

Mimi Marsteller
Lewiston, ME
LD 1089

Dear Senator Grohoski, Representative Cloutier, and Taxation Committee members,
My name is Mimi Marsteller, and I teach at Lewiston High School. I am testifying on behalf of my teacher colleagues and my students in support of LD1089 with the hope that public education in our state can receive steady funding.

In October of this school year, students in one of my classes visited Geiger Elementary in Lewiston to meet with an artist who, in collaboration with the elementary students, created a stunning mural on a wall beside the school gardens. My high school students interviewed the artist, took documentary footage of the garden and mural, and created videos highlighting this outdoor space for learning and community.

This kind of engaged pedagogy requires funding: first, for classroom teachers; second, for collaborations with community members like the artist highlighted here; third, for staff like the visionary young teacher who organized the resources and human power to build the Geiger garden, to commission the artist, to solicit student input about what the mural should feature, and to see the project through.

In the end, the artist who made this mural volunteered his labor, and the young woman who spearheaded the garden-and-art site at Geiger is leaving after this year because the funding for her position is ending.

Schools need reliable funding if they are to be lively spaces for community and collaboration. Wealthy Mainers want, I believe, to support the public education in our state which produces engaged, creative citizens. Such education benefits us all.

Votes ought to pass in favor of LD1089.

Thank you for your time.
Mimi Marsteller