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Governor, First Lady Bullock Announce \$100,000 in Grants for Montana Schools to Implement Breakfast after the Bell

HELENA – Governor and First Lady Bullock today announced that \$100,000 from private funders will be made available to Montana schools statewide to implement *Breakfast after the Bell*. The announcement was made during the Governor and First Lady's visit to Kessler Elementary School. The school recently implemented a breakfast in the classroom program. The funds announced today mark the fourth round of *Breakfast after the Bell* grants that have been made available to schools during the Bullock administration.

Total grant funds this cycle consist of over \$100,000 with special thanks to Albertson's Companies Foundation, Jeff Bridges, Share Our Strength/No Kid Hungry, Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation, Round It Up Montana, Blue Cross Blue Shield, First Interstate Bank Foundation, Neptune Aviation Services, Smith's Food and Drug Stores, and FutureSync International.

"Several barriers exist that prevent students from getting the fuel they need to learn such as limited food budgets, school buses arriving as the bell rings, and the stigma associated with breakfast only being offered for low-income kids." Governor Bullock said. "*Breakfast after the Bell* alleviates these problems and puts all students on a level playing field."

Governor Steve Bullock, First Lady Lisa Bullock, and the Montana No Kid Hungry program implemented the *Breakfast after the Bell* initiative in the fall of 2014 to increase participation in school breakfast and make it a part of the school day by serving it after the bell. There are creative, low-cost ways to increase school breakfast participation with little disruption to the school's regular schedule. Montana No Kid Hungry is working with superintendents, principals, teachers, school food service directors, parents, and students to implement alternative breakfast models, such as breakfast in the classroom and grab-and-go, which make breakfast more accessible for students.

"To ensure the academic success of our students, breakfast is a necessity." said First Lady Lisa Bullock. "Without a well-rounded breakfast, children, by no fault of their own, are beginning the day at a disadvantage. We want all students to have the opportunity to succeed, and that means ensuring that students don't need to worry about where their next meal will come from."

Federal Nutrition Programs, such as the School Breakfast Program, have shown long-lasting positive effects on academic, behavioral, and health success. Research continues to show that students who



skip breakfast generally have lower memory recall, make more errors, and are more likely to be absent or tardy and to repeat a grade. Students who eat breakfast have shown improved test scores, reduced behavioral issues, and fewer visits to the nurse. On average, school breakfast participation rises to more than 70% when schools implement a *Breakfast after the Bell* model versus 30% with a traditional model that serves breakfast in the cafeteria before school starts.

As of now, more than 110 schools in Montana have made the decision to make breakfast part of the school day. Since the fall of 2014, Governor and First Lady Bullock have provided over \$150,000 to 44 Montana schools as part of their [*Breakfast after the Bell* initiative](#).

For schools interested in starting a new breakfast program and/or making breakfast part of the school day, they can apply for a *Breakfast after the Bell* mini-grant from February 1st to March 1st, by visiting this link: grants.nokidhungry.org and entering the access code **MTBREAKFAST2016** (case-sensitive).

If schools have questions or need more information, contact the Montana No Kid Hungry School Breakfast Manager, Linda Cleatus at LCleatus@mt.gov or by phone at 444-3925.

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