



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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April 2, 2025

Senator Rafferty, Senate Chair
Representative Murphy, House 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:

LD 660, An Act to Provide Transparency and Public Access to Public School Curricula, would require school administrative districts (SAUs) to adopt policies to ensure that approved curriculum is implemented in the classroom without change, and to publicly post information on student enrollment data, student performance data, and all curricular materials, including information regarding guest speakers and guests. Furthermore, information regarding all professional development sessions and educator participation must also be publicly posted.

While the goal of increased transparency is understandable, this bill raises significant concerns regarding practicality, legality, and the preservation of local control in public education.

Curriculum development and implementation are already governed at the local level, as outlined in Title 20-A, §2 and in Title 20-A, Chapter 207, and are subject to approval by local school boards at public meetings. These meetings are open to all, and once approved, curriculum materials are available to any member of the public upon request. This existing process already supports transparency, offering communities multiple avenues to review instructional content without requiring that SAUs maintain an online repository.

Requiring that curriculum be implemented “without change” is contrary to effective teaching. Educators must be able to adjust materials and instructional strategies to meet the diverse and evolving needs of their students. Mandating a static curriculum not only limits this flexibility but also disregards professional judgement of teachers and the adaptive nature of high-quality instruction.

The bill’s requirement to post all professional development content and educator participation data presents additional complications. Much of the professional learning accessed by educators is developed and delivered by third-party vendors. These vendors often hold intellectual property rights and prohibit the public distribution of their materials as a condition of use. Enforcing a public posting requirement could violate these contracts and limit access to meaningful, high-quality training opportunities for educators across the state.

In addition to these legal concerns, the bill would impose a significant administrative and financial burden on SAUs. Creating and maintaining a comprehensive, up-to-date digital database of curricula, guest speakers, and professional development materials would require extensive time, staffing, and technical capacity that many districts simply do not have. For smaller or rural districts in particular, this would divert already-limited resources away from instruction and student supports.

It is also important to recognize that many SAUs already choose to make their curriculum materials available online, based on the preference of their communities. If greater online access to curriculum is desired, local school boards provide a clear and appropriate pathway for these decisions. Mandating a uniform statewide approach erodes local control and applies a one-size-fits-all model that does not reflect the diversity of Maine's districts or communities.

The Department will be available to provide additional information on LD 660 and respond to any questions during the upcoming work session.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Beth Lambert".

Beth Lambert
Chief Teaching and Learning Officer