

Testimony in Support of LD 1624: An Act to Provide Funding for Summer School Programming

April 24, 2025

Senator Joseph Rafferty
Representative Kelly Murphy
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

RE: LD 1624: An Act to Provide Funding for Summer School Programing

Dear Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and the honorable members of the Joint Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs,

My name is Mohamed Nur, and I am writing to support LD 1624, An Act to Provide Funding for Summer School Programming. Now more than ever before, it is critical that our government and communities prioritize, allocate, and distribute resources and funding toward supporting Maine students at and across every level possible. The significance of summer school programming extends beyond remedial education; it is an invaluable tool for schools and families to promote equitable access to education, foster intellectual and emotional development, and nurture our young people during a critical time in our state's history.

Summer school programs serve as an essential lifeline for many students, particularly those from vulnerable backgrounds who often face barriers to educational success. These programs provide opportunities for academic enrichment and create a safe and supportive environment for social and emotional growth. Students who struggle in traditional classroom settings benefit significantly from smaller class sizes, individualized attention, and increased engagement with educators and counselors available via summer school programming. By ensuring funding for summer school programs, we can actively level the playing field and provide all students – regardless of their backgrounds – with the opportunity to thrive.

Moreover, summer school programming allows struggling students to catch up, reinforcing the skills they need to succeed in the upcoming academic year. Such programming is particularly vital following the disruptions caused by the pandemic, which have left many students behind. Students, when given the resources to accelerate their learning during the summer, are set up for greater success in the fall, improving their chances of excelling in school and ultimately benefiting their academic trajectory and overall well-being.

Conversely, failure to fund summer school programs exacerbates the challenges facing our students, their families, and our schools. The consequence of removing this support will disproportionately impact low-income families who rely on these programs for both educational enrichment and childcare solutions throughout the summer months. The interruption of educational services can lead to widening

achievement gaps and disillusionment with the educational system, creating a vicious cycle that is difficult to break.

We must be proactive in solidifying education funding, particularly for vulnerable populations. Investing in summer school programming will demonstrate that Maine is committed to nurturing the potential of every student, regardless of their circumstances. We owe it to our children, families, and educators to create inclusive, equitable, and sustainable pathways for success.

I strongly urge the committee to support LD 1624. Ensuring that every child has the opportunity to excel academically, socially, and emotionally is essential for our state to thrive for generations to come.

Summer school programming was transformational in my own life. I was born and raised in Portland, Maine, and am a product of Portland Public Schools. The summer school programming in Portland gave me a safe environment to learn and grow. It allowed my mother peace of mind while she worked multiple jobs to provide for our family, knowing I was somewhere safe with access to good food, better people, and a quality learning environment. These early interventions underscored the transformative power of education as a tool for upward economic and social mobility. I am the first in my family to have graduated high school and college, and I am now pursuing my law degree at one of the best law schools in the country. I owe many people and programs that have brought me to this moment, including the summer school programming in Portland.

LD 1624 will allow Maine to pave the way for a stronger and more equitable future for our students and communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mohamed Nur".

Mohamed Nur
J.D. Candidate, Class of 2027
Stanford Law School