

REGULAR MEETING OF RSU NO. 5 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
WEDNESDAY- SEPTEMBER 10, 2025
FREEPORT HIGH SCHOOL - LIBRARY
6:30 P.M. REGULAR SESSION
AGENDA

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at _____ p.m. by Chair Michelle Ritcheson

2. Attendance:

___ Colin Cheney

___ Anna Child

___ Malik Farlow

___ Danielle George

___ Kara Kaikini

___ Maura Pillsbury

___ Michelle Ritcheson

___ Christopher Savaiano

___ Kelly Sink

___ Valerie Williams

___ Stephanie Worth

___ Moon Tussing, Student Representative

___ Phoebe Williamson, Student Representative

3. Pledge of Allegiance:

4. Consideration of Minutes: (5 Minutes)

- A. Consideration and approval of the Minutes of August 27, 2025 as presented barring any errors or omissions.

Motion: _____ 2nd: _____ Vote: _____

5. Adjustments to the Agenda:

6. Good News & Recognition: (10 Minutes)

- A. Report from Board's Student Representative

7. Public Comments: (10 Minutes)

8. Reports from Superintendent: (15 Minutes)

- A. Superintendent's Report
1. Opening of School
 2. Summer Resignations and Staff Hires

9. Administrator Reports:

None

10. Board Comments and Committee Reports:

None

11. Policy Review:

None

12. Unfinished Business:

- A. 2025-2026 Board Work Plan (45 Minutes)
- B. Consideration and approval of the RSU5 District Goal for 2025-2026 (10 Minutes)
To engage stakeholders in the communities of RSU5 in a comprehensive and inclusive process to collaboratively develop a five-year strategic plan.

Motion: _____ 2nd: _____ Vote: _____

13. New Business:

- A. FY27 Budget Timeline (5 Minutes)
- B. Discussion of the MSBA 2025 Proposed Resolutions and Proposed Revisions to the MSBA Constitution (40 Minutes)

14. Personnel:

None

15. Public Comments: (10 Minutes)

16. Executive Session:

- A. Consideration and approval to enter into Executive Session as outlined in 1 M.R.S.A § 405(6)(A) for the purpose of discussing the Superintendent's evaluation.

Motion: _____ 2nd: _____ Vote: _____

Time In: _____ Time Out: _____

17. Action as a Result of Executive Session:

18. Adjournment:

Motion: _____ 2nd: _____ Vote: _____ Time: _____

Item #4.A.

RSU No. 5 Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, August 27, 2025 - 4:00 p.m.
Hilton Garden Inn - Freeport
Meeting Minutes

(NOTE: These Minutes are not official until approved by the Board of Directors. Such action, either to approve or amend and approve, is anticipated at the September 10, 2025 meeting).

1. CALLED TO ORDER:

Chair Michelle Ritcheson called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

2. MEMBERS PRESENT: Colin Cheney, Anna Child, Malik Farlow, Danielle George, Kara Kaikini, Maura Pillsbury, Michelle Ritcheson, Christopher Savaiano, Kelly Sink (arrived at 4:53 p.m.), Valerie Williams and Stephanie Worth

MEMBERS ABSENT: There was no student representative present

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

4. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES:

A. **VOTED:** To approve the Minutes of June 4, 2025, June 11, 2025, June 18, 2025, and June 25, 2025 (Farlow – Kaikini) (10 – 0)

5. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA:

Add Item# 13.I - School Calendar

6. GOOD NEWS AND RECOGNITION:

None

7. PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

8. REPORTS FROM SUPERINTENDENT:

None

9. ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS:

None

10. BOARD COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS:

None

11. POLICY REVIEW:

None

12. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

13. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Board of Directors Member Code of Ethics - Acknowledgement

B. 2025-2026 Board Meeting Dates

Adjustment to the Agenda Item #13.I moved here

- I. **VOTED:** To revise the 2025-2026 school calendar by moving the date of the Freeport High School graduation from Sunday, June 14, 2026 to Saturday, June 13, 2026.
(Worth – George) (10 – 0)

- C. Boardsmanship - Michael Buescher, Drummond Woodsum

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

VOTED: To enter into Executive Session as outlined in 1 M.R.S.A § 405(6)(E) to discuss legal roles and responsibilities of the School Board (Kaikini – Williams) (10 – 0)

Time In: 4:49 p.m.

