



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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JANET T. MILLS
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February 26, 2025

Senator Rafferty, Co-chair
Representative Murphy, Co-chair
Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and Distinguished Members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee:

L.D 34, An Act to Increase the Minimum Teacher Salary, proposes to incrementally increase minimum teacher salaries beginning in the 2026-2027 school year and provides limited supplemental funding to pay for those increases.

In 2019, the Mills Administration, with the help of the Legislature, increased the minimum teacher salary to \$40,000. While we believe this was an important step toward fairly compensating our teachers, the Department of Education and the Mills Administration agree that the \$40,000 minimum teacher salary remains too low. Information from the 131st Legislative Session revealed that only 4.22% of SAUs pay a minimum teacher salary of \$50,000 or more. The estimated total cost from the 131st Legislative Session for Maine to increase the minimum teacher salary to \$52,500 would have been approximately \$38.5 million at the school administrative unit (SAU) level. Current estimated costs would be higher.

The estimated phase-in costs over a 4-year period to bring existing staff working under these minimums to the new threshold are as follows:

- FY 27 to bring all Teachers up to \$45,000 minimum based on current actual salary levels = \$5,733,838
- FY 28 to bring all Teachers up to \$47,500 minimum based on current actual salary levels = \$8,519,189
- FY 29 to bring all Teachers up to \$50,000 minimum based on current actual salary levels = \$11,014,116
- FY 30 to bring all Teachers up to \$52,500 minimum based on current actual salary levels = \$13,294,449

The additional cost to increase the statewide Essential Programs and Services Salary Matrix to match the proposed new Minimum Salaries each year is approximately \$230,377,756 with \$126,707,766 the State share at 55% and \$103,669,990 the local share at 45%.

The estimated phase-in costs over a 4-year period are as follows:

Estimate Additional Cost to increase EPS Teacher Salary Matrix to new Minimums				
School Year	Minimum Salary	Total Cost	State Share 55%	Local Share 45%
FY 2026-27	\$45,000	\$57,589,836	\$31,674,410	\$25,915,426
FY 2027-28	\$47,500	\$57,599,755	\$31,679,865	\$25,919,890
FY 2028-29	\$50,000	\$57,584,985	\$31,671,742	\$25,913,243
FY 2029-30	\$52,500	\$57,603,180	\$31,681,749	\$25,921,431
Total		\$230,377,756	\$126,707,766	\$103,669,990

These estimates do not account for typical annual salary increases; the DOE cannot reasonably calculate those amounts. The Department will be available to provide additional information on L.D. 34 and respond to any questions during the upcoming work session.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

Paula Gravelle

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Paula Gravelle

Director of Public School Finance