



Maine School Administrative District #51

Testimony of Peter L. Scott LCSW, Cumberland

LD 1769: An Act Concerning Students Who Experience Educational Disruption due to Temporary or Permanent Changes Where They Live

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and distinguished members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, my name is Peter L. Scott. I am a veteran school social worker and our district McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison at Greely High School/MSAD #51.

I am in favor of LD 1769: An Act Concerning Students Who Experience Educational Disruption due to Temporary or Permanent Changes Where They Live. A previous Maine Program entitled *Keeping Maine's Children Connected (KMCC)* primary focus was on this overlooked issue--I am excited that there may be impetus to reinstitute this initiative in support of Maine Students and Maine Families.

My experience with KMCC was impactful, thus influencing my testimony on behalf of LD1769. In advocating for students experiencing school disruption as I often do, interagency communication and collaboration is key to effectively and swiftly supporting students and families, often at the most stressful and vulnerable times in their lives. Our best collaborative efforts can be thwarted by unintended bureaucratic barriers. KMCC did a strong job of keeping the value of connection on behalf of Maine Students, front and center with key institutions and professionals. This, for me as a school social worker and homeless liaison during the KMCC years, most often became of paramount importance when a student was hospitalized or in foster or kinship care. In particular the program provided me the opportunity to be more efficient and effective in my advocacy work for students experiencing educational disruption. As a result of regular network meetings facilitated by KMCC I was able to know current key players and their roles in our region. I knew who to call in an often shifting landscape when I needed to move my work swiftly forward. Effective working relationships are invaluable in keeping professionals current and connected on behalf of students. Conversely, I was also able to be more widely known to professionals in the field who benefited from my in-school-district institutional knowledge when engaged in their end of student advocacy. KMCC was a strong impact program, likely with low budget requirements. My professional hope is that LD 1769 passes to best allow this program to again flourish.

For these reasons, I strongly encourage you to support this bill.

I am happy to further discuss my position or answer any questions. I can be reached at 207-829-4836 (w) or via email at pscott@msad51.org.

Thank you for your time today.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter L. Scott, LCSW".

Peter L. Scott, LCSW
Greely High School Social Worker & MSAD #51 McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison