

**MAINE
PRINCIPALS'
ASSOCIATION**



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*MPA is an Equal
Opportunity Organization*

TO: Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
FROM: Maine Principals' Association Legislative Committee
RE: In Opposition of LD 220: An Act to Establish the Hope and Inclusion Scholarship Program in Order to Provide Funding for Students Attending Certain Private Schools and Students Receiving Home Instruction
DATE: March 12, 2025

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, 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 700 PreK-12 principals and assistant principals, CTE Directors and Assistant Directors, and Athletic Directors of public and private schools in Maine. The Maine Principals' Association (MPA) Legislative Committee stands in opposition to LD 220. If enacted, this bill would divert critical resources away from public schools, reducing the funding available to support all students.

Under this proposal, funds that would otherwise be allocated to School Administrative Units (SAUs), as well as 90% of the local funding that communities would have spent on a student attending public school, would instead be placed into an account accessible by parents for various educational services. These include supplies, tutoring, transportation, and other reimbursable expenses. This redirection of funds would create significant inequities across our state. Public schools, which may already struggle to provide certain services, would still be required to contribute to a "Hope" account—funding services for students attending private or home schools while potentially being unable to offer the same support to their own students.

Additionally, we have serious concerns about the impact on students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This bill would require students accessing these funds to meet only the state's minimum educational requirements, rather than the individualized goals established by their IEP teams. This failure to meet IEP objectives would result in unmet student needs and further exacerbate educational disparities.

For these reasons, we strongly urge the Committee to vote **Ought Not to Pass** on LD 220.