



Augusta Adult & Community Education

22 Armory Street, North Wing, Augusta, Maine 04330
(207) 626-2470
<https://augusta.maineadulted.org/>

February 28, 2025

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan and Members of the 132nd Legislative Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs:

I am Dr. Kayla Sikora, the director of Augusta Adult and Community Education, and I am writing to you neither for nor against LD 471 – An Act to Establish an Adult English Language Learner Program. My intent is to provide information on the existing English language learning services offered through Augusta Adult and Community Education and to highlight the work currently being done to support multilingual learners in our community.

At Augusta Adult and Community Education, we provide a range of English as a Second Language (ESL) classes designed to meet the needs of adult learners at various proficiency levels. Our program serves over 90 multilingual learners annually, with a projected increase to 120 in the coming year. In addition to traditional ESL classes focusing on reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills, we integrate workforce preparation to help learners gain employment and advance in their careers. Our partnerships with local employers, such as MaineGeneral Health, allow us to offer on-site English language instruction, further expanding access to learning opportunities.

If the legislature is looking to increase funding and availability of ELL resources, our program would love to add more services to our already comprehensive offerings. As you know, adequate funding is critical for our program to be able to diversify course offerings and to be poised to offer one-on-one learner support. If desired, I can provide more information on our programs, waitlists, and funding needs.

As Maine continues to welcome an increasing number of multilingual learners, it is important to consider how to best support and expand existing programs that already provide comprehensive English language learning services. Strengthening and ensuring sustainable funding for these established programs could enhance the impact of services already in place and better serve the growing population of adult English language learners.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to reach out if you would like additional information about our program or the services we provide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Kayla Sikora", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Dr. Kayla Sikora
Director, Augusta Adult and Community Education