

Elizabeth Tracy
New Sharon
LD 1527

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education Cultural Affairs. My name is Elizabeth Tracy and I am a resident of New Sharon. I am an Ed tech teacher, After School Care Coordinator and a parent to students ranging from pre k to third grade that attend Cape Cod Hill School.

Today, I am submitting testimony in support of LD 1527 “An Act To Promote The Community School Program.”

As a working parent to three, doctors and dentist appointments can be difficult to find time for. With our school being a community school we have established the opportunity to have a dental clinic come to our building along with a health care coalition that provided students with vaccines. We also had Snap-Ed come in to teach our students about nutrition and have plans to start a community garden for fresh food options for families.

Our After School Program has been such a great accommodation for working parents. In our rural town there are no longer any daycare providers forcing parents to shorten their work day, find alternative care or even seek principals agreements to have their students attend other schools. Not only do we offer after care but have been able to offer many enrichment programs during these hours including; Girl Scouts, 4H, late day learning, planting groups and sports.

Over the past few years many families have been forced to make life altering choices for their students. Many in our area have chosen to homeschool or attend smaller private schools. With Cape Cod Hill becoming a community school it has allowed all children to be able to attend our community events and feel as though they are part of the whole. We have hosted events such as a community dance, Touch-A-Truck, Trunk or Treats and a holiday walk. Hosting these events has helped to bring the community to our school and to unite our community together.

In closing, I would like to recap the major points that have affected my family on a personal level. The benefit and convenience of having outside entities come into our building to support our students' health and well being, the opportunity for after school care and the many enrichments that it has offered of students, and finally the most important bringing our community together as a whole.

Thank you all so much for the time and commitment that you put in for the children of Maine and our future to come.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Tracy
New Sharon, ME