

SUPPORT LD 1160

Reduce Obesity and Increase Academic Performance Among Maine Children

LD 1160 would allow all Maine students in grades K-5 to get 30 minutes per day of physical activity. It doesn't have to cost schools anything and includes recess, physical education class and movement in the classroom. The schools that are currently meeting this minimal requirement report **better academic performance and less behavioral issues**.

The bill also eliminates using food as a reward for individual classroom performance which can lead to undermining of healthy meals, overconsumption of unhealthy foods and learning to eat when we're not hungry.

Let's Go! the Healthy Maine Partnerships, WinterKids and other organizations are available to provide free resources to help all schools meet the requirements of LD 1160.

- 1/3 of Maine children and adolescents are overweight or obese. Childhood obesity has more than doubled in children and tripled in adolescents in the past 30 years. We all must play a role in solving the epidemic that is now the #2 cause of preventable disease and death.
- Obese youth are more likely to have numerous health issues including diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, bone and joint problems, several types of cancers, sleep apnea and social and psychological problems.
- Childhood obesity contributes to higher medical costs today and in the future, because obese children and adolescents are more likely than their non-obese peers to become obese adults- the medical costs associated with Maine children and adolescents (both obese and non-obese) is estimated at \$1.2 billion over the next 20 years.
- Physical activity has been shown to improve students' academic performance, including academic achievement and grades as well as concentration and attentiveness in the classroom.
- A typical second grade student in Maine receives just 36 minutes of physical education per week.
- Almost 10% of children have food allergies, and the prevalence is on the rise. Schools that prohibit the use of food as a reward are less likely to put the health of children with food allergies at risk.
- Prohibiting food as a reward does not mean children cannot be rewarded- numerous resources are available to assist school staff seeking other ways of rewarding children.



Incorporating movement into the classroom is one piece of a comprehensive solution to the childhood obesity epidemic.

Regular physical activity helps reduce the risk of developing obesity and related chronic diseases and increases student academic performance.

Let's all play a role in giving Maine kids their best shot at success- support LD 1160.