



AUGUSTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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James Anastasio, M.A.
Superintendent

April 13, 2023

Michael Tracy, Jr., CAS
Assistant Superintendent

VACANT
Business Manager

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan and Members of the Legislature's 131st Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs:

Shelby Thibodeau, M.A.
Director of Special
Education

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of **LD 1367 - An Act Regarding the Funding Formula for Adult Education**. An increase in state subsidy for adult education is much overdue in our district and also across the state. I am hoping that the funding portion of this law passes as written so that much needed funds can be directed toward adult education programming.

Board of Education

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Our program in Augusta is a large one. In terms of subsidy, taxpayers have increased their share each year while the state has not. Supporting the cost of living increases alone would attest to the need for this increase. Adult Education is so diverse in its offerings that adding services will be needed for many reasons.

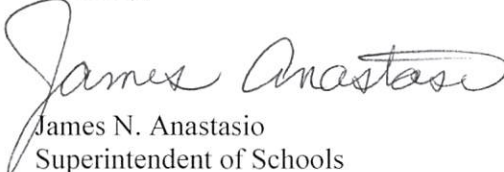
We are seeing an influx of immigrant learners in Augusta. To provide quality services to these learners, most often an individualized learning program must be developed. This can be costly in terms of having the flexible office hours that are necessary for adult learners to attend. Most are raising families and have issues pulling them in many directions. Our programs for this population must be run by well-trained teachers and we need to have opportunities for learning during the day and at night. As Maine moves forward, learners from other countries are coming forward to fill workforce gaps. We need to make sure educational possibilities are close by and ready.

Adult education is also involved in credit recovery planning for high school-age students. Since the pandemic, we've been faced with more teens needing to gain a credit or two to graduate on time. I am thankful that the adult education program is open and willing to help in this area. As adult education offers more programming and increases the breadth of programming, more resources are needed.

These are just two examples of what adult education offers and how important these services are. Our local program also teaches basic skills, offers a high school credential to those in need, designs and offers workforce training, and is a feeder program for post-secondary education. These are critical services needed in Maine.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I can be reached at 207-626-2468 or janastasio@augustaschools.org for any questions you may have.

Sincerely,


James N. Anastasio
Superintendent of Schools