

The Maine Heritage Policy Center

Testimony to Oppose LD 712

"An Act To Fully Fund After-school and Preschool Programs in the School Funding Formula, Increase the Economically Disadvantaged Student Factor in the School Funding Formula and Increase the School Construction Debt Service Limit"

Senator Millett, Representative Kornfield, and distinguished members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, my name is Adam Crepeau and I serve as a policy analyst at The Maine Heritage Policy Center. Thank you for the opportunity to speak in opposition to LD 712.

There has been no shortage of expensive proposals this legislative session. LD 712 would mandate that the state fund public preschool programs at 50 percent or more. In addition, it would add after-school programs to the essential programs and services (EPS) formula while creating additional weight for economically disadvantaged students and increasing the debt service for school construction projects to \$150 million.

The Maine Heritage Policy Center is not opposed to helping economically disadvantaged children. However, by raising the additional weight given for economically disadvantaged students in the EPS formula to 1.5 (currently 0.15), costs would significantly increase at the state and local level. For example, the amount currently allocated to pre-k through 12th grade in Bangor Public Schools for economically disadvantaged children is just over \$2 million. Under this bill, the amount would be over \$20 million, which would be paid for by taxpayers at either the state or local level.¹ This would increase the total allocation to Bangor Public Schools by almost 50 percent (currently \$40 million). Similarly, the total allocation in Lewiston would increase by 49 percent. In other words, this change is not sustainable through either state or local funding.

Under LD 712, the state would be mandated to provide 50 percent or more of the funding to public preschool programs in Maine. Also, the bill would add after-school programs to the EPS formula despite the state's inability to cut ineffective programs to create funding for current K-12 education priorities. This would be a costly endeavor for the state to take on and would inevitably result in increased taxes on Maine citizens. This proposal would merely throw millions of dollars at education without guaranteed results.

One of the larger concerns is the effectiveness of preschool programs. While short-term effectiveness is typically positive in contemporary research, preschool programs across the country have not proven to increase the long-term cognitive ability of children. In fact, it was found that most of the advantages

¹ <https://neo.maine.gov/DOE/NEO/eps/public/ed279.aspx>

gained from Head Start do not persist into the third grade.² In another study, it was found that when children gained statistically significant improvements during preschool years, these gains faded when they entered kindergarten and first grade.³ Lastly, a literature review conducted by the Brookings Institute on the long-term effects of preschool revealed that “improvements in learning are detectable during elementary school, but studies also reveal null or negative longer-term impacts for some programs.”⁴ What goal are we accomplishing by spending exorbitant amounts of money on early education programs that have been proven to enhance the long-term cognitive ability of children? Is it prudent to saddle taxpayers with this burden when such programs produce inconclusive results?

Further, Maine has not conducted a short or long-term scientific study to evaluate the effectiveness of our current preschool programs.⁵ It would be irresponsible to throw millions of taxpayer dollars at these programs without knowing their effects on Maine students.

Because we do not know the true effects of Maine’s preschool programs and the costs would be exceptionally high, The Maine Heritage Policy Center respectfully urges the committee to vote “Ought Not to Pass” on LDs 712. Thank you.

² https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/hs_quality_report_4_28_14_final.pdf

³ <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED558006.pdf>

⁴ https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/duke_prekstudy_final_4-4-17_hires.pdf

⁵ https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/duke_prekstudy_final_4-4-17_hires.pdf

ED 279

STATE OF MAINE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AUGUSTA 04333

2/15/2019

STATE CALCULATION FOR FUNDING PUBLIC EDUCATION (PreK-12) REPORT

ORG ID : 42

Bangor Public Schools

2019 - 2020

Section 2: Operating Cost Allocations

Section : 2

A) Subsidizable Pupils (Includes Superintendent Transfers)		4YO/PreK	K-8	9-12	Total
1)	October 2017	129.0 +	2,238.0 +	1,221.0 +	3,688.0
2)	October 2018 (may include 4YO/PreK estimates)	161.0 +	2,295.0 +	1,060.0 +	3,516.0
3)	Subsidizable Pupils Average	145.0 +	2,315.5 +	1,040.5 +	3,501.0