Time Out: 7:47 p.m.

- D. **VOTED:** To appoint Stephanie Worth as delegate and Maura Pillsbury as alternate to the Maine School Boards Association Annual Delegate Assembly. (Sink – Cheney) (11 – 0)
- E. 2024-2025 Board Self-Evaluation
- F. RSU5 Strategic Plan - Update
- G. Board Goal for 2025-2026
- H. 2025-2026 Board Work Plan - *This item was Tabled until the next meeting*

14. ORGANIZATIONAL BUSINESS:

- A. **VOTED:** To add, delete, or consolidate committees and make annual appointments.
(George – Cheney) (11 – 0).
1. Negotiations - Professional - George, Pillsbury, Ritcheson
Support Child, Farlow, Ritcheson
 2. Policy - Cheney, George, Kaikini
 3. Finance - Ritcheson, Savaiano, Sink
 4. Strategic Communications Committee - Kaikini, Pillsbury, Sink
 5. Facilities and Operations Committee - Pillsbury, Ritcheson, Sink
 6. Stipend Review Committee - Kaikini, Worth
 7. Maine Region 10 Technical High School Board - Cheney, Williams
 8. Dropout Prevention Committee (BOOST) - Worth
 9. Freeport Cable TV Board - Kaikini
 10. Wellness Committee - Sink
 11. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion - Farlow, Williams
 12. Curriculum and Program Development - Child, George, Pillsbury

15. PERSONNEL:

None

16. PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

17. ADJOURNMENT:

VOTED: To adjourn at 9:29 p.m. (Sink – Savaiano) (11 – 0)



Tom Gray, Superintendent of Schools

Summer Staff Hires

Sarah DeFlipp, DCS STEM Teacher
Allison Muir, DCS 7/8 Science Teacher
Liam Quinn, DCS Special Education Teacher
Stephanie Pound, FHS Special Education Teacher
Heather Gilpin, School Psychologist
Jenn Whitney, MLS Special Education Teacher
Shayne McHatten, MLS 4th Grade Teacher
Sarah Greenberg, PES 1st Grade Teacher (one year only)
Paul Carignan, FMS Special Education Teacher
Anthony Del Rosso, FHS .5 Drama Teacher
Kristen Hanley, FMS GaTE Teacher
Molly Washi, FHS Guidance Office Secretary
Liam Holt, MSS Ed Tech
Maxwell Pulsifer - DCS Ed Tech
Benjamin Porta, FMS Ed Tech
Katelyn Richards, DCS Ed Tech

Resignations

Mara Dale, FHS .5 Drama Teacher
Amanda Robson, FMS/FHS Gifted and Talented Teacher
Bailey McGee, FMS Ed Tech
Kelly Brodeur, MLS Ed Tech
Ashley Harris, MSS Ed Tech
Grace Marley, MSS Ed Tech
Kelly Dumont, DCS Ed Tech

**2025-2026 RSU5 Board Work Plan
8-30-25 Draft**

August 27, 2025 Retreat

Review Board Self-Evaluation
District Goals for 2025-2026
Code of Ethics (review/sign)
Delegate & Alternate for MSMA Fall Conference
Organizational Business - Committees

September 10, 2025

Budget Timeline
Board Vote on 2025-2026 District Goals
Work Plan for 2025-2026
MSMA Resolutions
Executive Session - Set Supt's Performance Goals

September 24, 2025

MSS Update
MSS Goal Review
MSMA Fall Conference Information
Cell Phone Usage
Policies

October 8, 2025

FMS Update
FMS Goal Review
FHS Update
FHS Goal Review
Community Programs Report/Goal Review

October 22, 2025 @ PES

PES Update
PES Goal Review
Multilingual Learners Update
Policies

November 5, 2025

MLS Update
MLS Goal Review
Facilities Dept. Capital Improvement Plan Report/Goal Review
Transportation Department Report/Goal Review

