

Key Talking Points

What does the bill do?

- AB 2449 would ensure that students have enough time to sit down and eat a nutritious lunch at school.
- It emphasizes the crucial role of nutrition in supporting academic achievement and student health.

What is the problem we're trying to address?

- **Children need to eat during the school day.** State labor law ensures a minimum 30-minute, uninterrupted meal break for employees, yet schoolchildren have no similar guarantee. California should ensure that its hard-working students are given the time they need to eat during the school day.
- **Students need time to eat a complete, nutritious lunch.** Many California students miss out on the benefits of school lunch due to factors outside of their control, such as long lines and wait times, insufficient points of service, and scheduling constraints. When students don't have enough time to eat, they throw away parts of their meal, buy less nutritious snacks instead, or skip lunch entirely.
- **Hungry students have a hard time focusing at school.** Nutrition plays a critical role in academic achievement and student behavior. Research definitively links nutrition with student performance. When students don't have time to eat a full lunch, their ability to learn and achieve is compromised.
- **Valuable resources are wasted when students don't have time to eat.** California has made great strides in improving the nutritional quality of school food. School districts are working hard to make meals more healthful and appealing to students. Efforts to improve the quality of school meals are hindered when students don't have enough time to eat during their lunch periods.

What are the overall impacts of AB 2449?

- **AB 2449 would improve student nutrition, reduce food waste and support student learning.** Research shows that providing enough time to eat may encourage students to eat more of the foods that are often under-consumed and nutritionally beneficial, such as fruits, vegetables, and milk. When given more time to eat, students consume more nutrients and less food is wasted.
- **AB 2449 would more efficiently spend resources that support school lunches.** School lunches bring health and academic benefits to students while drawing additional federal funds into California in the form of per-meal reimbursements. These funds can be used to improve school meal programs, purchase higher-quality food, and support local jobs.

For more than 20 years, CFPA has been the state's trusted food policy advocacy organization dedicated to increasing low-income Californians' access to healthy food at home, at school, and throughout entire communities. CFPA's advocacy agenda draws on the anti-hunger, nutrition, and health movements. Working as both a policy leader and supportive policy ally, CFPA continues to build on its long history of success.