



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

MASSACHUSETTS SENATE  
OFFICE OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

SENATOR CYNTHIA STONE CREEM  
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June 11, 2021

Senator Jason Lewis, Chair  
Joint Committee on Education  
State House, Room 511B  
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Alice Peisch, Chair  
Joint Committee on Education  
State House, Room 473G  
Boston, MA 02133

RE: S298, *An Act promote student nutrition*  
S299, *An Act to establish food allergy plans*  
S301, *An Act to promote social-emotional learning*

Dear Senator Lewis and Representative Peisch:

I am writing to request that you favorably release three bills that will benefit students throughout the state and ensure that schools remain a safe, healthy environment for schoolchildren.

*S298, An Act relative to student nutrition*, will ensure more children have access to school meals by requiring eligible schools throughout the state to participate in the federal Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program, which reimburses districts for school meals. The CEP program, which allows schools with a certain percentage of low income students to serve breakfast and lunch to all students without collecting household financial information, eliminates the need to collect school meal money from families and ensures more children have access to healthy meals at school. It will also prohibit schools from involving children in discussions about school meal debt.

*S299, An Act to establish food allergy plans*, will require schools to develop food allergy management and prevention plans. Schools which have an enrolled student with a severe, life threatening allergy will be required to have plans in place to ensure staff have the training and knowledge necessary to prevent and treat allergic reactions. Approximately 7% of Massachusetts students have a known allergy and as the rates of food allergies continue to rise, it is critical to ensure that school staff are appropriately trained to handle these medical emergencies.

S301, *An Act to promote social-emotional learning*, would require educators to receive training in social-emotional learning, including how to develop self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making skills in students. Social-emotional learning skills, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent mental health issues many students are facing, are a necessary skill and teachers should receive the necessary training to assist students and promote emotional and behavioral health.

Thank you for your consideration of these important bills and please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any additional information..

Sincerely,

  
Cynthia Stone Creem  
State Senator