

# An Act to End Student Hunger with Breakfast After the Bell

## About the bill

**LR 1194** will reduce childhood hunger in Maine by creating greater access to the school breakfast program, which will in turn increase revenue to the state. The bill requires schools with above 50% free and reduced-price qualifying students to offer an alternative breakfast model after the bell. The bill provides funding to schools to aid in the transition.

## Current situation

Nearly half of all Maine students are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals.

## Benefits of school breakfast

- Associated with higher test scores and better attendance.
- Promotes **concentration, alertness, memory, comprehension, and learning.**
- Gets kids a morning meal when they have not had one at home.
- Eating breakfast in the classroom creates a sense of community.

## Three alternative breakfast “After the Bell” models

- **Breakfast in the Classroom** takes place once all students have arrived in their classes. Breakfasts are delivered to classrooms before the start of the day, and kids eat at their desks.
- **The Grab ‘n’ Go Cart** is stationed in a central location in the school during passing periods or before school. Students quickly grab a breakfast on their way to class.
- **Second Chance Breakfast** takes place after the start of the day, between periods or during a scheduled breakfast break. Students grab breakfast from a cart or from the cafeteria.

## Participation

- Only **47%** of free or reduced-price meal eligible students participate in school breakfast.
- Traditional breakfast (before the bell) does not provide equal access to the meal and for students who can’t get to school 20-30 minutes early (bus arrives late, etc.), and leaves students hungry
- Alternative breakfast models help increase participation and encourage all students to eat.

## Increasing participation helps the state's economy, too!

- While schools pay about \$1.35 to make each meal, they are **reimbursed** about \$1.71 for each breakfast eaten by a student who gets free meals. **If implemented, this bill could bring an estimated \$730,000 annually into the budgets of local school districts.**
- The more students who eat, the more **federal reimbursement money the school gets.**

This bill is supported by:

