

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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127th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2015

Legislative Document

No. 1285

S.P. 460

In Senate, April 9, 2015

An Act To Support School Nutrition

Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Heather J.R. Priest".

HEATHER J.R. PRIEST
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator JOHNSON of Lincoln.
Cosponsored by Representative HICKMAN of Winthrop and
Senators: BREEN of Cumberland, LANGLEY of Hancock, MILLETT of Cumberland,
Representative: KORNFIELD of Bangor.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §6602, sub-§12**, as enacted by PL 2001, c. 447, §1, is
3 amended to read:

4 **12. Local Produce Fund.** The Local Produce Fund is established within the
5 ~~Department of Education~~ department. The fund is authorized to receive revenue from
6 public and private sources. The fund must be held separate and apart from all other
7 money, funds and accounts. Any balance remaining in the fund at the end of the fiscal
8 year must be carried forward to the next fiscal year. The fund must be used to match \$1
9 for every \$3 a school administrative unit pays for produce or minimally processed foods
10 purchased directly from a farmer ~~or~~ farmers' cooperative or local food hub in the State, to
11 a maximum state contribution of \$1,000 or \$2,000 if funding is received and the school
12 administrative unit sends a food service employee to local foods training administered by
13 the department under subsection 13. At the end of the fiscal year, the school
14 administrative unit may provide the department with receipts documenting purchases
15 pursuant to this subsection during that year. For purposes of this subsection, "minimally
16 processed" means only the washing, cleaning, trimming, drying, sorting and packaging of
17 food items or a combination of those activities. Reimbursement or partial reimbursement
18 to school administrative units may only be made up to the amount available in the fund.
19 Failure to reimburse does not constitute an obligation on behalf of the State to a school
20 administrative unit. The department shall apply for federal grant funding to provide state
21 contributions in excess of \$1,000 pursuant to this subsection if applicable grant funding is
22 available. The department may accept grant funding from hospitals and other sources to
23 provide state contributions in excess of \$1,000 pursuant to this subsection.

24 **Sec. 2. 20-A MRSA §6602, sub-§§13 to 15** are enacted to read:

25 **13. Local foods training.** The department shall administer a program to encourage
26 and expand the use of local foods in school food service programs. As used in this
27 subsection, unless the context otherwise indicates, "local food" means food produced or
28 harvested by a Maine food producer as defined by Title 7, section 212, subsection 2. The
29 program must:

30 A. Provide competitive grants for a training program to be conducted in up to 6
31 regions to provide training throughout the State without cost for local school food
32 service programs to encourage and expand the use of local foods in school food
33 service programs. The training program must emphasize practical training for food
34 preparers, including creative and effective cooking skills using local fresh foods and
35 local food procurement skills. The training program must also inform participants
36 about practical supply chain solutions, including local food hubs and cooperatives
37 within and across each region of the State;

38 B. Foster collaboration between school food service programs throughout the State;

39 C. Facilitate and encourage the use of local food hubs; and

40 D. Provide guidance to schools in the use of local food products and the nutritional
41 attributes of local foods and provide strategies for encouraging maximum knowledge

1 and acceptance of the nutritional value of locally produced food by students and
2 communities.

3 The department shall apply for federal grant funding to implement this subsection. The
4 department may implement this subsection only if the department receives funding
5 covering the costs of the program under this subsection.

6 **14. Food service program personnel; position description.** The department shall
7 develop and post a position description for school food service program personnel on its
8 publicly accessible website. The position description must meet the federal guidelines
9 established under the Nutrition Education and Training Program and Team Nutrition
10 initiative of the National School Lunch Program under 7 Code of Federal Regulations,
11 Part 210.

12 **15. Food service recognition.** The department shall provide for the development of
13 an annual competitive skill-oriented school food service recognition based on criteria
14 developed by the department emphasizing creative and effective use of local food
15 products to attract students to eat healthier meals and snacks and promoting community
16 interest in good nutrition and other factors determined by the department.

17 SUMMARY

18 This bill requires the Department of Education to develop and support local food
19 training programs for public school food service personnel and facilitate the use of local
20 food hubs to expand the use of local foods in schools. It increases the limit on the
21 amount that the State matches for the acquisition of local food by a school administrative
22 unit if the unit sends a food service employee for training in the acquisition and use of
23 local foods. It directs the department to develop and post a position description for
24 school food service program personnel on its publicly accessible website and to develop
25 an annual competitive skill-oriented school food service recognition emphasizing creative
26 and effective use of local foods. It directs the Department of Education to apply for
27 federal grant funding for the implementation of the local foods training program and the
28 increased state contribution for the Local Produce Fund and it makes implementation
29 contingent on receipt of funding. It also allows the department to accept grant funding
30 from hospitals and other sources.