



**YARMOUTH**  
**SCHOOL DEPARTMENT**

*"Empowering students"*

*Andrew R. Dolloff, Ph.D.*  
*Superintendent of Schools*

*Jodi L. McGuire*  
*Director of Instructional Support*

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*Director of Business Services*

March 21, 2021

To: Education and Cultural Affairs Committee  
From: Jodi McGuire, Director of Instructional Support, Yarmouth School Department  
Re: Proposed LD 552: An Act to Strengthen The Individual Education Program Process.

I respectfully submit comments on the proposed LD552.

LD 552, as proposed, does not strengthen the IEP process. It, in effect, allows for an individual team member to impact the programming for a child with disabilities, while disregarding the collective knowledge, expertise and consensus of a team. A team process is what is best for students and is what the current state of Maine special education regulations mandate. If a team is not allowed to make decisions by consensus, as LD 552 proposes, students could well be languishing in a state of educational purgatory, 'stay put,' which is not in their best interests educationally and does not meet the federal and state requirement for districts to provide FAPE.

LD 553, as proposed, also has the potential to severely impact the programming of many students with disabilities by mandating that all staff working with a student may attend the IEP meeting. Again, this is counter to the current Maine special education regulations which already has a robust student-centered requirement for IEP meeting participation. This part of the proposed legislation comes with a huge cost to students by decreasing their access to support while their teachers/support staff languish in meetings. The other cost is the loss of school funds diverted from student programming to payment for salaried and non-salaried staff to attend meetings, rather than provide instruction and support directly to students.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

