

**MAINE  
PRINCIPALS'  
ASSOCIATION**



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**TO: Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs**  
**FROM: Maine Principals' Association Legislative Committee**  
**RE: Neither For Nor Against LD 1642: An Act to Strengthen the Teaching of Wabanaki Studies in Maine Schools**  
**DATE: January 9, 2024**

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. My name is Dr. Holly Blair, and I am the Executive Director of the Maine Principals' Association – Professional Division. The MPA represents more than 800 PreK-12 principals and assistant principals of public and private schools in Maine.

The MPA Legislative Committee is neither for nor against LD 1642. The Committee agrees that strengthening the teaching of Wabanaki studies in schools is necessary. We fully agree that changing the verbiage in the bill from "Maine Native American Studies" to "Wabanaki Studies" is more accurate and should be changed.

As with other content specific bills, we encourage this bill to be presented to the Learning Results task force created by the Maine Department of Education to discuss what in the Learning Results should be altered. At that time, it is up to the local school boards to determine what, and to what extent, is expected to be taught in their schools.

We strongly encourage the make up of the commission to include more educators- specifically those who teach in the tribal schools.

We do have a significant concern with the section requiring the Department of Education to choose a sample of schools each year to look at the curriculum. This is not done for any other content area, and we do not believe this should take place regarding Wabanaki studies as well.

For these reasons, the MPA is Neither for Nor Against LD 1642.