



LEWISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

36 Oak Street
Lewiston, ME 04240
www.lewistonpublicschools.org
TDD: 207-795-4100
FAX: 207-795-4177

Administration: 207-795-4100

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RE: LD 1103

Hello Maine Delegation,

Thank you members to the Education Committee for your time today and your commitment to our schools. My name is Jake Langlais. I am the Superintendent of Lewiston Public Schools and President of the Western Maine Superintendents Association. I am sharing this position from my chair and in representation of the larger group from the greater Lewiston/Auburn area to the greater Oxford area up to Rangeley.

The challenges we face today are certainly unique. We believe having a higher percentage of carryover will allow us to strategically plan financially.

Concerns include:

- Reductions in staff have contractual obligations.
- Capital improvements are necessary at all our facilities.
- Budgets have been delayed - some numerous times.
- Between materials, regulations, permitting, and labor - all projects take on significant costs.
- Variables shift in valuation, revenue sharing, enrollment fluctuations, unexpected or untimely facility needs
- Fund disbursement schedules make things difficult to predict including federal allocations, hardship funds, and even grants that fall outside of state subsidy but may require some matching.
- This year alone we (in Lewiston) are over 10 students who have moved to our community with a pre-existing out of district placement that needs to be maintained.
- It does concern me that some may enact spend down strategies to achieve the lower percentage instead of applying long-term financial strategy.

- A common business would build to 3 - 6 months (or more) for their operating reserve. That is 25% - 50%.
- Stability in any organization is important. This allows for more stability.

We support this adjustment given the number of variables that exist in school finance. This isn't a fiscal vote. This allows for good financial management.

This bill would provide that the temporary percentage threshold of 9% applies to all future fiscal years. Prior to the temporary threshold the limit was 5%. It is too limiting in the landscape today. We support the 9% threshold even though it is less than half of what a business would carry at a minimum.

Sincerely,

KJ Langlais

K. Jake Langlais
Superintendent