B) Basic Counts		Average Pupils	SAU EPS Rates from Page 1	Basic Cost Allocations	
1)	4YO/PreK Pupils (Most Recent Oct Only)	361.0	X	7,352 +	3,351,472.00
2)	K-8 Pupils	2,315.5	X	7,352 +	36,540,456.00
3)	9-12 Pupils	1,040.5	X	7,607 +	7,915,083.50
4)	Adult Education Courses at 1	5.2	X	7,607 +	39,556.40
5)	4YO/PreK Equip. Instruction Pupils (Most Recent Oct Only)	0.000	X	7,352 +	0.00
6)	K-8 Equip. Instruction Pupils	1,875	X	7,352 +	13,410.00
7)	9-12 Equip. Instruction Pupils	1,250	X	7,607 +	8,508.75

C) Weighted Counts (Most Recent Oct Only)		Pupils	EPS Weights	SAU EPS Rates from Page 1	Weighted Cost Allocations
1)	4YO/PreK Disadvantaged @ 1:423	87.3 X	0.15	7,352 +	93,655.64
2)	K-8 Disadvantaged @ 0:123	1,255.7 X	0.15	7,352 +	1,347,114.96
3)	9-12 Disadvantaged @ 1:423	564.3 X	0.15	7,607 +	643,894.52
4)	4YO/PreK English Learners	0.0 X	0.000	7,352 +	0.00
5)	K-8 English Learners	29.0 X	0.500	7,352 +	303,704.00
6)	9-12 English Learners	14.0 X	0.500	7,607 +	53,249.00

D) Targeted Funds		Pupils	EPS Weights	EPS Targeted Amount	Targeted Cost Allocations
1)	4YO/PreK Student Assessment (Most Recent Oct Only)	361.0	X	30.00 +	8,050.00
2)	K-8 Student Assessment	2,315.5	X	30.00 +	115,775.00
3)	9-12 Student Assessment	1,040.5	X	30.00 +	52,025.00
4)	4YO/PreK Technology Resources (Most Recent Oct Only)	361.0	X	309.00 +	17,549.00
5)	PreK-8 Technology Resources	2,315.5	X	309.00 +	252,389.50
6)	9-12 Technology Resources	1,040.5	X	327.00 +	340,243.50
7)	4YO/PreK Pupils (Most Recent Oct Only)	361.0 X	0.10	7,352 +	215,147.20
8)	K-2 Pupils	746.5 X	0.10	7,352 +	533,896.80
9)	4YO/PreK Disadvantaged Targeted (Most Recent Oct Only)	87.3 X	0.05	7,352 +	31,218.48
10)	K-8 Disadvantaged Targeted	1,255.7 X	0.05	7,352 +	449,038.32
11)	9-12 Disadvantaged Targeted	564.3 X	0.05	7,607 +	214,631.51

E) Isolated Small School Adjustment			
1)	PreK-8 Isolated Small School Adjustment		0.00
2)	9-12 Isolated Small School Adjustment		0.00

Section 2: Operating Allocation Totals			
			30,261,062.88

Preliminary Not Yet Enacted - Adjustments will be made to these printouts throughout FY 20

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Section 3: Other Allocations

Section : 3

A) Other Subsidizable Costs		Base Year Expenditure	Inflation Adjustment	
1)	G/PreK & Talentred Expenditures from 2017 - 2018	0.00	X 101.70%	= 0.00
2)	Special Education - EPS Allocation		X	= 6,953,224.74
3)	Special Education - High Cost Out-of-District Allocation		X	= 234,855.96
4)	Transportation Operating - EPS Allocation		X	= 1,717,204.49
5)	Approved Bus Allocation (Purchase Year FY 19 or earlier)		X	= 0.00
				Total Other Subsidizable Costs = 8,914,785.19

B) Teacher Retirement Amount (Normalized Cost)		
		1,095,082.62

Total Adjusted Operating Allocation (Page 2) plus Total other Subsidizable Costs plus Teacher Retirement		
		40,144,536.69

C) Debt Service Allocations		Principal	Interest	Total
1)	Town / District Payment Date Name of Project			
2) Total Debt Service Principal & Interest Payments				
3)	Approved Lease for 2018 - 19	Bangor Public Schools		0.00
4)	Approved Lease Purchase for 2018 - 19 for	Bangor Public Schools		0.00
				Total Debt Service Allocation = 0.00

Section 3: Total Combined Allocations (Page 2 Adjusted Total plus Other Subsidizable plus Debt Service)		
		40,144,536.69

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