# Floor Alert

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To: Members, California State Assembly

From: Your Name/Organization

Date: May XX, 2014

Subject: Support AB 2449 (Bocanegra) – Adequate Time to Eat: Lunchtime Supports Learning

### **Opportunity**

### School lunch is a critical resource that helps students learn, grow and achieve. However, students across the state miss out on the benefits of lunch every day because they don’t have enough time to eat, due to long lines, insufficient points of meal service, and scheduling constraints. While state labor law guarantees workers an adequate meal break during the workday, students have no similar guarantee. California has the opportunity to more effectively spend the existing state and federal funds that support school meals by ensuring students have adequate time to eat.

### What Does AB 2449 Do?

* **AB 2449 would ensure that students have enough time to eat lunch at school.** AB 2449 would make certain that schools provide students with adequate time to eat, per existing California Department of Education guidelines recommending that all students have at least 20 minutes to eat lunch after receiving their meal. This recommendation is evidence-based and promoted by nutrition experts and the USDA.
* **AB 2449 fulfills the responsibility to meet students’ most basic needs at school.** 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.

### Why Support AB 2449?

* **AB 2449** **emphasizes the crucial role of nutrition in supporting student learning.** Hungry students have a hard time focusing at school. Nutrition plays a critical role in academic achievement and student behavior. When students don’t have time to eat lunch, their ability to learn and achieve is compromised.
* **AB 2449 would improve student nutrition and reduce food waste.** Research shows that providing enough time to eat can 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 effectively spend existing 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 federal funds are used to continually improve the operation of school meal programs and support local jobs.
* **AB 2449 has received bipartisan support and has no opposition.**

*School lunch is a critical resource that helps students learn, grow and achieve. California should ensure that all students have enough time to eat lunch at school. Valuable resources are wasted when students don’t have time to eat.*

**For more information on AB 2449 contact:**

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