

Board Retreat
Tuesday, March 26, 2013 5:00 PM

Board Room
520 East 9th Street
Imperial, NE 69033

Agenda

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of Agenda
- III. Discussion Items
 - 1. Reading Program
 - 2. Student "Web Team"
 - 3. Laptop programs and textbooks
 - 4. School Performance Rating/School Improvement Update
 - 5. Valedictorian/Salutatorian
 - 6. Board Goals
 - 7. Wellington Football Field/Front Entrance
 - 8. Credit Recovery Program
 - 9. Offering Breakfast for Students/Backpack program
 - 10. Drama Program in the Grade School
 - 11. Budget Forecast
- IV. Adjourn

Seeing benefits, schools get creative with breakfast

BY JULIE ANDERSON | WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

When the first bell rang, students filed into Fontenelle Elementary's gym, wound their way through a zigzag of retractable barriers and grabbed plastic bags full of breakfast: a sausage biscuit on the hot line or a doughnut, cereal or yogurt on the cold line.

They trooped to their classrooms and sat down to eat with classmates. On an average day, about 500 of Fontenelle's roughly 650 students eat breakfast through the Grab and Go program, which the school started in the fall of 2011.

Principal Eric Nelson said

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there's little muss and no fuss. Students get the fuel they need to focus and learn. Teachers get an extra 20 minutes to work with kids who need help — over breakfast — before the school day begins. Not only has the school ended midmorning runs by hungry kids to the nurse's office, it's also seen a big improvement in test scores.

That fits in with national research that shows that kids who eat school breakfast score higher on tests and attend more days of

school, which in turn makes them more likely to graduate.

"It gives them a much calmer start to the day where they can focus," Nelson said.

Fontenelle showcased its Grab and Go program recently as part of ongoing efforts in Nebraska, Iowa and the rest of the nation to increase the number of schools that offer breakfast and the number of students who take it.

