

State of Maine
State Board of Education

Testimony of Wendy Ault, Chairman of the Certification and Higher Education Committee of the State Board of Education

L.D. 67: An Act to Increase the Number of Educational Professionals by Accepting Out-of-State Certification

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
Sponsored by Representative Duodena of Camden

Date: February 16, 2023

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs:

My name is Wendy Ault. I am the Chair of the Certification and Higher Education Committee of the State Board of Education. On behalf of the State Board, I am testifying neither for nor against LD 67. We understand the workforce needs and challenges school districts are facing today. If the intent of this bill is to bypass the current rule in Chapter 115, we have the following concerns:

1. The bill does not require a Criminal History Records Check and all conviction data from the Maine State Bureau of Identification, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
2. Chapter 115, Part 1: Standards and Procedures for Credentialing outline the eligibility criteria in subsections A-E. Provisions are in place for out-of-state applicants.
3. There are states that do not require completed coursework before issuing initial certification. Chapter 115 allows for conditional certification when the applicant has met the criteria in the multiple pathways that now exist for certification.
4. States vary on course requirements and not all states are in alignment with Maine. As the bill reads, there are significant implications for what could happen in the classroom. We would not want to see the quality of instruction sacrificed.

We request that this bill be discussed with a focus on the potential implications that could result as it is written. We support encouraging strategies to improve the workforce challenges in education, while maintaining the standard of high quality education for all students in Maine.

Thank you for your consideration. The State Board will be available for work sessions on this bill.