

# 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 512: An Act to Provide Educational Opportunities for Students in Secondary Schools with 200 or Fewer Students

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 MPA Legislative Committee is in opposition to LD 512. This bill, which would allow students residing in districts with high schools of 200 or fewer students to attend other schools of their choice, poses a significant threat to the stability and sustainability of small, local high schools.

Public Education is designed to serve all students equitably, and our current statute ensures that students attend the public high school in the district where they live, regardless of school size. LD 512 undermines this foundation by creating a system that disadvantages small schools, diverting critical funding and resources away from the community that need them most.

If students are allowed to leave their local high school for larger or alternative schools, the funding that follows them will place an undue financial burden on already struggling small districts. These schools rely on per-pupil funding to maintain programs, hire qualified teachers, and provide extracurricular opportunities. A decline in enrollment will only lead to further budget cuts, potential staff reductions, and diminished educational opportunities for the students who remain. This creates a cycle of instability that could ultimately lead to the closure of small high schools, which serve as vital educational and community centers in rural areas.

Additionally, LD 512 creates an unfair dynamic where only certain students—those living in smaller districts—are granted school choice, while others remain bound by residency-based school attendance policies. This selective approach to school choice contradicts the principle of equity and fairness in public education policy.

For these reasons, we urge you to oppose LD 512. Instead of creating policies that weaken small schools, we should be working to strengthen and support them, ensuring that every student, regardless of where they live, has access to a high-quality education within their own community.