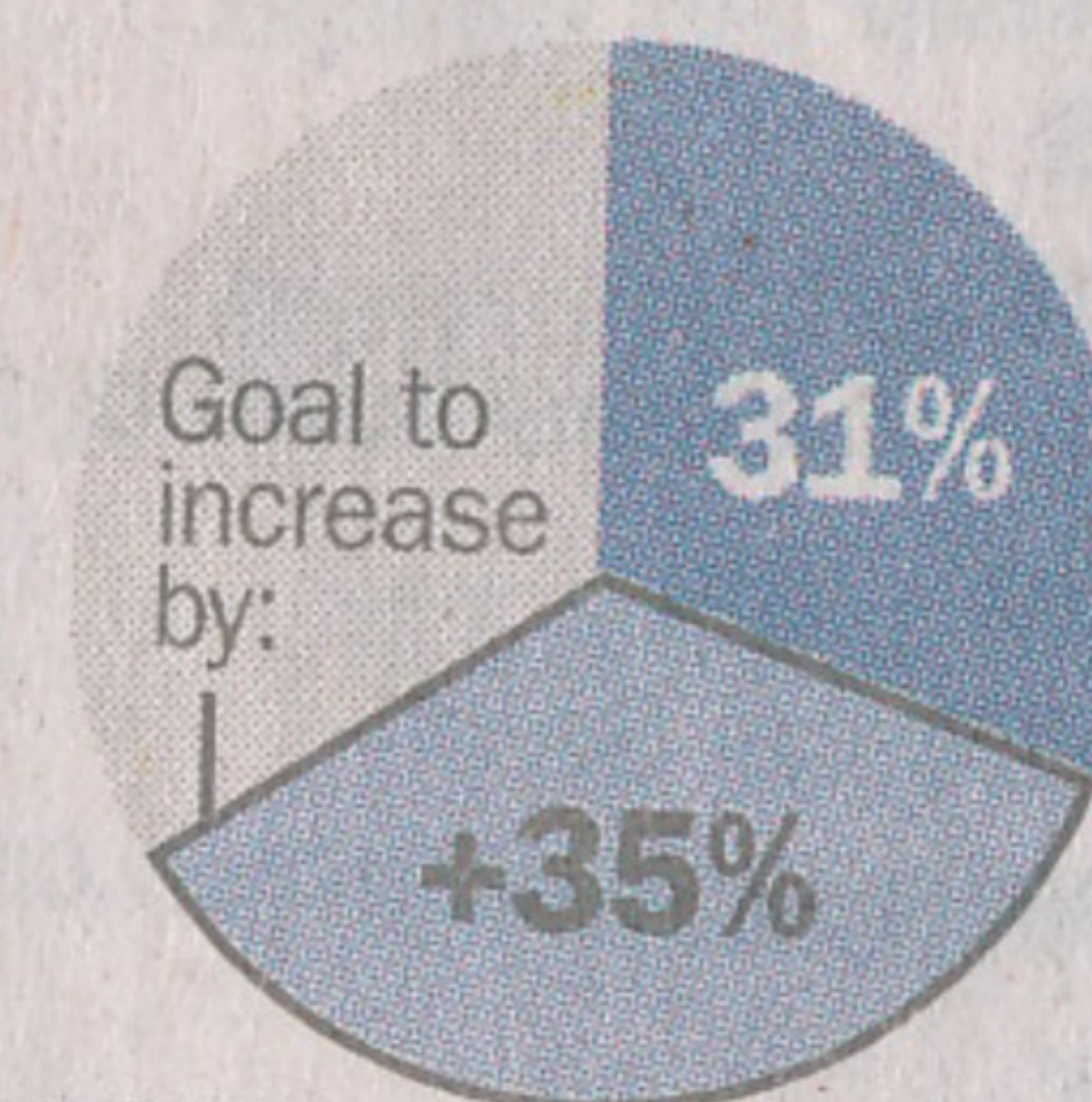
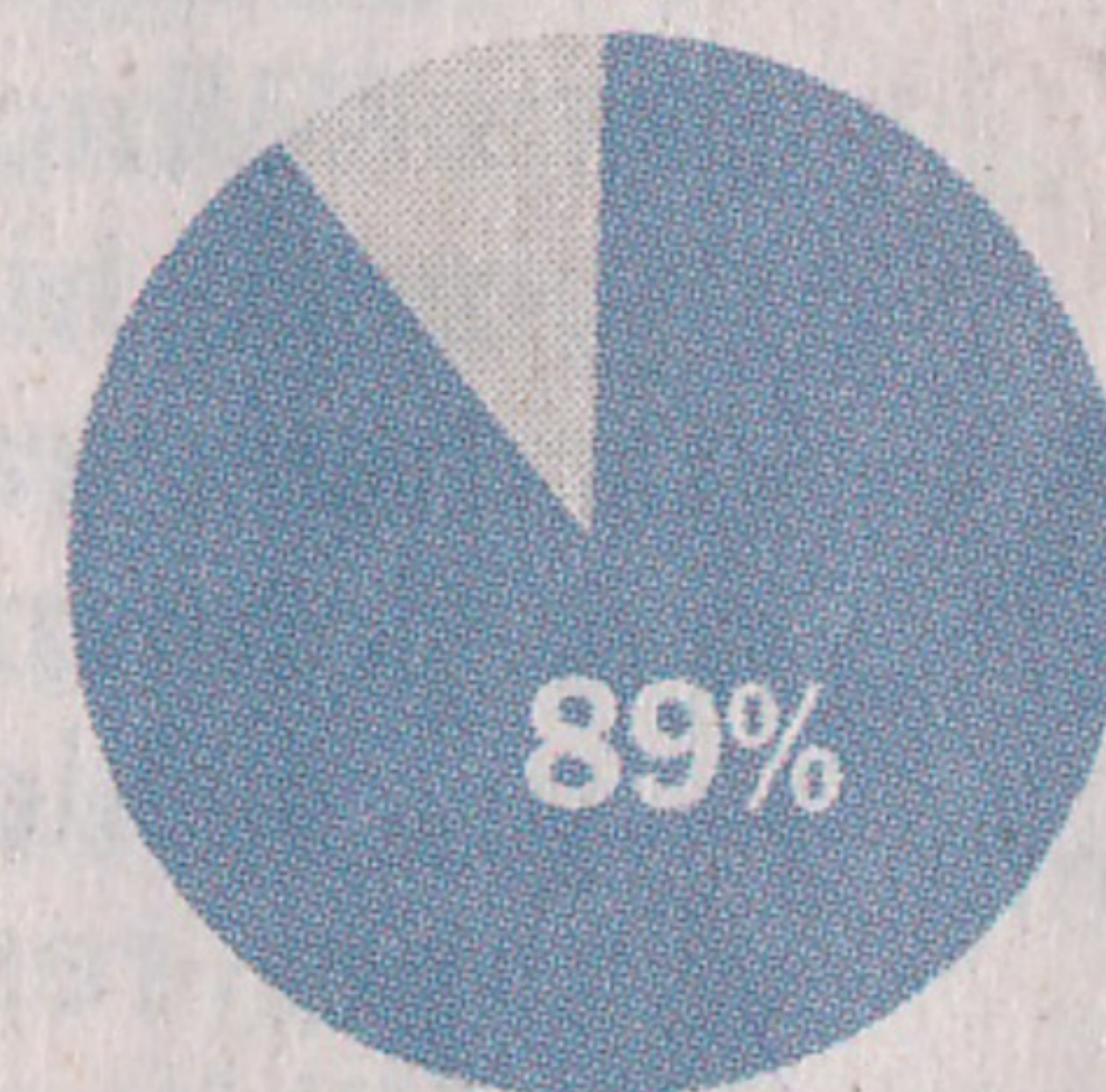
The two states are in the second year of a national challenge aimed at encouraging school districts to launch or expand breakfast

