**Final Report**

**Background on Project BREAK**

Project BREAK was a joint effort between Northfield High School, John Marshall High School, Mayo High School, Burnsville Senior High and the University of Minnesota, Program in Health Disparities Research. The goal of the project was to determine whether or not participation in the School Breakfast Program could be increased by adding convenient breakfast serving and eating locations. Researchers surveyed 208 randomly selected students to determine if the additional serving and eating locations changed student participation, their diet, specifically maintaining or decreasing total calories eaten during a day, increased intake from a variety of food groups and weight gain. The randomly selected students agreed to participate and their parents'/guardians’ gave permission for their participation.

Project BREAK began with Mayo High School and Burnsville Senior High adding a grab and go serving line in their main student entry ways. Students were allowed to eat in the hallway before class and, depending on teacher preference, during first hour. Northfield High School and John Marshall High Schools served as comparison sites, and did not make changes to their breakfast programs.

The results of the study should be interpreted with caution due to the small number of schools participating, short timeline and minimal evaluation efforts. This study paves the way for a larger study that will include sixteen rural Minnesota schools.

**After six months, did the changes make a difference?**

Yes, especially for girls, low income students, and students of color!

Mayo High School and Burnsville Senior High increased participation by 62% among girls, by 63% among low income students, and by 5% among students of color. While participation among these groups of students increased, it did not increase overall (among the 208 students in the study).

**Did you know?** A girl from a food insecure household decreases her risk of being overweight by 68% when she participates in a food assistance program such as the School Breakfast Program.
Yes, students ate more whole grains and drank more milk!
Students reported eating more whole grains (a half ounce equivalent increase) and increased milk drinking by 1/3 cup.

Did you know? The 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans report that all Americans need more potassium, dietary fiber, calcium, and vitamin D. Whole grains and milk are excellent sources of these four nutrients.

Yes, skipping breakfast decreased!
The number of times per week that student’s report skipping breakfast decreased by a third of a day per week at Mayo High School and Burnsville Senior High (from 2.9 days to 2.6 days). The number of times per week that student’s report skipping breakfast stayed the same at Northfield and John Marshall High School (2.5 days).

Did you know? A one day increase in a student’s participation in the School Breakfast Program is associated with a decline in Body Mass Index (BMI). BMI is calculated from an individual’s height and weight and, for most people, it correlates with their amount of body fat.

Yes, student weight stayed the same!
A group of random students at Mayo High School and Burnsville Senior High had their height and weights measured at the start of the 2010-2011 school year and again six months later. The students did not experience a change in BMI. A group of random students at Northfield High School and John Marshall High School also had their heights and weights measured and these students reported a 0.30 unit BMI increase. This increase translates to roughly 2 pounds of weight gain for a person weighing 137-pounds and 5 feet 5 inches tall.

There were no differences in student GPA mean scores from September to February between control and intervention schools nor any differences by free and reduced meal status or gender.

A closer look at how changes in meal participation...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total student population</th>
<th>Students qualifying for free/reduced price meals</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Average (total meals/service days)</td>
<td>% Increase in participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Average (total meals/service days)</td>
<td>% Increase in participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention sites</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>2010-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>114.5</td>
<td>163.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control sites</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96.6</td>
<td>105.8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

What did key school staff think about the program?
Teachers at both schools noticed higher morning attendance, fewer interruptions in first hour and that students seemed a lot more awake in second hour.

"It’s a little extra work...but if it gets (students) to eat a breakfast, it’s worth it.”
--Burnsville Senior High food service staff

Additional Resources
Watch the student led marketing campaigns online: http://www.youtube.com/user/Communityblueprint and http://vimeo.com/23799166