



Maine Curriculum Leaders Association

Championing Policies And Practices That Enhance Teaching And Learning

Shelly Mogul, Auburn, President

Heather Manchester, MSAD 17, President-Elect

Deb Taylor, RSU 12, Treasurer

Beth Clifford, Maine Indian Education, Secretary

Courtney Belolan, Executive Director

Testimony of Courtney Belolan, Executive Director, on behalf of the members of the Maine Curriculum Leaders Association, testifying neither for nor against LD 277 An Act To Discontinue The Use Of The SAT In Maine Schools

Senator Daughtry, Representative Brennan, members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, I, Courtney Belolan the Executive Director of the Maine Curriculum Leaders Association, offer testimony neither for nor against LD 277 An Act To Discontinue The Use Of The SAT In Maine Schools.

The SAT was never intended to be used as a general measure of academic performance for the purposes of school and district accountability. In that light, MCLA members are happy to see that this bill prohibits the use of the SAT as an integral part of the assessment and accountability system for Maine high schools. We are neither for nor against LD 277 because of two issues: equity of access and accuracy of measurement for accountability.

The use and value of the SAT in Maine schools is nuanced. MCLA members agree there is little value in the SAT as an accountability measure, and many members still see the SAT as an important assessment that should be available to any learner interested in taking the test. While it is true that more and more colleges and universities are moving towards not requiring the SAT as a part of admission, many still do. Prohibiting the SAT entirely from any overall assessment package designed by the state could have the unintended consequence of creating an equity issue. There is the potential for a significant number of learners to no longer be able to access the SAT, which is still an essential piece of college admittance. MCLA would like to see the SAT included in an assessment package as an option available to any learners, paid for by the State, who take the SAT as part of their college application process. Preserving the SAT as an option for learners addresses an equity issue in the college application process.

The SAT is also an assessment with high relevancy and meaning for the Maine high school students who choose to take the test. MCLA strongly believes that in order for any assessment measure to accurately reflect learner performance, and in turn overall school or district performance, it needs to be relevant and meaningful to the learners taking the test. As the Commissioner and the DOE work to find a replacement assessment for the high school levels as part of the assessment and accountability system, it is imperative that viable options take relevance and meaning into account. Without doing so we will find ourselves in a similar situation, with an assessment that is neither accurate nor useful for measuring performance.