

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF

L.D. 1624

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAMMING

April 25, 2025

Senator Rafferty, Representative Noonan Murphy, and members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, I am Robbie Feinberg, the Director of Communications and Government Relations of the Maine School Management Association, testifying on behalf of the legislative committees of the Maine School Boards Association and the Maine School Superintendents Association in support of L.D. 1624.

Research has long recognized the importance of summer programming to reduce “summer learning loss,” and recent research routinely demonstrates that summer interventions can increase student engagement, boost test scores, and decrease the amount of time that teachers have to spend “re-teaching” content in the fall, allowing students to make faster progress in their learning.

Millions of dollars in federal COVID relief funding allowed dozens of Maine school districts to invest in these strategies, and many created or expanded programs that combined hands-on learning with academic interventions. As some examples:

- At Windham Primary School, many young children enroll in a summer literacy program in order to maintain the strides they’ve made over the course of the school year. The program helps students improve their reading skills while easing their transition back to the school in the fall.
- In Skowhegan, students at the Somerset Career & Technical Center take part in summer programming in financial literacy, college prep, and even a pre-apprenticeship program learning about the operations at the Somerset Mill.
- At MSAD 17, elementary school students visit Roberts Farm Preserve for an immersive, nature-based experience integrated outdoor learning with skill-building in reading, math, and more.

L.D. 1624 rightfully recognizes this array of offerings and instructional strategies and would provide funding for everything from “credit recovery activities that will help high school students” graduate on time to “summer enrichment and intervention programs” to prevent learning loss.

These programs work. National [studies](#) have found that summer learning programs improve students’ reading and math scores, with lower-income students seeing the greatest benefit.

Beyond that academic improvement, summer learning programs are also routinely recognized because of the way they connect schools and students with the wider community. A [DOE report](#) on Maine summer school programs from two years ago found that Maine schools were partnering with YMCAs, recreation departments, theatres, wildlife refuges, and more, exposing students to wider community partners outside of the classroom.

The significant funding in this bill will allow Maine schools to bolster these strategies and programs they developed during the pandemic -- and potentially expand them -- leading to even more enriching opportunities for children across Maine.