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Supplemental Testimony of Representative Sophie Warren Supporting
L.D. 1624, An Act to Provide Funding for Summer School Programming
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

1. **Rep. Sargent:** *Can you provide Maine-specific data highlighting evidence-based value that comes from summer school, and enrichment programming?*

Below encompasses a culmination of available data I was able to access, review, and summarize in time for this committee work session.

Funding for summer school and enrichment programming is correlated with a determination as part of the most efficient use of public funds:

A 2009 Report contracted through Maine DOE evaluated ‘Most Efficient’ Maine Public Schools as those that included robust funding and support for summer school and enrichment:

“Accordingly, in this study, school efficiency was defined by this set of six (or seven) criteria, four based on two years (2007-2009) of student academic performance (and a fifth one for high schools), and two based on multiple years (2007-2009) of per pupil instructional spending. In order to meet a criterion, the school’s score had to be greater than a comparison score. For both criteria 6 and 7, per pupil operating expenditures were defined to include those expenditures most closely tied to delivering instruction. So, for example, they included teaching staff and other educational staff (e.g., teacher aides, counselors, principals, etc.), classroom instruction costs, **summer school**, professional development, technology, etc. They did not include expenses such as transportation, operation and maintenance of buildings, and debt service.” – Page 5¹

“Patently, the More Efficient schools we studied are having considerable success in helping students master core academic subject knowledge, and they are having success helping students to develop intellectually so as to be able to understand, transform, and share their learning. Thus, we conclude that More Efficient schools are accomplishing this as *emerging student-centered schools* that are taking significant steps toward preparing students for the 21st Century. The central focus is on students and helping them learn and develop intellectually. Plus, all students have access to a variety of learning opportunities, and a wide variety of learning experiences are available to students throughout the school day, **including remediation and enrichment**. There is ample evidence of high expectations and

¹ A Study of Maine’s More Efficient Public Schools. Maine Department of Education. January 2012.
<https://www.maine.gov/doe/sites/maine.gov.do/files/inline-files/studyofMaineEfficientPublicSchools2012.pdf>.

high standards and the use of multiple assessments in assessing progress in learning. Teachers and leaders are actively engaged in creating a school culture that helps students acquire more and more responsibility for their own learning.” – Page 55 (iv)²

Funding for summer school and enrichment programming is correlated with helping Maine students graduate on-time, reducing the burden on local resources, and increasing graduation rates overall:

“...[T]he U.S. Department of Education has adopted a single, uniform definition...when reporting their yearly high school graduation rates.” “...[F]or some high schools, the graduation rates might be quite different if **five-year graduates** were considered.” – Page 3, 10³

“The national **four-year** graduation rate was 87% and the national median was 86%. Maine’s statewide high school graduation rate was similar at **86%** (NCES, 2023).” “A second common approach to estimating high school graduation rates includes students who graduate in **five or six years**, or obtain an equivalent credential such as a GED. According to a recent Current Population Survey using this measurement approach, the high school completion rate rose from 89% in 2007 to **93.3%** in 2017 for 18-24 year olds who had left high school.” – Page 4⁴

“The high percentage of economically disadvantaged students in Maine does have a negative impact on the state’s overall graduation rate. The graduation rate for Maine’s economically disadvantaged students was 78% in 2022 compared to a graduation rate of 93% for non-economically disadvantaged students. The combined rate for all students is 86%. This disparity raises concerns about the potential for high school completion for students attending small schools that primarily serve students from economically disadvantaged homes.” – Page 9⁵