November 19, 2025 @ DCS

DCS Update
DCS Goal Review
Nutrition Department Report/Goal Review
Athletics Department Report/Goal Review
Board Committees (due to Freeport election, if needed)
Policies

December 10, 2025

Instructional Support Department Report/Goal Review
Technology Department Report/Goal Review
Policies

January 14, 2026	Interim Progress on District Goals District Scorecard FHS Program of Studies Executive Session - Interim Progress on Supt's Performance Goals
January 28, 2026	Superintendent's Recommended Budget - Presented 2026-2027 School Calendar (1 st Read) Policies
February 4, 2026	Budget Review: MSS, PES, MLS, Inst. Support
February 11, 2026	Budget Review: DCS, FMS, FHS, Athletics 2026-2027 School Calendar (2 nd Read)
February 25, 2026	Budget Review: Region Ten, Technology, CIA, Nutrition, Community Programs, Facilities, Transportation Executive Session on Administrator Contracts Policies
March 11, 2026	Review of FY27 Superintendent's Budget Board Deliberations on Budget
March 18, 2026	Review of FY27 Superintendent's Budget Public Input on Budget Board Deliberations on Budget
March 25, 2026	Public Input on Budget Adopt FY27 Superintendent's Recommended Budget Policies
April 8, 2026 @ DCS	6:00 - 6:30 p.m. Q&A on FY27 Board Adopted Budget Update from DCS Signing of Warrants for ABM & Referendum Migration of Students Executive Session (just Board) - Superintendent's Eval. Process
April 29, 2026 @ PES	6:00 - 6:30 p.m. Q&A on FY27 Board Adopted Budget Update from PES Board Committees (due to Durham election, if needed) Policies
May 6, 2026	6:00 - 6:30 p.m. Q&A on FY27 Board Adopted Budget Appointment of Probationary Teachers Comprehensive Education Plan Executive Session (Just BOD) - Superintendent's Evaluation

May 13, 2026 @ FHS

Annual Budget Meeting on FY27 Budget @ FHS
(5:00 p.m. Business Mtg. for New hires)

June 3, 2026

Recognize Retirees
Strategic Plan Presentation
Schedule of 26-27 Board Meetings
5% Transfer Authority to Finance Committee
Policies
Executive Session (Just BOD)- Superintendent's Evaluation)

June 10, 2026

Computation & Declaration of Votes
Assessment Warrants
Superintendent Authorization to Hire in the Summer
Organizational Business (Chair/Vice Chair, Committees)
Executive Session (Board & Supt)- Superintendent's Evaluation

Additional Board Agenda Items:

Routine Business Meeting Items - Superintendent's Report, Finance Report, Reports from Board Committees, Report from Student Representatives, two public comment sessions on each agenda

FY27 RSU5 Budget Timeline

September 10, 2025	Budget Timeline to Board
December 3, 2025	Leadership Meeting w/ Towns
January 28, 2026	Superintendent's Proposed Budget
February 4, 2026	Budget Review: MSS, PES, MLS, Inst. Support
February 11, 2026	Budget Review: DCS, FMS, FHS, Athletics
February 25, 2026	Budget Review: Region Ten, Technology, CIA, Nutrition, Community Programs, Facilities, Transportation
March 11, 2026	Review of FY27 Superintendent's Proposed Budget Board Deliberations on Budget
March 18, 2026	Review of FY27 Superintendent's Budget Public Input on Budget Board Deliberations on Budget
March 25, 2026	Public Input on Budget Adopt FY27 School Budget
April 8, 2026 @ DCS	6:00-6:30 p.m. Q&A on FY27 Board Adopted Budget Signing of Warrants for ABM & Referendum
April 29, 2026 @ PES	6:00-6:30 p.m. Q&A on FY27 Board Adopted Budget
May 6, 2026	6:00-6:30 p.m. Q&A on FY27 Board Adopted Budget
May 13, 2026 @ FHS	Annual Budget Meeting (ABM) on the FY27 Budget Board Meeting
June 9, 2026	Budget Validation Referendum (BVR)
June 10, 2026	Computation & Declaration of Votes Assessment Warrants

Board of Directors Review:



