



# LEWISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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March 9, 2026

RE: LD 2226

Hello Maine Delegation,

My name is Jake Langlais. I am the Superintendent of Lewiston Public Schools. This testimony is in support of LD 2226 but with some items to consider.

1. The language about adjusting for transportation makes sense and returns the levels that existed prior.
2. The adjustment for economically disadvantaged students makes sense and gives communities with higher poverty the resources to educate students that have far less access to learning in comparison to students from communities with more wealth. Student exposure to learning at home and at school is just different when there are resources. For example, families that can vacation, travel, and live lives of stability expose their children to far more in the world because they can. This creates boundless context and exposure that kids can absorb. Families who do not have these opportunities due to limited resources can not provide these same learning opportunities, often have less stable homes, and do not expose their children to as many (if any) opportunities to grow their skills, context for learning, or other beneficial experiences. The opportunity gap is great but we continue to have systems that spend more per pupil dollars in wealthier communities regardless of subsidy levels. Some towns/cities do not have the geography, infrastructure, or population to build the economic factors to generate a local tax base. The whole intent of the funding formula is to address the cost of education. This adjustment does not do enough but at least we are acknowledging that some communities have far more resources available than others. It is just the right thing to do.
3. Inserting a per-pupil cost for instructional staff support allows for more necessary flexibility.
4. Moving the prevalence threshold from 15% to 17% may shift some distribution of funds. However, removing the high-cost in-district special education funds is more challenging to forecast as districts do not always know what students they will have or what their needs will be year to year.
5. The regional adjustment should align to the cost-of-living index. When we set wages outside of collective bargaining there needs to be a regionalized factor for allocations.
6. The other adjustments could create a hardship for high cost students. There is some effort that the federal government could better fund special education costs. This is a different conversation of

course but please note the number of identified students continues to increase and the level of support families want and diagnosis demand seem to be constantly growing. These costs have become incredibly burdensome. In addition, percentages and caps on funding lack equity. For example, high poverty communities often have more students with disabilities. When you build good programs to support students, parents will find their way to your community to get the support their children need. In this context, you can do things really well which may attract additional students but then we put a cap on the funding and it limits the resources available. Discontinuing mid year or hardship adjustments will create immediate non-recoverable budgetary shortfalls for some year to year.

I am certain this bill will have numerous edits. I am hopeful there is clarity with what this bill asks. It asks us to take a look at the research and make the recommended changes because our kids deserve a more level playing field...especially, when they are already operating from such a disadvantage. I am in support of adjustments that improve the resources to our more disadvantaged kids. If we do not spend the funds on education, we will spend more later on a whole range of services.

Sincerely,

*KJLanglais*

K. Jake Langlais, Superintendent

Jake Langlais  
Lewiston  
LD 2226

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