

Maine Arts Academy

Good Morning Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy and Members of the Educational & Cultural Affairs Committee.

My name is Diane Manter. I live in Sidney and work at Maine Arts Academy. I am here to speak in opposition to LD1571.

I have been lucky enough to work at Maine Arts Academy since its first year. We are now getting ready to celebrate our 10th anniversary. This school has grown in every way imaginable and I am honored to be a part of it. Having toured uncountable numbers of potential students and their parents or guardians, one thing that is always said is "where was this school when I was young". Students learn from professionals in their fields. Sure you can learn a lot from books and lectures, both of which our students receive, but learning from a professional how to truly find the correct angle for that photo, or put multiple dance moves together in a beautifully choreographed dance of your own, or fundamentals of visual arts up to having your work curated for a show or better yet curating that show yourself, or learning all aspects of theater - acting, directing, playwriting, stage management, or learning to play in an ensemble and getting to play at events - and because the students are taught by professionals, they don't just learn it - they live it. They are more prepared to go on to further educate themselves in that field or perhaps choose something entirely different. These professionals give them the chance to learn if that "art" is how they want to live their life.

On a more personal note, having a son that struggled academically, go to a high school similar to this and succeed, even making the honor roll, has taught me that different kids learn differently. Forcing a student like him to go to a traditional high school would have been like trying to fit a square peg in a round hole. He undoubtedly would not have been successful.

Thank you for your time and I sincerely urge you NOT to pass this bill.