



LEWISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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RE: LD 607

Hello Maine Delegation,

We do not support this bill as it removes the home location Superintendent's input in the decision-making process for students to attend schools other than their own. We believe this step will create a significant imbalance in enrollments and could create instability in budget creation, subsidy, and be a detriment to schools with diminishing enrollments. Maine is a rural state that struggles to adequately fund schools. Property taxes and state subsidy have become the two main revenue streams for schools. Without having both sending and receiving Superintendents agree to transfer a student essential information for student success will be missed, resources will be strained, additional cost will move to the local tax base in some situations, and an imbalance of resources could create greater gaps with the haves and have nots.

Some submissions from parents are dishonest. Some share inaccurate information or omit information to manipulate favor, some just want to be on a sports team, play for a certain coach, are trying to avoid disciplinary situations, have incredibly high needs, share an inaccurate address that later turns into McKinney Vento situations, and so many more examples. We denied a request this year for a family that was "seeking to purchase land and build a new home" in a nearby town so they wanted to send their students to another school. This would be year 4 of the exact same request and the students have poor attendance because (as noted by the receiving district) the parents do not transport regularly or on time. If in the correct school district, these students could take the bus.

A school unit with shrinking enrollment could find itself at a crossroad with not having enough subsidy through enrollment to keep the heat on. They would have to raise non-state subsidy support for operations through local taxes or have community conversations about closing schools to afford to operate. If only one Superintendent needed to say yes, it could create an exodus of students creating immediate subsidy impacts that would only be a detriment to the resources remaining for those who attend school there.

We have lots of examples but our key sentiment is that there are so many unique situations that need to be assessed. With both Superintendent's weighing in as the top representative for each community's schools - the most current information for the request and all the other variables can be weighed appropriately.

Sincerely,

KJLanglais

K. Jake Langlais, Superintendent

Summary:

This bill provides that, in the case of a student transferring from one school administrative unit to another, the superintendent of each school administrative unit must approve the transfer if the student's parent approves and the superintendent of the receiving school administrative unit has determined that the school administrative unit has the capacity to enroll the student. A transfer must be approved if the receiving school administrative unit has adequate physical space to enroll the student and enrolling the student would not require additional staff.