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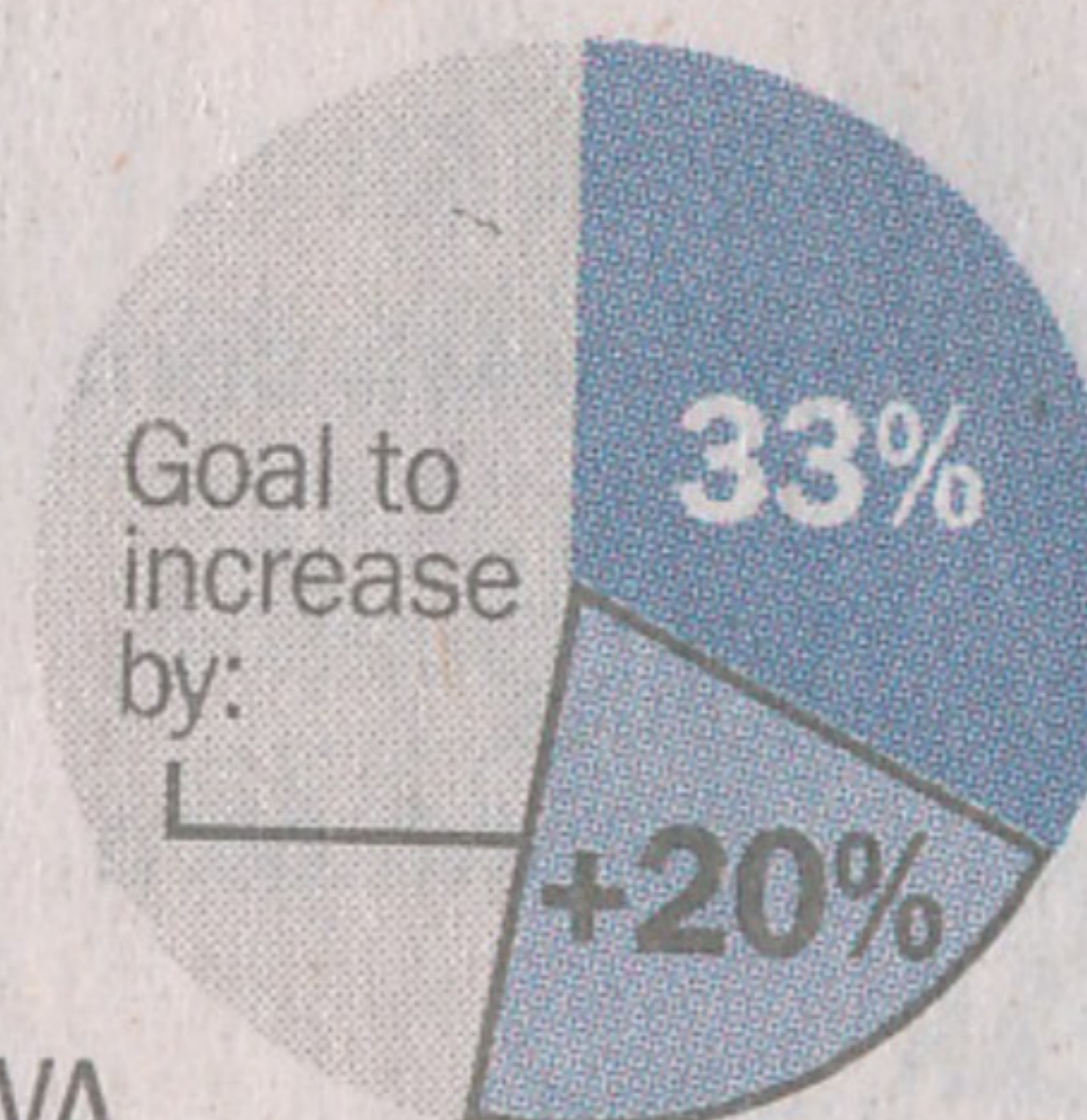
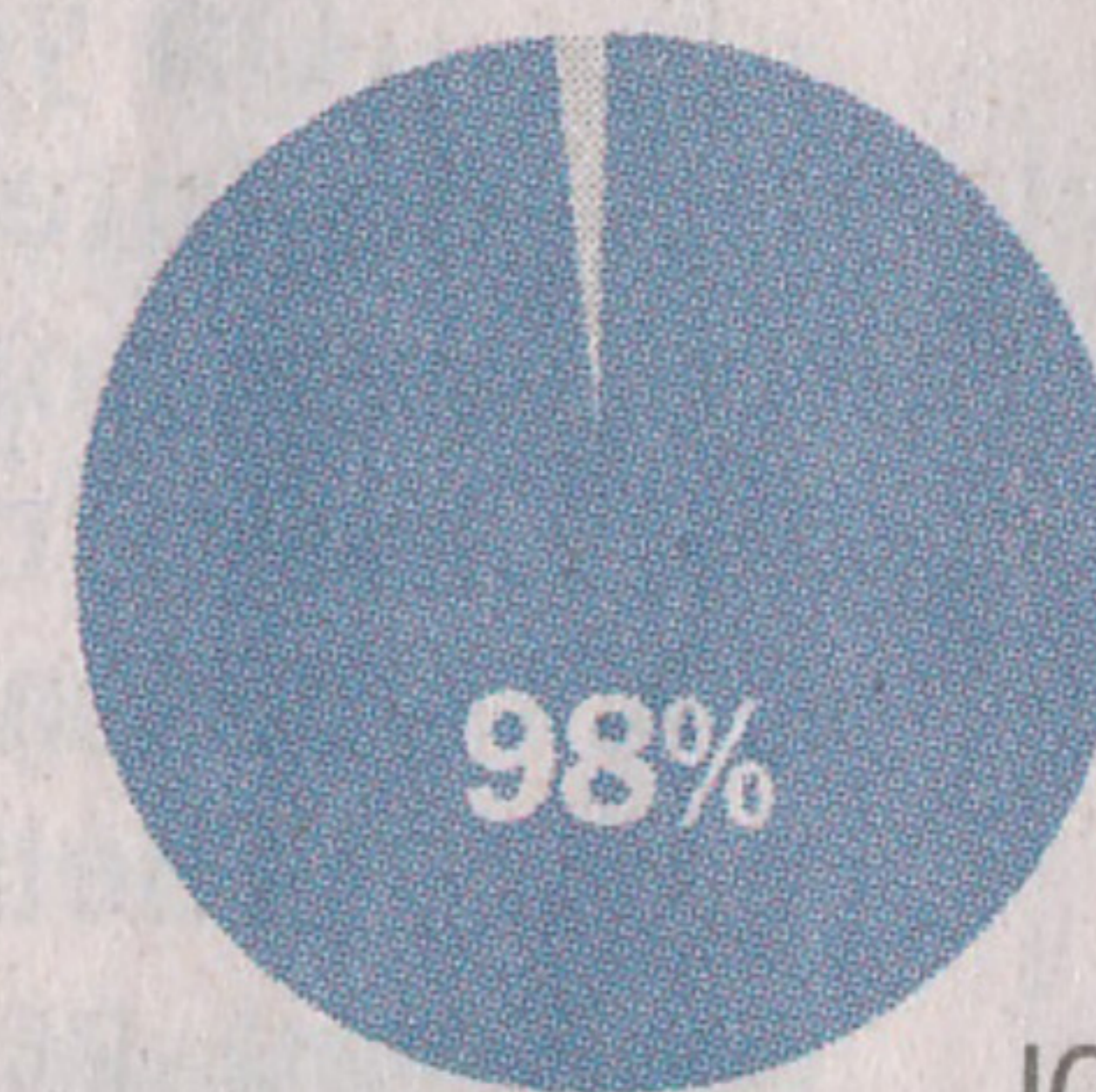
BREAKFAST AT NEBRASKA AND IOWA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Schools that offer breakfast