TO: Board Members, Board Chairs, Superintendents, and CTE Directors

FROM: Faye Anderson, President
Roy Gott, Chair, Constitutions and Bylaws Committee
Joe Long, Chair, Resolutions Committee
Eric Waddell, Executive Director

DATE: August 7, 2025

RE: MSBA Proposed Resolutions Packet and Proposed Revisions to the MSBA Constitution and Bylaws

Linked below are the proposed 2025 Resolutions that will be considered by the MSBA Delegate Assembly at their meeting on October 18, 2025. These resolutions include three new proposed resolutions, along with resolutions proposed for deletion, edits, and revisions. An additional document provides proposed revisions to the MSBA Constitution and Bylaws, which also need to be voted on during the MSBA Delegate Assembly.

Please share these proposed Resolutions with your school board members during your August School Board meetings. **Also, please select the delegate from your School Board who will attend the October 18, 2025, MSBA Delegate Assembly at your August School Board meeting.** Remote meetings of the MSBA Regions have been scheduled for September where the Resolutions will be discussed prior to Delegate Assembly. It is very much desired that the delegate from your school board will be able to attend these pre-Delegate Assembly regional meetings so as to be better informed, early, on the resolutions being brought before the Delegate Assembly. Please be on the lookout for the virtual meeting for your Region. The list of Regional Meetings for September can be found here. An announcement will come from an MSBA email closer to the time of the meetings. Members from your Board can attend any of the three Regional meetings. If you cannot attend the regional meeting hosted by your region, please join the meeting on a different night. Links for all three meetings will go to all school board members.

This year, MSBA is requesting that any proposed amendments to a resolution be presented to MSBA no later than October 10, 2025 for consideration at the Delegate Assembly. This is to facilitate discussion and decision making without causing undue extension of the Delegate Assembly.

For your reference, **and not for any other action**, the full history document of the 2024 MSBA Resolutions is also linked below.

Please note that it is not uncommon for events to unfold during the next two months that may require additional proposed Resolutions to be presented to the Delegate Assembly.

As a reminder, the 2025 MSBA Delegate Assembly will be held remotely, via Zoom, and will be on Saturday, October 18, beginning at 9:30 a.m. Delegates must be technology savvy and will need to be in attendance no later than 9:15 a.m.

This preliminary packet is being provided to give local boards time to review the Resolutions and give feedback to their elected Delegate. **Please be reminded that each Delegate must be elected by their local school board and must be registered as a Delegate, with the appropriate documentation, prior to October 10, 2025.**

Please contact Eric Waddell at MSMA with any questions regarding the MSBA Delegate Assembly.

2025 Proposed Resolutions

MSBA Constitution and Bylaws, proposed changes

2024-2025 MSBA Resolutions

Delegate Form

49 Community Drive, Augusta ME 04330 • Telephone: (207) 622-3473 • Toll Free: (800) 660-8484 • Fax: (207) 626-2968 • Email: msba@msmaweb.com

MSBA Resolutions Committee Work 2025
MSBA PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

NEW PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

1) Role of U.S. Department of Education: (Section 4)

The Maine School Boards Association (MSBA) fundamentally supports the original mission of the U.S. Department of Education “to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.” MSBA opposes any effort that reduces federal funding to Maine schools. Any such change would disproportionately harm rural students, those with disabilities, and children from economically disadvantaged communities.

Rationale: Schools in Maine and across the country have faced uncertainty around federal funding in recent months. Certain federal funds have already been withheld from Maine schools, creating budget challenges for many districts. Other proposals from the federal government would effectively restructure many federal funding streams and reduce funding from current levels. These grants serve a valuable purpose, helping to fund positions such as math and reading coaches, interventionists, guidance counselors, and before and after-school activities. Any cuts would result in a loss of programming and/or increases in local school budgets.

2) Tax Policy

The Maine Schools Boards Association believes revenue sources to fund public schools should be raised in a fair and equitable manner based on taxpayer ability to pay.

Rationale: The Maine legislature is considering several proposals that could impact the EPS funding formula and funding for Maine schools as a whole. Multiple bills call for the creation of new state funding streams to fund K-12 public education. More state funding for schools is badly needed: local property taxpayers already face substantial burdens, yet school districts face growing expenses, such as rising special education costs and the maintenance and upkeep of aging school infrastructure. This resolution would provide more guidance for MSBA's Legislative Committee as it evaluates legislative proposals affecting Maine school funding.

