

Carey Hotaling
Freeport
LD 1064

To the Educational and Cultural Affairs Committee,

As a parent of children who went to the Falmouth School District, Senator Pierce saw the quality of teachers in a district with a reasonable salary in Maine. I applaud you for bringing this bill to the legislature. I retired from teaching in Falmouth, and was continually inspired by the creative, talented, brilliant educators. That's what you attract with the good salaries. If you look at measures of educational student success, you will see Falmouth is right up there with a short list of other higher paying districts in Maine.

Public schools are in desperate need of talented, caring educators. We need to encourage young people who might think of going into education that it is a viable career. At the \$30,000 for a minimum beginning salary, they won't be able to buy a house or many other necessities. (Even \$40,000 seems minimal given the cost of living raises teachers haven't been getting.) We still have people who care about children, want to be part of a thriving educational community, but who don't think they could support a family on that type of salary.

The lack of respect for educators is reflected in our compensation for their work. Much our work occurs in the evening, weekends, throughout the summer and other vacations. There is a misconception about the amount of time we have to prepare our fast evolving lessons, and the amount of money we are given for creative supplies. Through the "Great Resignation" that has occurred during the pandemic, many educators reevaluated their priorities and quit. Rather than lowering the requirements to become a teacher, we should be training and paying teachers better. I'm guessing every single district in Maine has a teacher vacancy (or many). This number will continue to grow if we don't get the compensation in line with the economic realities we live within.

Please support LD 1064. We have no time to lose.

Sincerely,
Carey Hotaling, Retired Falmouth Science Teacher