

# MAINE PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION



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**TO:** Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs  
**FROM:** Maine Principals' Association Legislative Committee  
**RE:** In Support of LD 1163: An Act to Foster Career and Technical Education in Maine Schools by Creating an Additional Pathway to Certify Industrial Arts Teachers  
**DATE:** April 25, 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 in support of LD 1163. Maine is currently facing a significant challenge when it comes to maintaining access to industrial arts education in our schools. Many of the individuals who have filled these essential teaching roles are retiring, and without a clear and accessible pathway to certify new industrial arts teachers, we risk losing this important educational opportunity entirely. At present, there is no viable pathway in Maine for educators to obtain an industrial arts endorsement, and the future of these programs is in jeopardy.

By creating an additional pathway to certification, LD 1163 would help ensure that PK-12 schools in Maine can continue to offer industrial arts courses. These courses play a valuable role in engaging students who may not follow a traditional academic route but are eager to explore hands-on learning, problem-solving, and career-related skills. While industrial arts programs are not the same as Career and Technical Education (CTE) centers, they can serve an important purpose, particularly for students who are interested in technical fields but may not have access to CTE programs due to limited space or geographic barriers.

This bill would not only address a growing gap in the educator workforce but would also expand learning opportunities for Maine students at a time when technical skills and applied learning have never been more relevant.

We do acknowledge one area of caution—that establishing this new pathway could potentially open the door for similar proposals for other endorsements without appropriate oversight. It is important that the development of this pathway continues to involve the expertise and approval of the Maine State Board of Education to ensure quality and consistency.

Despite this concern, we believe LD 1163 is a practical and necessary step to preserve industrial arts education in Maine schools and to meet the interests and needs of students across the state.

*Please note that this testimony was submitted based off of the original language of the bill and not additional amendments that may be presented.*