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Testimony of Kelly Noonan Murphy Introducing
LD 1332, An Act to Establish the Community Schools Success Fund to Ensure the Implementation and Success of Community Schools Programs
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

Good afternoon, Sen. Rafferty and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee. My name is Rep. Kelly Murphy, and I represent District 125, which includes part of Scarborough. Today, I am here to introduce **LD 1332, An Act to Establish the Community Schools Success Fund to Ensure the Implementation and Success of Community Schools Programs**.

While there are just six community schools in Maine, their impact is immense. They represent an approach to education that prioritizes the whole child—academic, emotional and physical growth—while simultaneously nurturing the local community. These schools bridge gaps, foster relationships and create an environment where everyone is invested in the success of the students while serving as hubs for the entire community.

In a rural state with high incidences of childhood poverty, community schools have an even bigger role to play. They help ensure that children, regardless of their family background or location, receive a quality education that is supported by their families, local businesses, nonprofits and community leaders. This model of collaboration ensures that students are not only well-educated but also healthy, well-rounded and prepared for the challenges of the future.

Community schools are designed to be places where families can take an active role in their children's education. This can include volunteering in classrooms, attending school events and participating in decision-making processes. Community schools foster these connections by creating regular opportunities for families to interact with educators and school staff, ensuring that families feel welcomed and valued in their children's educational journey.

The Community Schools Success Fund will play a pivotal role in the development and sustainability of community schools in Maine. By providing funding and resources to support academic achievement, emotional well-being, family engagement and community partnerships, the fund strengthens the effectiveness of these schools and ensures that they can meet the needs of Maine children. The establishment of this fund is crucial for expanding opportunities for students, families and local communities, ensuring that these schools can continue to be places of support, learning and growth.

I ask for your support of LD 1332 and thank you for your time and consideration. I will happily answer any questions you may have now or for future work sessions.