

February 26, 2025

Testimony in support of LD 370

I write in support of the passage of LD 370 which will increase the number of math credits/courses needed for a high school diploma in Maine from 2 to 3. Briefly, I support the bill for the following reasons:

1. The study of mathematics requires logical and critical thinking along with problem solving. These skills and approaches to finding solutions are critically important in our complex society.
2. Mathematics study, especially a course in algebra, has traditionally served as a gate opener to formal education beyond high school. In other words, not having studied at least algebra is a barrier to most forms of higher education. Additionally, completing study beyond a year of algebra opens students to the potential to enroll in more advance degree programs such as ones offered at a 4 year college or university either immediately after high school or later in life. Thus three years or credits of math study improves post-secondary opportunities for high school graduates.
3. Several topics might be considered important for the additional year of mathematical study: *Computer Science* is commonly taught in high schools now, however teaching credentials have not been established nor has the content area “home” been established for CS. Possibly, CS could be considered a mathematics, or quantitative reasoning, course. (Other considerations are to place CS in the sciences family. These are matters to be determined and might be better determined at the local school district level.) *Statistics* is also a strong contender for an area of mathematics that should be studied by more high school students. Knowledge of statistics will enhance decision-making and critical thinking; it is math content that has immediate practical use.

I write as a school board member and long-time educator who is retired from full-time employment. I do not speak for my school district nor for any former employers with this view of LD 370. The EPS formula can be adjusted to support schools that will be providing 3 mathematics courses per student rather than two. There will likely be additional costs to school districts to implement any additions to graduation requirements. Such costs will be worthwhile.

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