



Maine Education Association

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Testimony

Neither for nor against

LD 2182, Resolve Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 132: Learning Results: Parameters for Essential Instruction, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Education Before the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs February 8, 2024

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and other esteemed members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs,

My name is Mallory Cook (pronouns she/her/hers), and I have the pleasure of serving as the Director of Training and Early Educator Engagement at the Maine Education Association, which represents around 24,000 educators in our state. On behalf of MEA, I submit this testimony neither for nor against *LD 2182, Resolve Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 132: Learning Results: Parameters for Essential Instruction, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Education*.

Throughout the 131st session, we have seen several bills that seek to mandate new courses, content, and curricula. As members of the committee have emphasized, each time we add something new, something else is lost. While MEA understands the merits of each of the mandates proposed, we must also consider the extent to which our educators have time to prepare for those changes, how they fit within existing curricula, and hopefully how they reinforce a culture of skills-based learning with a focus on depth over breadth. There simply is not enough time to teach students everything they need to know.

We appreciate the time and energy that the Department and stakeholders put into the 13-step review process for both the Social Studies and Science, Technology, and Engineering Standards. MEA stood before this committee earlier this session speaking neither for nor against *LD 2001: An Act to Establish the African American Studies Advisory Council and Require Funding for African American Studies* and *LD 1642: An Act to Strengthen the Teaching of Wabanaki Studies in Maine Schools*, citing concerns about lack of professional development opportunities and time to engage in those opportunities, and a lack of time to implement these requirements within the school day. These proposed changes bring up those same concerns. Pursuant to MRSA §4706, Wabanaki Studies, African American Studies, and Genocide Studies must be included in the review of learning results to ensure they are taught in school; however, we want to ensure that we are being realistic in the changes we are making. We have heard loud and clear that our educators do not yet have the supports and time to implement the requirements around Wabanaki, African American, and Genocide Studies, but these proposed changes add considerably more requirements around those topics, as outlined below. For these reasons, we believe it would be more appropriate for these changes to be considered following the establishment and convening of the Wabanaki and African American Advisory Council, which will support the Department and districts in equipping educators to teach on these topics.

35 Community Drive, Augusta, ME 04330 | 1349 Broadway, Bangor, ME 04401
7 Hatch Drive, Suite 220, Caribou, ME 04736 | 29 Christopher Toppi Drive, South Portland ME 04106

207-622-5866 | 207-888-2070 fax | www.maineea.org

I welcome you to reach out with any questions.

Social Studies Standards

Word	Appearances in 2019 Standards	Appearances in 2024 Standards
Native American	51	7
Wabanaki	0	111
African American	0	63
Genocide	0	50

Science Standards

Word	Appearances in 2019 Standards	Appearances in 2024 Standards
Native American	0	0
Wabanaki	0	63
African American	0	1
Genocide	0	9