

TESTIMONY

In favor of

LD 277, An Act To Discontinue the Use of the SAT in Maine Schools
Dan Allen, Professional Development Director, Maine Education Association
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
March 3, 2021

Senator Daughtry, Representative Brennan and other esteemed members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs:

My name is Daniel Allen and I am the Instruction and Professional Development director for the Maine Education Association (MEA) which represents 24,000 teachers, education support professionals, and retired educators across Maine.

I am here to testify in favor of LD 277, An Act To Discontinue the Use of the SAT in Maine Schools. However, that support comes with a strong suggestion: that as long as the SAT remains an admissions requirement for most colleges, the state should ensure equitable access to the test for Maine's students.

The MEA is convinced that the SAT is not an appropriate measure of growth and has only limited ability to measure achievement against state standards, primarily because the test does not fully cover Maine's Common Core. As such, it is less than adequate as a measure of student growth and does not provide enough useful information to teachers and administrators trying to make decisions about changes to curriculum and approaches to instruction. That said, there remains much debate about the usefulness of the SAT in measuring student readiness for college. While that debate continues, it is obvious that the SAT will remain an admissions requirement in many institutions.

Maine should continue to fund the cost of the SAT for those students who want to take the test, especially for those who may find the fees a barrier to doing so. According to an article in a [2015 study published in Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis](#), a journal of the American Educational Research Association, there was a 2-3 percent increase in students going to 4-year colleges as a result of Maine's decision to fund the cost of taking the SAT. While we do not support mandating the SAT, we do believe there is an equity issue that must be addressed in Maine and that more Maine students will choose to go to college if the barrier to the SAT in the form of fees is removed.

For these reasons, the MEA encourages you to vote "ought to pass" on LD 277, but we suggest it should be amended to ensure that financial barriers do not prevent Maine students from accessing the SAT.