



Maine School Superintendents Association



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF

L.D. 34

OFFICERS—2024-25

AN ACT TO INCREASE THE MINIMUM SALARY FOR TEACHERS

February 26, 2025

PRESIDENT
MARIA LIBBY
MSAD 28/FIVE TOWN CSD
CAMDEN, 04843

Senator Rafferty, Representative Noonan Murphy and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee. I am Eileen King, the executive director of the Maine School Superintendents Association, testifying on behalf of the MSSA Legislative Committee in support of the amended version of L.D. 34, An Act to Increase the Minimum Salary for Teachers.

PRESIDENT-ELECT
DR. ANDREW DOLLOFF
YARMOUTH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT
YARMOUTH, 04096

Our association has spoken in front of your committee countless times in previous legislative sessions, noting our concerns about efforts to mandate a minimum teacher salary. But today, our superintendents continue to be challenged in recruiting and retaining qualified teachers.

VICE PRESIDENT
RHONDA SPERREY
RSU 64/MSAD 64
CORINTH, 04427

SECRETARY/TREASURER
BENJAMIN SIROIS
VALLEY UNIFIED REGIONAL
SERVICE CENTER
FORT KENT, 04743

While MSSA firmly believes in local control and the ability of school districts to make decisions that best reflect the unique needs and priorities of their communities, we also recognize the critical importance of ensuring our teachers are fairly and competitively compensated for the essential work they do.

PAST PRESIDENT
PATRICIA HOPKINS
MSAD 11
GARDINER, 04345

Maine's schools are facing unprecedented challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified educators. Maine ranks 50th in the country for teacher compensation. Within the New England region, Maine's average teacher salary is lower than that of neighboring states. Ensuring that we have a strong, stable, and dedicated teaching workforce is fundamental to the success of our students and competitive salaries play a key role in attracting and retaining the best educators for our schools.

EILEEN E. KING
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Many potential teachers hesitated to come to Maine due to the Windfall Elimination Provision. With the recent passage of the Social Security Fairness Act that fear is no longer a barrier. The repeal of WEP and increasing teacher salaries will only improve Maine's effort to attract and retain teachers to our state. Our educators play a pivotal role in shaping the future of our students, communities, and workforce. They provide not only academic instruction but also mentorship, guidance, and support that extend far beyond the classroom. Their dedication deserves to be recognized with compensation that reflects the significance of their contributions.

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Maine Superintendents have long recognized the need to increase our teachers' salaries. The fact that MSSA is in support L.D. 34 reflects the work that school districts have done to negotiate higher salaries in recent years, making L.D. 34 a realistic target to reach. The incremental approach to supporting this bill financially and the support from the state to make it happen, will also support Maine school districts in making this a reality. For these reasons, I ask you to support L.D. 34.

Leading for equity, excellence and opportunity for all Maine Students