Illinois currently ranks 42nd in feeding kids school breakfast, which means thousands of children from low-income families are starting the school day without a meal. Our kids can’t learn on an empty stomach.

There are easy steps we can take to make sure our kids are set up for success. More than 175,599 Illinois students who face hunger can more easily access school breakfast if we update the language in the School Breakfast and Lunch Act.

Making breakfast an official part of the school day through ‘Breakfast after the Bell’ models ensures that all students have the healthy food they need to learn and succeed in the classroom.

“\textit{We’ve seen a pretty drastic reduction in the number of kids that are coming down to the office with stomachaches and headaches. Often kids don’t make that connection—that they didn’t eat, and they think they’re sick.}”

\textit{—Principal Nancy Gancy, Memorial Elementary, Taylorville}

\textbf{BREAKFAST MAKES ACADEMIC SENSE}

Research shows that when kids eat school breakfast, test scores rise, attendance improves and graduation rates jump. Making sure more kids have access to breakfast would have a profound impact on academic achievement in Illinois.\textsuperscript{1}

\textbf{BREAKFAST MAKES FINANCIAL SENSE}

When children are hungry, they struggle to grow up into strong, healthy and productive members of our society, leading to long term costs to our community.

But breakfast makes short term financial sense as well. If schools with high rates of poverty reached an ideal 70% school breakfast participation rate it would bring in an \textbf{additional $42 million dollars} of federal funding into Illinois schools.\textsuperscript{2}

\textbf{Every high-need school in Illinois would see positive revenue if they switch to Breakfast after the Bell.} The Illinois Legislature should act to require high-need schools to choose one of these common sense models that would not only better serve their students, but would benefit their budgets. Learn more at RiseAndShineIllinois.org