

GORHAM SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

Office of the Superintendent

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March 11, 2025

Senator Joseph Rafferty, Chair
Representative Kelly Murphy, Chair
Joint Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Re: Opposition to LD 220

Dear Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and Honorable Members of the Committee:

As a 20-year veteran Superintendent of Schools in Maine, and someone who is passionate about public schools, I am writing to urge you to **vehemently oppose LD 220**. This LD, if passed, would siphon tax revenue to fund the education of students who attend private schools in Maine.

At a time when public schools are struggling to provide quality education programs to EVERY child in their community this bill is a slap in the face to every local community in Maine. If passed, public schools will see less financial support, with no fewer requirements. As a result, local property taxes will increase and more children will be left behind.

Legislators should not support school vouchers in any form because they divert critical funding away from public schools, weakening the education system that serves the majority of students. Public schools rely on state and local funding. Many private or religious schools are not even held to the same academic and accountability standards as public schools. They often refuse to educate students with disabilities, or with other special needs. When vouchers funnel taxpayer money into private and religious schools – it exacerbates inequality and leaves disadvantaged students in the dark.

Instead of investing in a system that can deepen demographic divides and reduce oversight for the use of public taxpayer dollars, legislators should focus on strengthening

public schools, ensuring that every child has access to a high-quality education regardless of their socioeconomic status or zip code.

I urge you to keep public dollars in public schools which are accountable to taxpayers and are the heart of our rural communities in Maine. **Vote NO on LD 220.** Thank you for considering my views. I am happy to be a resource to you on this important topic. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heather J. P.", followed by a long, sweeping horizontal stroke.

Superintendent of Schools
Gorham School Department