3) Immigrant Students

The Maine School Boards Association is committed to maintaining a safe and secure learning environment for all students, staff, and visitors, and believes that, regardless of their immigration status, no student should be denied a free public education.

Rationale: The 1982 Supreme Court case *Plyler v. Doe* declared that all U.S. children have a constitutional right to public education, regardless of education status. In Maine, schools have seen a growing number of immigrant students in recent years in the midst of changing policies at the local, state and national levels. This resolution affirms a commitment to providing an education for all children in Maine, and aligns with MSBA's core mission of enhancing "the education of all students in Maine's public schools."

RESOLUTIONS RECOMMENDED FOR DELETION

2A1a Administrator Evaluation/Effectiveness

The Maine School Boards Association urges local school boards to develop comprehensive evaluation policies designed to measure and improve the effectiveness of the superintendent and other school administrators. The development of such policies should recognize the need for constructive input from the superintendent and other administrators, thereby helping establish a commonly understood structure for the management and supervision of the schools. The evaluation procedure should address all aspects of individual administrative performance and recognize the importance of educational leadership. (Adopted 1981 – Amended 1982, 1986, 1999)

2B1o Parenting Education

The Maine School Boards Association urges school boards to collaborate with other community organizations to provide parenting programs in their communities. (Adopted 1993 – Amended 1999)

3B2a Siting of School Construction

The Maine School Boards Association opposes the passage of any legislation that unreasonably restricts the choice of school sites by local school units and/or prevents the State Board of Education from granting approval to proposed sites that do not take into account the wishes of local communities, transportation considerations, or other elements that may be factors in the siting decision. (Adopted 2005)

3B5c Teachers as Legislators

The Maine School Boards Association urges the Legislature to amend the statute regarding teacher "leave of absence as legislators". (Title 20-A MRSA Section 13602) by establishing a limit on the number of terms that teachers may serve as legislators under this provision. (Adopted 1982 – Amended 1986)

4.5 Social Security, Repeal of GPO and WEP

The Maine School Boards Association urges Congress to repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset to the Social Security Act to ensure that a quality pool of teacher candidates are available to be hired so as to meet the needs of students. (Adopted 2022)

EDITS (not substantially changing the intent or meaning of the resolution)

2A2a Religious ~~Interference~~ Recognition

In planning school calendars and events, school boards should ~~require~~ encourage administrators to consider the significance of holy days the practices of all recognized religions. (Adopted 1976 - Amended 1982) Proposed Edit, 2025

2A2e Advertising ~~in the Schools~~

The Maine School Boards Association encourages local school boards to adopt policies on advertising ~~in schools, including a prohibition on advertisements~~ especially advertising for products that do not meet minimum nutrition standards or which are otherwise incompatible with the educational mission of the schools. Boards should evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of advertising prior to entering any contractual arrangements for enhancement of school facilities, instructional programming or extracurricular activities. (Adopted 1990 - Amended 1999, 2007) Proposed Edit, 2025

2A2h Board Fiduciary Responsibility

~~The Maine School Boards Association believes that~~ By law, every school board has a fiduciary

responsibility in its oversight of the school unit's finances. The Maine School Boards Association (MSBA) urges local boards to adopt policies that require the Superintendent, in consultation with appropriate school unit personnel, auditor(s) and others, to develop and implement administrative procedures for internal accounting and records management; audit compliance; prevention and detection of fraud, financial irregularities or fiscal improprieties; and to provide regular and timely financial reports to the district's finance committee and the board ~~Board or its Finance Committee~~. MSBA also recommends that new board member orientation includes sufficient information concerning school unit finances to enable members to make informed decisions. (Adopted 2006) **Proposed Edit, 2025**

2A3f Business Employment of Students

The Maine School Boards Association reminds local school boards of the statute ~~which restricts~~ regarding employment of students during the school year, as well as limits to work permits ~~to~~ for students with inappropriate attendance and grades. Moreover, boards are urged to direct the schools to work closely with parents or guardians, businesses, and potential employers of students to obtain recognition and support of the need for balance between work and schooling to enhance the development of young people. (Adopted 1991 - Amended 1999, 2007, 2020) **Proposed Edit, 2025**

