

February 13, 2024

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennen, and members of the  
Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs:

My name is David Haines, I'm from Auburn, and am Professor of Mathematics Emeritus at Bates College. I have been associated with MSSM in many capacities for the past 22 years: as parent of three alumni, as chair of the Board of Trustees, and now as member of the MSSM Foundation Board.

Many have forgotten that MSSM was created by this legislature in 1995. A few years ago, it was ranked as the second-best high school in the nation. It has succeeded beyond anybody's expectations.

Why? With my career in education and decades of interactions with MSSM students, parents, and faculty, I know the answer to that question. But that is a topic for a long speech. For now, I'll just say that an important part of the answer is the location of the school in Limestone, thanks to this Legislature and generous Limestone leaders, one of whom was Art Thompson, who recently passed away.

Thirty years ago, many cynics feared that MSSM would educate our finest and that they would leave Maine. There are several here in this room that prove them wrong. After 25 years these brilliant students not only are in sometimes outrageously successful careers but they have returned to Maine to contribute to their beloved home state and to contribute to their communities.

Many talented Maine students can't attend MSSM because of our fees for room and board. I ask for your support for Senator Jackson's amendment not only to help MSSM to continue to be the national model for secondary education it has proven to be, but to assure financial aid for room and board for those students who otherwise could not benefit from this gem in the Crown of Maine.