

Tamber Craig
Millinocket
LD 470

Hello. My name is Tamber Craig, and I am writing in support of LD 470. As a teacher who transitioned from teaching in private Christian schools to public schools, there was a huge learning curve for me in a lot of ways. The expectations and rules governing teachers in a public school are very different from those of private schools. When I started my first year teaching in Maine public schools, I was assigned a mentor. However, the school itself didn't really have a set mentoring process, and my mentor, though state-trained, and I just guessed our way through it. I was able to adapt quickly and learn fast, but there were still many things I wish I could have learned, especially in classroom management and what to expect from students in a public school. I know I am not alone in the confusion that is caused by not having a state-approved system that is the same throughout Maine. What saved me is that I came in already having teaching experience, so I wasn't learning how to operate in a public school classroom and how to teach the material at the same time. Those entering the teaching field as a second career or those coming right out of college do not have the experiences I did and are therefore in danger of failing if they are not guided correctly. If we want to empower and maintain the standard of education we expect in Maine, then we need to make sure all our teachers, no matter how they enter the field, have the correct mentors in place to make their transition into teaching as smooth as possible. That's how we gain and retain teachers - by helping them to be as prepared as possible for the environment they are going to be teaching in. To do that, we need our mentors to have the training they need to guide our new teachers to success. All of that starts with all districts being on the same page with programs that will ensure the best for all of us in the classroom. Thank you for considering my testimony.