2B1s Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Schools

The Maine School Boards Association recognizes the use of AI (including generative AI) in schools as a tool to enhance student education. Its purpose should be to support all students to achieve their educational goals. All use of AI should adhere to existing policies. The goal of the use of AI is to promote literacy, providing students the opportunity to learn to question and evaluate information while making informed decisions about generated content. Appropriate use and awareness of the potential dangers of AI will guide students to think critically about the results they obtain through AI. AI is not a substitute for schoolwork that requires original thought. (Adopted 2024) **Proposed Edit, 2025**

2B4b Students' Rights/Conduct

The Maine School Boards Association (MSBA) urges school boards to ensure that a student code of conduct and a student handbook are developed and distributed at the beginning of each school year so that students, parents, and guardians understand their rights and responsibilities, the types of conduct that are expected, those that are unacceptable, and the consequences for each. MSBA encourages boards to adopt policies that set high standards for acceptable student conduct in order to maintain a respectful and supportive learning environment in every school and to support school administrators in their implementation of such policies. Policies that are adopted after issuance of the student handbook should be disseminated to students, parents, and guardians during the school year. (Adopted 1978 - Amended 1982, 1987, 1989, 1999, 2002, 2007) **Proposed Edit, 2025**

3B1d Copyright

The Maine School Boards Association (MSBA) supports the right of educators to the fair use of copyrighted instructional materials without permission of the copyright holder. MSBA supports the continued guarantee of such rights and believes the fair use rights extend beyond printed material to include ~~off-the-air tapes~~ streaming content, live performances, and other electronic media. (Adopted 1982 – Amended 1998) **Proposed Edit, 2025**

3B1e ~~DOE Workshops Scheduling~~ Maine Department of Education Workshops Scheduling
The Maine School Boards Association encourages staff development workshops sponsored by the Maine Department of Education and other educational opportunities ~~should to~~ be conducted ~~at other times than during school hours in order~~ outside of instructional time to avoid any adverse impact on students and on budgets. Technology should be utilized as much as possible in the delivery of these workshops. (Adopted 1990 - Amended 2008) **Proposed Edit, 2025**

3B5a Binding Arbitration

The Maine School Boards Association opposes any legislation that would allow binding arbitration on salaries, pensions, and insurance because the fiscal impact of these significant cost drivers in the school budget should be decided by locally elected school boards, ~~not~~ outside arbitrators who have no stake in or knowledge of the school administrative unit and community. Adopted 2021) **Proposed Edit, 2025**

REWRITES

2A4d Board-Teacher Relations

The Maine School Boards Association fully supports the statutory “meet and consult” requirements contained within teacher contracts regarding proposed education policy changes. The goal is to work together on important policies that affect teachers, while maintaining board authority to make changes to education policy. Additionally, we believe boards should create more avenues for teachers to share their voices. **Proposed Revision, 2025**

Replaces

~~**2A4d Board-Teacher Relations**—The Maine School Boards Association is committed to providing training and support to its members on ways to validate and improve the meet and consult process when adopting or amending education policy. The goal is to improve communication around key policies that most directly affect teachers and review and collaborate with staff on policies that need updating. In concert with that effort, MSBA would like to encourage and help train boards in interest-based bargaining to further support collaborative relationships between school boards and our teaching staff by welcoming their input. We also believe boards should create more avenues to provide teachers’ voice. (Adopted 2019)~~

2A4o School Board Member Email Accounts

The Maine School Boards Association recommends local school administrative units establish a district system of email accounts by which administrators and the public can communicate with school board members. School board members should be reminded annually that any email accounts (district or personal) used to conduct school board business are subject to Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) requests. School board business may not be conducted via email (Reference MSMA Sample Policy BEA, School Board Use of Electronic Mail, and MRSA Title 1, §401). (Adopted 2010) **Proposed Revision, 2025**

Replaces

~~2.A.4.e. District-sponsored Email Accounts—The Maine School Boards Association Delegate Assembly recommends local school units establish system email accounts for use by school board members. Adopted 2010)~~

