



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2 STATE HOUSE STATION

AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002

(207) 287-1400

TTY: MAINE RELAY 711

Kelly Noonan Murphy

Phone: (207) 318-3215

Kelly.murphy@legislature.maine.gov

January 21, 2026

Testimony of Representative Kelly Noonan Murphy introducing
LD 2017, An Act to Update Certain Statutes Governing School Nutrition
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs: I am Representative Kelly Murphy, and today I am here to introduce a bill for the Department of Education, **LD 2017, An Act to Update Certain Statutes Governing School Nutrition**. This bill updates several areas of statute that have been rendered obsolete due to changes in the way the State of Maine administers free and reduced-price breakfast and lunch at school. The Department will offer a friendly amendment, which will preserve statutory language related to food access and discipline.

The Department of Education will present testimony on this bill, and I respectfully request that you defer any specific questions regarding the content to them. I look forward to working with you as the committee deliberates the bill.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill.

An Act to Update Certain Statutes Governing School Nutrition

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §6601-A, as repealed and replaced by PL 2023, c. 405, Pt. A, §44, is amended to read:

§6601-A. Free or reduced-price school meals; Internet-based school meal applications

The department ~~shall~~ may contract for the development and implementation of an Internet-based application for free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Program under 7 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 210 and the School Breakfast Program under 7 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 220 or otherwise make available to public schools an Internet-based application for those programs. The department ~~shall~~ may make available to public schools the an Internet-based application for free or reduced-price meals developed under this section on ~~the department's~~ a publicly accessible website. The department shall make the any Internet-based application developed pursuant to this section in an understandable and uniform format and, to the maximum extent practicable, in a language that parents and legal guardians can understand. A public school may make the an Internet-based application available for school meal applications on the public school's publicly accessible website. All public schools shall continue to distribute paper applications for school meals to all students. A public school is solely responsible for processing that school's online applications. Data submitted through the an Internet-based application may not be visible to the department and must be transmitted directly to the applicable public school. All public schools shall accept data submitted through the an Internet-based application.

Sec. 2. 20-A MRSA §6602, sub-§1, ¶F, as enacted by PL 2019, c. 556, §1, is amended to read:

F. Except as provided under paragraph G, a school administrative unit with a public school in which at least 50% of students qualified for a free or reduced-price lunch during the preceding school year shall operate an alternative breakfast delivery service that provides breakfast after the start of the school day and before any lunch period in the school begins for students at that public school. ~~A school administrative unit with a public school in which at least 70% of students who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals under paragraph A participate in the breakfast program under paragraph B is exempt from the requirements of this paragraph.~~

The department shall publish annually, by July 1, 2020 and every July 1st thereafter, on its publicly accessible website, information regarding schools required to comply with and schools exempt from this paragraph in the preceding school year, including, but not limited to, the name of the school, any alternative breakfast delivery service operated, free and reduced-price breakfast participation rate and the financial impact of the program on the school nutrition budget.

Sec. 3. 20-A MRSA §6602, sub-§1, ¶G, as enacted by PL 2019, c. 556, §2, is amended by repealing the 2nd blocked paragraph.