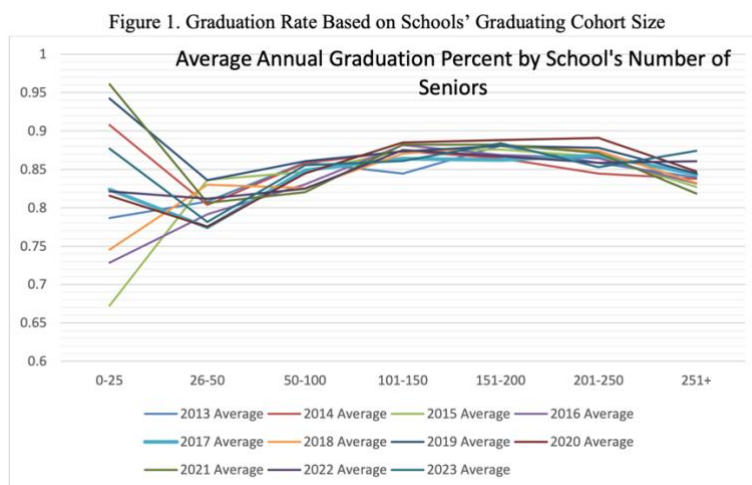
² *Id.*

³ Silvernail, David L. PhD; Walker, Leanne C.; and Batista, Ida A., "Increasing Maine’s High School Graduation Rate: Necessary But Not Sufficient" (2011). Higher Education and College Readiness. 4. https://digitalcommons.usm.maine.edu/cepare_readiness/4.

⁴ MEPRI Report on Analysis of Maine’s High School Graduation Rates. Maine Education Policy Research Institute, University of Maine. March 2025. <https://bpb-us-w2.wpmucdn.com/wpsites.maine.edu/dist/e/97/files/2025/03/MEPRI-Report-on-HS-Grad-Rates-final-rev-030725.pdf>.

⁵ *Id.* at page 9.

This issue may⁶ be more acute for the smallest and largest⁷ school populations:



Qualitative analysis⁸ of success in 2022 summer school programming to improve student achievement:

“Students in grades 4-6 studied the ocean in the classroom, went tide pooling, and took a sea kayaking trip. Offering these types of experiences in our summer programs gives students experiences that they would not have otherwise. Hands- on and project-based learning – especially summer work with community partners – have proven to be the most effective for improving student engagement and in turn impacting **student achievement**.”

“We also made the decision to use our reallocation funding to add support staff to the already existing summer programming. This allowed for two key things to happen. One, it allowed for a staff member who contacted parents when students did not show up in the morning and another staff person who could follow up with those parents at the end of the day, ensuring that families received materials from the day's activities. In addition, this meant two extra people to provide additional **small group instruction** during the academic block.”

⁶ The data may be even more stark for smallest school populations, but there is state statute that places limitations on reporting data for small schools per: “Overall, our analysis found that a significant portion of graduation rates for some high schools are not available due to data suppression at the state level. In fact, almost a third of all high school graduation rates statewide were suppressed in the ten-year period examined in this report, and 82% were suppressed for the smaller high schools. This high rate of data suppression poses significant challenges for accurate data interpretation and public accountability.” *Id.* at page 7.

⁷ “...[For] schools in the largest size category (251–300 students in the graduating cohort), ...fluctuations in graduation rates were more pronounced... [with] unstable and lower graduation rates for those schools.” *Id.* at page 8.

⁸ 2022 Title I Summer School Programming. Maine Department of Education.

<https://www.maine.gov/doe/sites/maine.gov.do/files/inline-files/Summary%20of%20Summer%20School%20Programming.pdf>.

All of these Maine-specific evaluations are reflective of national statistics indicating strong academic consensus that summer experiences or the lack thereof can greatly influence the academic success of students, particularly from low-income and at-risk backgrounds. These experiences can either help close or widen achievement gaps, particularly those affecting poor and minority students in the U.S.⁹¹⁰ Most broadly, meta-analysis of ninety-three summer programs found that, on average, students who attended summer programs performed better than about 56% to 60% of their peers who did not participate.¹¹

⁹ “An Independent Review of Maine’s Essential Programs and Services Funding Act: Part 1.” Lawrence O. Picus & Associates. April 1, 2013. P. 89-91. https://picusodden.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Review_of_Maines_Essential_Programs_and_Services_Program_-_Part_1.pdf. See, Heyns, Barbara. (1978). *Summer learning and the effects of schooling*. New York: Academic Press.

¹⁰ Borman, Geoffrey D., & Boulay, Matthew. (Eds.). (2004). *Summer Learning: Research, policies and programs*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

¹¹ Cooper, Harris, Charlton, Kelly, Valentine, Jeff C., & Muhlenbruck, Laura. (2000). Making the most of summer school: A meta-analytic and narrative review. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, 65 (1, Serial No. 260).