



May 1, 2025

Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

Re: LD 1098 to Ensure Equal Access to a Full School Day for All Students

Chair Rafferty, Chair Murphy, and Distinguished Members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

My name is Carrie Woodcock and I am the Executive Director for Maine Parent Federation (MPF) and the parent of two children with different abilities. MPF is Maine's federally funded Parent Training and Information Center and Family-to-Family Health Information Center. We provide training and individual assistance to families of children with different abilities (especially to underserved populations) to increase access to all systems of care and increase positive outcomes.

I am testifying today in support of LD 1098 to Ensure Equal Access to a Full School Day for All Students

In recent years Maine Parent Federation has seen a steady increase in families in need of support for their students who do not have access to a full day of school. The most common reasons for a student being placed on an abbreviated day is behavior and school resources. Most times these students have experienced an abbreviated school day for an extended period of time and do not have access to their full services as they are written on their Individualized Education Program (IEP). As a result these students, who have been identified with a disability, are experiencing both academic and behavior regression.

Additionally, families are struggling to get districts to provide the resources within the school so the student can return to a full day of learning. Required re-entry plans are not even being written and schools are telling families they don't have the resources to provide the student with the programming for a return to a full day of schooling.

It is for these reasons that MPF supports the additional language in LD 1098. This bill works to reduce the use of an abbreviated school day by eliminating academic resources as an acceptable reason. It also addresses how a student who is placed on

an abbreviated day will access their full services on their IEP by requiring a written explanation of how the student will meet the system of learning results and receive full access to the curriculum like their typically developing peers. It encourages a quick return to a full day by requiring a description of the identified services needed for the student to return. Finally, it requires parental/caregiver consent to place a child in an abbreviated school day which engages the family as a partner. When families are engaged as partners in learning the student is more likely to have academic success.

It is for these reasons that MPF urges the Committee to pass LD 1098.

Respectfully,  
Carrie Woodcock