



LD 1002
 AN ACT TO REQUIRE AT LEAST A
 30-MINUTE LUNCH PERIOD FOR
 ALL STUDENTS

Full Plates Full Potential

Full Plates works to remove logistical and social barriers by providing technical and financial assistance to schools and communities across the state to help feed kids now, while advocating for systemic changes necessary to ensure that all Maine children have consistent access to nutritious meals. Our strategy is to maximize access to USDA Child Nutrition Programs - commonly known as school lunch, school breakfast, afterschool meals, and summer meals - which promise free meals to every child who needs them.

STUDENTS DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO EAT

- **1 in 6 Maine kids experience food insecurity.**
- A hungry child can't learn.
- Research has shown that **the last student in line has 10 minutes or less to eat** their lunch.
- Healthy choices like raw vegetables take longer to consume.
- Not enough time to eat means more food waste.
- School meals are the most reliable and nutritious source of nutrition for students.
- Having recess before lunch cuts down on behavior issues and results in kids eating more during lunchtime.

“Getting free lunch is great, but I feel like I am wasting most of the food that we need to take in order to get free lunch because we only have 20 minutes to eat.”
 - 8th Grader, Bucksport Middle School

ABOUT THE BILL

This bill would **require Maine schools to allow at least 30 minutes to eat lunch** as part of the National School Lunch Program. It also directs districts to allow adequate time for recess and to schedule recess before lunch, a best practice that encourages students to sit and eat lunch after fresh air and exercise. Districts are given the option to opt-out if a 30 minute lunch period and recess before lunch doesn't fit into their daily schedule.

- Some Maine schools already allow 30 minutes for lunch, so we should make this best practice a reality for students across our state.

SUPPORT

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