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**Testimony of Representative Nicole Grohoski
In Support of LD 518, *Resolve, Directing the Department of Education
To Review and Assess Existing Educational Mandates***

**Before the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
5 April 2021**

Hello Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan and members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. I am Nicole Grohoski, and I represent the communities of Ellsworth and Trenton in the Maine House. I appreciate the opportunity to speak in support of LD 518, *Resolve, Directing the Department of Education To Review and Assess Existing Educational Mandates*.

I'd like to start by clarifying that the intent of this resolve is to review and assess **curricular mandates** that affect our primary and secondary schools, and I have submitted an amendment to this committee that uses that phrase instead of "educational mandate." It may be appropriate to use a different phrase, such as "mandated instruction or training," as used in Rep. Brennan's bill LD 278, *An Act To Establish a Process for the Consideration and Implementation of Changes to Mandated Instruction or Training for Students*.

This resolve tasks the Department of Education with reviewing existing curricular mandates and the process by which they are established. The Department would report its findings and related recommendations to this committee next year for you to consider acting upon. Included in its review of each curricular mandate are: the ages of students affected, the academic subject area affected, and the estimated time and cost to implement. The Department would recommend which mandates are appropriate and which are onerous, outdated or otherwise ineffective. It would also recommend improvements to the process of establishing new curricular mandates. I recognize that this committee is considering the aforementioned LD 278, which may address that last point, so it may no longer have a place in this resolve.

I have heard from teachers, school board members, and Legislative colleagues that the current array of curricular mandates has become a burden on our education system. I have seen the long list of current and recently proposed mandates, but I am not an expert on what each entails, which may be covered by the learning results, and which really should stay in statute to the benefit of our students. That is why I have submitted this resolve to ask the Department, which

can see both the fine details and the overall picture, to provide a systematic review of these mandates. The resulting information will be valuable for all interested members of the public to review, as well as this committee and in turn, the full Legislature.

It is true that similar reviews have been conducted in the past and may still be instructive if unearthed and reviewed. However, due to ongoing improvements in educational best practices and term limits of Legislators, I believe another review of curricular mandates due back in 2022 would be helpful, and I hope you will agree.

Thank you all for listening attentively to my testimony in support of LD 518. I would be happy to answer any questions.