



# YARMOUTH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

*Empowering all students*

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Maine Legislature  
Education and Cultural Affairs Committee

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

My name is Andrew Dolloff, and I am the Superintendent of Schools in Yarmouth, testifying in opposition to LD 607 – an incredibly harmful bill that would negatively impact educational opportunity both in school districts that would be forced to accept non-resident students and in districts that may experience declining enrollment.

In districts that are deemed to be “more attractive” for any number of reasons, superintendents are already inundated each year with requests to enroll non-resident students. Currently, superintendents work with the families and the superintendent in the student’s home district to determine what is in the best interest of the child. If LD 607 were to pass, those personal conversations and professional considerations would no longer matter.

This bill would cause harm to students in receiving districts due to an increase in class sizes and a strain on resources. This is unfair to students whose schools must accept students from other communities with a small corresponding increase in funding. To say the school will be compensated through the State’s EPS funding mechanism is simply untrue. Most districts that are deemed highly attractive – like ours in Yarmouth – receive a minimal amount of funding from the State to support their high-performing schools.

Asking the taxpayers of communities like Yarmouth to invest considerable funds in educating students who live in the town is challenging enough. To expect that they will take on additional expenses because students want to come to their schools from other communities is simply not fair. It could easily create a backlash against school expenses, likely resulting in a further strain on resources. This will harm programming for resident students, whose parents pay a significant tax bill to benefit the school and their child’s education each year.

For students remaining in the sending district, declining enrollment may lead to reduced programming and a lack of breadth and depth in the curriculum. I know from colleagues in more challenging geographic settings that the loss of students can be devastating to a small school.

Maine is a state that prides itself on local control. Maine educators pride themselves on knowing their students and their families in deeply personal ways. The interaction between superintendents and families when making decisions about the proper placement of students who



request Superintendent Agreements is a significant activity that highlights the engagement of school leaders with students throughout the state. Let's not diminish that relationship between school leaders and families by removing those discussions from the equation.

Let's not negatively impact programming and experiences for students in receiving schools by increasing class sizes and placing a strain on resources.

Let's not negatively impact programming and experiences for students in sending schools by decreasing enrollment to the point where the curriculum is narrowed, and programming is dropped.

Let's not penalize communities that invest more in their schools by forcing them to educate students from communities that invest less with virtually no compensation.

This bill is unfair to students, unfair to taxpayers, and dismissive of the personal nature of Maine education. I urge you to soundly defeat LD 607.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Dolloff', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Andrew Dolloff, Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Schools  
Yarmouth