

**MAINE
PRINCIPALS'
ASSOCIATION**



50 Industrial Drive
Augusta, Maine 04330
(207) 622-0217

Fax: (207) 622-1513
Email: mpa@mpa.cc

Website:
<http://www.mpa.cc>

Paula Callan
Messalonskee
High School
President

Lori Smail
Ames and Weymouth
Elementary Schools
President-elect

Michael R. Burnham
Executive Director
Interscholastic Division

Holly D. Couturier
Executive Director
Professional Division

Michael G. Bisson
Assistant Director

*MPA is an Equal
Opportunity Organization*

TO: Joint Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
FROM: Maine Principals' Association Legislative Committee
RE: In Opposition of LD 552: An Act to Strengthen the Individualized Education Program Process
DATE: March 22, 2021

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan and distinguished members of the Joint Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. My name is Dr. Holly Couturier and I am the Executive Director of the Maine Principals' Association – Professional Division. We represent more than 800 PreK-12 principals and assistant principals of public and private schools in Maine.

The MPA Legislative Committee unanimously opposes LD 552. The current IEP team is required to work toward consensus. While we want to have full consensus, ultimately, we are required to develop and implement an IEP focused on the needs of the child that provides a free appropriate public education. This includes providing an education in a least restrictive environment in a timely manner. This bill could cause a child with significant needs to be stuck in their current IEP and not have their needs met while the adults try to meet a full consensus.

This proposed change would go beyond the federal and state requirements. This would cause disruption to many students' programs as there is not enough time to have all IEP meetings before or after school and schools do not have the staff or resources to cover classes for everyone to attend the IEP. This could increase costs for schools and potentially not comply with many students' IEPs.

The MPA strongly urges the Committee to vote unanimously Ought Not To Pass on LD 552.