



## School Breakfast Initiative

Presented by Children's Defense Fund – Minnesota  
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# Breakfast Champion: Marleen Webb

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**Marleen Webb**

**Food Service Coordinator**

**Bemidji Area Schools, Bemidji, MN**



Marleen Webb has been a passionate advocate for school nutrition for over 34 years in the Bemidji school district. Over the past few years, she has overseen changes to the school breakfast program at all grade levels in the district, from hallway Grab 'n Go kiosks at the middle schools and several elementary schools to a Second Chance Breakfast offering at the high school.

“I feel the meal program, both breakfast and lunch, are essential for the success of students, and breakfast in particular starts students off in their day to actually learn and be settled into their educational area,” Webb said. “Nourishment is so important for the kids. When they are well-nourished, they will be able to develop, function and learn so they can become the students they’re supposed to be.”

Changing the breakfast model has been beneficial for all students, Webb said. “Having the opportunity to get breakfast in locations outside of the cafeteria has enabled students to feel as if this is something that is available to everyone. The idea that breakfast is only for low-income kids is going away. It’s more inviting, because students can grab their breakfast and take it with them wherever they might be going, whether to the classroom, practice, or just sitting and socializing with friends.”

The changes have also prompted closer relationships between food service and administration, Webb said, noting that three years ago, food service was just a part of the overall operation. There was little interaction between food service staff and administrators. Now, she said, principals are actively seeking ways to promote and expand the breakfast program. Webb notes, “Support from administration has been incredible and is continuing to grow.”

**Congratulations to Marleen Webb, Breakfast Champion!**