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## SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS - SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

Joint Committee on Education - Massachusetts State House

Tuesday July 18, 2017

Testimony from Patrick Roach, Chief Financial and Operations Officer for Springfield Public Schools

In Support of

An Act Regarding Breakfast After the Bell (S.242, H.327)

*Breakfast in the Classroom has been a highly successful program for the Springfield Public Schools, and most importantly our students. The benefits to our students by far outweigh any challenges that we faced. As we approach the final year of our three-year and over fifty school roll-out, we have seen that with proper planning and a clear vision, this program can be implemented with few problems.*

*In Springfield, we began by identifying a group of schools with leadership that had the capacity and buy-in. Next, we had an information meeting with administrators, teachers, custodians and food service personnel to discuss any concerns. By working with the school's staff prior to starting the program, many challenges were resolved before they occurred. Our vision has been to make sure that there is little hassle as possible – this means providing bags, trash pickup and additional cleaning materials to ensure that teachers aren't distracted with problems. If necessary, we adjusted the custodial clean plans and shift schedules to maintain the cleanliness of the classrooms to avoid any pest management issues. Fifteen minutes into the day, all trash has been removed and school functions the same as it did previously. If this seems common sense, that is because it was.*

*Our second group of schools approached us. They heard from their colleagues how much of a success it was. Prior to breakfast in the classroom approximately 25% of our students ate breakfast each day. With breakfast in the classroom, participation immediately jumps above 80%, and some of our schools even reach the high 90's. The data speaks for itself.*

*At the end of the day, this is an efficient, effective and cost-neutral program that can be implemented successfully by working with school staff and making changes as needed. In Springfield, almost all of the issues and concerns that arose were "adult issues" and by listening to the adults, but making sure that we prioritize the children, we have set our students up for success.*

Sincerely,

Patrick Roach



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**SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS - SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS**

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Joint Committee on Education - Massachusetts State House  
Tuesday July 18, 2017

Testimony from Daniel J. Warwick, Superintendent of Springfield Public Schools

In Support of  
An Act Regarding Breakfast After the Bell (S.242, H.327)

*As Superintendent of Schools, I believe the Breakfast in the Classroom program plays a crucial role in our student's success. With most our students coming from low-income families and facing hunger, the Breakfast in the Classroom program helps combat this problem by offering a nutritious breakfast to all students at no cost. In fact, the program has been so successful that we are implementing it district wide, including in our secondary schools.*

*In Springfield, the Breakfast in the Classroom program has helped to decrease student tardiness and absences by encouraging students to come to school on time to eat breakfast each day. Our students that participate in the program are more alert and able to focus. There are less visits to the school nurse in the morning and behavioral issues decrease and student attentiveness increases. By serving meals in the classroom and ensuring that it is available after the bell, our students can avoid waiting in lines in the cafeteria or missing breakfast because they arrived at school late.*

*I have seen firsthand the positive impact that this program has had in our district. It is a wrap-around support that we can provide to our students help overcome the challenge of hunger; a barrier that otherwise would keep them from being ready to learn, and have a negative impact on their academic success.*

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Warwick  
Superintendent of Schools