VALLEY SD	432	397	8.1%
Berks	HAMBURG AREA SD	634	578	8.8%
Allegheny	CHARTIERS VALLEY SD*	740	672	9.2%
Dauphin	SUSQUEHANNA TOWNSHIP SD	806	727	9.8%
Adams	UPPER ADAMS SD	619	551	11.0%
Lancaster	DONEGAL SD	649	576	11.2%
Westmoreland	GREATER LATROBE SD*	905	797	11.9%
Montgomery	POTTSGROVE SD*	701	614	12.4%
Lawrence	SHENANGO AREA SD	298	261	12.4%
Susquehanna	MOUNTAIN VIEW SD	530	464	12.5%
Northampton	WILSON AREA SD*	537	469	12.7%
Cumberland	BIG SPRING SD	588	512	12.9%
Schuylkill	SCHUYLKILL HAVEN AREA SD	458	395	13.8%

* First Year Program

Failing the Children
No Breakfast Despite the Need

County	School District	Low-Income	% Low-Income	NSLP ADP
Elk	JOHNSONBURG AREA SD	294	41.1%	535
Lackawanna	RIVERSIDE SD*	526	34.9%	924
Carbon	WEATHERLY AREA SD	248	33.3%	464
Lehigh	WHITEHALL-COPLAY SD	1,150	29.7%	2,577
Adams	CONEWAGO VALLEY SD**	991	26.6%	1,848
Cumberland	SHIPPENSBURG AREA SD	829	24.5%	1,877
Armstrong	FREEPORT AREA SD	449	22.7%	1,172
Adams	LITTLESTOWN AREA SD	473	22.3%	1,438
Dauphin	MILLERSBURG AREA SD	184	21.5%	632
Delaware	INTERBORO SD*	805	21.2%	1,631

*** Started breakfast in Fall 2008.**
**** Will start breakfast in January 2009.**