

MAINE

**PRINCIPALS'
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TO: Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
FROM: Maine Principals' Association Legislative Committee
RE: In Opposition of LD 1069: An Act to Require Personal Finance to Be Taught as a Separate Course in Order for a Student to Obtain a High School Diploma
DATE: April 1, 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 Maine Principals' Association's Legislative Committee is in opposition to LD 1069, An Act to Require Personal Finance to Be Taught as a Separate Course for a Student to Obtain a High School Diploma. While we fully support the idea that personal finance is an essential skill for all students, I have concerns about the approach outlined in this bill.

Maine is a local control state, meaning that school boards have the authority to determine additional curriculum requirements beyond the minimum Maine Department of Education diploma standards. Requiring a standalone personal finance course for every high school student imposes a rigid mandate that may not align with the priorities and resources of individual districts.

Furthermore, while personal finance education is undoubtedly valuable, mandating an entire additional year-long course may be excessive. Many schools already integrate financial literacy into existing courses, such as economics, mathematics, or career preparation programs. A more flexible approach, allowing districts to incorporate personal finance into their curriculum in ways that best fit their students' needs, would be more effective.

We urge the committee to consider alternative methods of strengthening financial education in Maine schools without imposing a one-size-fits-all requirement. Thank you for your time and consideration.