

MAINE PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION



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TO: Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
FROM: Maine Principals' Association Legislative Committee
RE: In Opposition of LD 1327: An Act to Improve and Expand Student Teaching Opportunities in Maine by Compensating Student Teaching
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 opposition of LD 1327. While we fully understand and appreciate the intent behind this bill—to provide financial support to student teachers who often face significant financial burdens—it raises several concerns that warrant careful consideration.

First, this proposal could result in substantial new costs for school districts. It is unclear where the funding for this compensation would come from, and there is concern that districts may be asked to absorb this expense. This could lead to districts limiting the number of student teachers they are willing to host due to financial constraints, ultimately reducing opportunities rather than expanding them.

Additionally, the bill, as written, appears to support only student teachers from the University of Maine System. There are other colleges and universities in Maine that offer education degrees, and this proposal does not appear to include those institutions. This raises equity concerns and could unintentionally disadvantage students from other programs.

Finally, if student teachers are to be paid, it is unclear whether they would then be considered employees, subject to the same expectations, benefits, and obligations as other paid staff members. This could create new and complex challenges around supervision, evaluation, and accountability.

For these reasons, we respectfully oppose LD 1327 and encourage the committee to explore alternative ways to support aspiring educators without placing additional financial strain on local schools.

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