



Maine School Superintendents Association

OFFICERS—2025-26

PRESIDENT  
DR. ANDREW DOLLOFF  
YARMOUTH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT  
YARMOUTH, 04096

PRESIDENT-ELECT  
RHONDA SPERREY  
RSU 64/MSAD 64  
CORINTH, 04427

VICE PRESIDENT  
BENJAMIN SIROIS  
VALLEY UNIFIED REGIONAL  
SERVICE CENTER  
FORT KENT, 04743

SECRETARY/TREASURER  
K. JAKE LANGLAIS  
LEWISTON SCHOOL DEPARTMENT  
LEWISTON, 04240

PAST PRESIDENT  
MARIA LIBBY  
MSAD 28/FIVE TOWN CSD  
CAMDEN, 04843

EILEEN E. KING  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

49 COMMUNITY DRIVE  
AUGUSTA ME 04330  
(207) 622-3473  
(800) 660-8484

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF

LD 2226

AN ACT TO AMEND THE ESSENTIAL PROGRAMS AND  
SERVICES SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA

March 9, 2026

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and esteemed members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, I am Eileen King, executive director of the Maine School Superintendents Association. I am speaking on behalf of MSSA's Legislative Committee in support of LD 2226. We believe this bill includes urgent, necessary updates to the EPS formula that will direct more funding to the Maine communities and students who need it most.

The presentations you have heard from MEPRI this session are clear and conclusive: Maine's school funding formula is outdated and isn't meeting the current needs of our children. For years, the funding formula has underfunded districts by close to \$40 million per year. This should be an urgent wake-up call signaling a need for reform. If you do anything in this bill, please update the Regional Adjustment and ensure local districts receive these funds they have been promised for years, but have not received, resulting in a higher local tax burden. Update this outdated system and make it more responsive to the needs of students today.

LD 2226 also makes critical investments in areas that need it most. This bill updates the transportation cost formula, more closely reflecting the realities of today's school bus fleets. And by moving to a variable weight for economically disadvantaged students, LD 2226 invests in the Maine students who need it most.

This bill also takes a long-overdue step toward fairness. Property values in Maine no longer reflect what residents can actually afford to pay. A community that looks wealthy on paper may be anything but. By incorporating income data into the formula and moving to a "90/10" split, LD 2226 creates a more honest, more equitable system.

*Leading for equity, excellence and opportunity for all Maine Students*

While our Association fully supports these four provisions, we would urge far more caution regarding this bill's proposed changes to special education funding – and specifically, the “Maintenance of Effort” cap.

We recognize and support the need for changes in special education: costs continue to rise, while Maine faces a dire shortage of special ed staff, particularly in our rural schools. However, we urge your committee to listen to MEPRI and to wait before moving forward with a proposed MOE cap. As a state, we still do not have a firm understanding of the full impact and consequences of this change. We need to wait for more specific details before including this provision in any final bill.

Second, some districts will see funding reductions under the new formula. As we consider the new adjustments to EPS, we ask that you include a “hold harmless” provision or a phased transition to help mitigate drastic swings in subsidy for school districts.

While LD 2226 is a meaningful step forward for Maine, it cannot be the final step. Maine communities are spending far, far beyond EPS -- \$600 million over EPS in FY2024. Across our state, communities feel they must spend additional funds to provide an adequate education for their students, inevitably leading to a higher tax burden on local residents.

Despite these questions, MSSA fully believes that the passage of LD 2226 represents a vital first step towards supporting our communities and meeting the needs of Maine students. We urge you to support it.

Thank you for and time and years of careful consideration of this issue. I'm happy to take any questions you may have.