

Notes from December 8 Meeting of Task Force to End Student Hunger in Maine

(Deirdre Schneider and Jane Orbeton, OPLA)

1. **Senator Alfond called the meeting to order** and welcomed task force members and the public. Present were Senator Alfond, Senator Millett, Representative Kornfield, Helen Rankin, Representative Black, Representative Reed, Clare Whitney for Kristen Miale, Angie Bellefleur for DHHS, Gail Lombardi for DOE, Michelle Lamm, Rita Furlow, John Woods, Ron Adams. Absent were Senator Langley, Tiffany Krastins, Tom Desjardin and Holly Lusk.
2. **The task force reviewed the draft** and discussed the suggested introduction, overview of child nutrition programs, presentation of child nutrition programs in Maine, recommended child nutrition access plan and anti-hunger strategies, legislation suggested by the task force, meeting process and conclusion. The following discussions occurred and decisions were made.
 - a. Task force members decided to use Maine data, attributed to Maine sources, as much as possible in the report. They decided that for breakfast, lunch and summer meals programs they would present in the report the number of students eligible for free and reduced-cost meals, number of students participating on an average day the gap, between eligibility and participation and the funding not used that is available from federal USDA.
 - b. Task force members decided to focus on students eligible for free and reduced-cost meals, not all students. They also decided not to address pre-school child nutrition programs, the fresh fruit and vegetable program and the milk program.
 - c. Task force members decided to add references to awareness as a barrier, and best practices as opportunities throughout the report where appropriate.
 - d. Task force members decided to state broad goals within the action plan and strategies as follows:
 - i. For the school breakfast program, to adopt a goal of increasing registration over 5 years to 100% registration of all free and reduced-cost eligible students and a goal of increasing actual participation to 100% participation of eligible students who are in attendance each day. Also to add annual reporting of gains from the prior year and to add that information to training by DOE.
 - ii. For school lunch program, to adopt a goal of increasing registration over 5 years to 100% registration of all free and reduced-cost eligible students and a goal of increasing actual participation to 100% participation of eligible students who are in attendance each day. Also to add to tasks annual reporting of gains from prior year and to add that information to training by DOE.
 - iii. For at-risk after school programs CAFCP, to set goal of 20% increase per year, with aim of providing programs across the state within 5 years. For

tasks add streamlining the federal and state application processes and annual reporting of gains from prior year in reporting by DHHS.

- iv. For summer meals to state a goal of having at least 1 summer meal site in each school district that is eligible for summer meals program over 5 years and to add text on programming.
 - v. For CEP to set a goal of having all districts that are eligible for CEP without increasing local level costs using CEP within 5 years.
 - vi. Task force members decided to remove the section on best practices, buying locally and part reports as those issues are covered elsewhere in the report and to refer to the millennium reports in the text on public testimony from Jim Hanna.
 - vii. Task force members decided to add statements on the adopted goals in the conclusion section.
3. **Public Comments** were provided in the morning and afternoon:
- **Kristine Jenkins** from Partners for a Hunger Free York County provided information on the importance of partnerships in providing the resources to ensure that children are provided adequate food and the value of local community food councils. She mentioned the Maine Network of Community Food Councils and cautioned against leaving on the table not only funding but other resources that are available and are needed to feed the children. Agreed to add a Did You Know box containing information on community partnerships in or near Strategy 3. She spoke of USDA food programs and non-USDA programs,
 - **Jim Hanna**, Cumberland County Community Food Council, provided information on food council presence in all counties, sometimes countywide and sometimes only in certain smaller areas. He spoke of the importance of partnerships and of the success of a \$250,000 grant program in the early 1990's in helping almost half of the 80 schools that did not participate in school lunch to participate.
 - **Jackie Tselikis** from Partners for a Hunger-Free York County provided information on the experience in York County and their success in increasing the number of summer meals served during the summer meals program from 48,000 in 2012 to 75,427 in 2014. She spoke of the increase in sites to 17 sites in 2014.
4. Task force members agreed to request an additional meeting on Monday, December 22 at 9:30am to enable all members to review the next draft and to enable absent members to participate in the final decisions of the task force. A sixth meeting requires that the Legislative Council of the 127th Legislature grant permission for another meeting and grant an extension of the final report due date, which in Resolve 2013, chapter 107 is December 9.