Eligible students that participate



NEBRASKA



IOWA

SOURCE: Nebraska Department of Education and Iowa Department of Education

MATT HANEY/THE WORLD-HERALD

Breakfast: Grab and Go program fuels more kids for learning

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programs. Nebraska's goal is to increase participation by at least 35 percent. Iowa's mark is 20 percent. Sixty-eight Iowa districts, or 17 percent, met that target last year.

Nearly 89 percent of Nebraska's public school buildings offer breakfast, according to the Nebraska Department of Education, but only 31 percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price meals participate. In Iowa, where 98 percent of schools offer breakfast, one-third of such students participate.

That's where advocates such as Hunger Free Heartland and the Midwest Dairy Council hope alternative breakfast programs such as Grab and Go will come in. The groups say traditional school breakfast, served in the cafeteria before school, hasn't attracted many students. Time is tight, and some still see the

meals as only for low-income students. The Omaha Public Schools offer free breakfast to all students.

A number of districts in Nebraska and Iowa offer Grab and Go options, in varying forms. Some even offer a "second chance" breakfast after first period.

The Council Bluffs Community School District offers the Grab and Go program at some elementary buildings. At some, it's the only breakfast offering, said Virginia Bechtold, the district's nutrition services supervisor. Others provide it only for preschool students.

About 2,000 of the district's 9,000 students take breakfast each day, she said, "and the numbers keep going up."

The Westside Community Schools this year are piloting a Grab and Go program at Swanson Elementary, said Diane Zipay, District 66's nutrition services director. About 25 students

eat breakfast at the school each day. Roughly half of those take the Grab and Go option.

Altogether, Westside serves about 500 elementary breakfasts a day and 150 or more at middle and high schools. Zipay said she'd like to expand the Grab and Go option to every school. As in other districts, that's a school-by-school decision.

Westside also is rolling out new breakfast items, aiming to increase participation. Among them are chicken and waffles (a Southern favorite) and breakfast potpie — biscuit dough filled with egg and cheese and baked in a muffin pan.

Zipay said parents often prefer to give kids breakfast at home. But a lot of children just aren't hungry first thing in the morning. School breakfast provides an opportunity for kids to socialize, get ready to learn and eat when they're more awake.

Fontenelle is one of eight OPS elementary buildings that offer

Grab and Go. Kellom Elementary, where Nelson previously served as principal, was one of the district's first two sites. He brought the program with him to Fontenelle.

"Wherever I go, that's where I'm taking it," he said.

Second-grader Tyvelle Foster chose the sausage biscuit on a recent day. He and several other youngsters said they like eating breakfast at school.

Tammy Yarmon, OPS's nutrition services director, said the meals are made to travel. The pancake sandwich, for example, comes with a glaze between layers rather than syrup.

Administrators and staff from a couple of other area schools visited during Fontenelle's showcase to see the program in action. Ralston officials were set to send a team to Indian Hill Elementary, the other of OPS's first sites.

One team came from the Weeping Water Public Schools.

Superintendent Ken Heinz said his district is in the early stages of exploring a variation on Grab and Go.

The school offers breakfast to all grades. Participation, as in many school districts, skews higher in the lower grades.

Heinz said high school students are more likely to sleep late, jump out of the shower and grab a Pop-Tart.

"When you have so many kids flying in late, they don't have time to eat," he said.

Weeping Water is considering offering Grab and Go from carts in hallways, starting before school in the elementary grades and moving to the high school during an extended passing period between the first two hours of classes.

The school would like to get as many students to eat breakfast as possible. "We've seen the studies," Heinz said. "That makes them better students."

Contact the writer:
402-444-1223, julie.anderson@owh.com