

Lt. Governor Guadagno Addresses Advocates for Children's 5th Annual NJ School Breakfast Report

Thursday, October 15, 2015 Tags: [Education](#)



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Report Highlights New Jersey's Rapid Improvement, Increased Participation

Trenton, NJ – Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno addressed the Advocates for Children of New Jersey to discuss the successes of the School Breakfast Program in New Jersey based on the 5th Annual New Jersey School Breakfast Report.

"New Jersey was number one in the country for increasing the number of children participating in breakfast after the bell. Last year we served 49 million meals," said Lt. Governor Guadagno. "While our jump in rank was significant, from 48th to 28th in the nation, we will not be satisfied until we are first in the nation for meals served and we intend to find the best ways to achieve this goal. No child should start school hungry in our state."

The report was compiled by the Advocates for Children organization and was released at the Fred W. Martin School in Jersey City. The report outlines the effectiveness and participation rates of the School Breakfast Program. Compared to the 2010-2011 school year, New Jersey's national school breakfast participation rank for the 2013-2014 school year has risen from 48th to 28th, according to The Food Research and Action Center.

"This is great news for children across New Jersey," said Cecilia Zalkind, executive director of the Advocates for Children of New Jersey, which co-leads the campaign with the New Jersey Anti-Hunger Coalition. "This simple change in the way breakfast is served means that tens of thousands of children are now receiving the nutrition they need to concentrate and learn. School leaders should be commended for meeting the school breakfast challenge."

Participation in the New Jersey School Breakfast Program has surged 75% in just five years. In this time, the number of children receiving free or reduced price school breakfast has increased by 101,000 statewide, from 136,000 in 2010 to 237,000 in 2015. Much of this success has been attributed to switching to a "Breakfast After the Bell" program, where breakfast is served in the classroom at the beginning of the school day.

A full copy of the report is available at <http://acnj.org/school-breakfast/nj-school-breakfast-data/>.

The USDA's School Breakfast Program provides a nutritious start to each school day for nearly 13.2 million children in over 88,000 schools nationwide. For more information on New Jersey's School Breakfast Program, visit www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/fn/childadult/school_breakfast.html.

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