

MAINE PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION



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MPA is an Equal
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TO: Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

FROM: Maine Principals' Association Legislative Committee

RE: In Neither For Nor Against LD 1271: An Act to Make Permanent the Law Allowing School Boards to Accept the Volunteer Services of Immediate Family Members of Superintendents or School Board Members

DATE: April 8, 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 MPA Legislative Committee is neither for nor against LD 1271. This legislation could help fill a gap for schools that may need additional volunteer support. In many districts—particularly those that are rural or under-resourced—volunteer assistance can have a meaningful and positive impact on students and staff. This bill would allow local school boards the continued flexibility to utilize volunteers, including immediate family members of superintendents or school board members, when appropriate.

Additionally, it is important to recognize that building administrators have the authority to determine who is permitted to volunteer in their schools. This local oversight provides a layer of protection to ensure volunteers are placed appropriately and effectively.

However, there are several concerns worth considering. While many districts have policies in place to address nepotism, allowing immediate family members of district leadership to serve in volunteer roles may still present a conflict of interest—or, at the very least, the appearance of one. This could undermine public confidence or create discomfort within the school community, even when all parties involved are acting with integrity.

I would also like to note the language in the bill title, which references making this law "permanent." I question whether that means the Legislature would be unable to revisit or repeal this law in the future, should circumstances change or unintended consequences arise. Ensuring that local control remains a priority and that districts retain the ability to set clear, transparent policies around volunteerism will be important moving forward.