2A5a Facilities

The Maine School Boards Association (MSBA) believes that public school facilities should be used as centers for the integration of community activities and encouragement of family participation in wholesome character-building activities conducive to good citizenship. MSBA further recommends that local school administrative units, in conjunction with other public and private agencies, particularly when schools are closed during summer months, make every effort to provide summer educational programs, career and technical education (CTE) experiences and training, recreation and work opportunities for students. Use of facilities needs to be coordinated with school administration to avoid conflicts with school activities. The board should adopt policies that cover public use of school facilities. Adopted 1963 - Amended 1968, 1982, 1999, 2020) **Proposed Revision, 2025**

Replaces

~~2.A.5.a.——Facilities—The Maine School Boards Association believes that public school facilities should be used as centers for the integration of the community activities and the encouragement of family participation in wholesome character building activities conducive to good citizenship. MSBA further recommends that local school units, in conjunction with other public and private agencies, particularly when schools are closed during summer months, make every effort to provide summer educational programs, career and technical education (CTE) experiences and training, recreation and work opportunities for students. (Adopted 1963—Amended 1968, 1982, 1999, 2020~~

2B1d School Curricula

The Maine School Boards Association urges school boards to adopt curricula which integrate vast human experiences, including those of historically marginalized groups, through the generation of questions, collection, and analysis of evidence from credible sources, and consideration of multiple diverse perspectives. Curricula so adopted should be consistent with the Maine System of Learning Results. **Proposed Revision, 2025**

Replaces

~~2.B.1.d.——School Curricula—The Maine School Boards Association urges school boards to adopt curricula which are designed to present a realistic view of the contributions made by the various ethnic and racial groups in the development of our nation. (Adopted 1968—Amended 1976, 1982, 1986, 1999)~~

2B1i Values Education

The Maine School Boards Association encourages local school boards to promote high standards of human behavior which include but are not limited to respect, compassion, responsibility, acceptance, trust, collaboration, perseverance, curiosity, accountability, growth mindset, and empathy within the educational community. As a vital link between communities and their schools, school boards must help create an environment in which values that are central to a democratic society can be discussed and nurtured among students in order to help them develop and clarify their own values. MSBA supports activities that facilitate the study of U.S. foundation documents and broader efforts to identify a common

~~set of values to be discussed and fostered among Maine public school students. (Adopted 1987—Amended 1990, 1999)~~ **Proposed Revision, 2025**

Replaces

~~**2.B.1.i. — Values Education**—The Maine School Boards Association encourages local school boards to promote high standards of human behavior within the educational community. As a vital link between communities and their schools, school boards must help create an environment in which values that are central to a democratic society can be discussed and nurtured among students in order to help them develop and clarify their own values. MSBA supports activities that facilitate the study of U.S. foundation documents and broader efforts to identify a common set of values to be discussed and fostered among Maine public school students. (Adopted 1987—Amended 1990, 1999)~~

2B2a Accountability: School Board Self-Evaluation

The Maine School Boards Association (**MSBA**) endorses the concept that school boards, in order to manage their schools more effectively, must adopt criteria and standards by which to measure the effectiveness of their governance policies, processes, and board norms adopted in the pursuit of positive student outcomes. MSBA encourages local boards to include self-assessment of the board in these criteria. Such criteria and standards should be adopted in board policy. (Adopted 1976 - Amended 1999) **Recommend moving this resolution to 2.A.4. Section. Proposed Revision, 2025**

Replaces

~~**2.B.2.a. Accountability**—The Maine School Boards Association endorses the concept that school boards, in order to manage their schools more effectively, must adopt criteria and standards by which to measure the results of the educational process. MSBA encourages local boards to include a self-assessment of the board in these criteria. Such criteria and standards should be adopted in board policy. (Adopted 1976—Amended 1999)~~

2B5b Learning Support

Students who experience learning loss because of summer vacation, illness, or prolonged absence whatever the cause should be supported in their efforts to recover. The Maine School Boards Association believes a student-centered approach, which looks at individual academic achievement and informs what support systems are needed and for whom, is more effective. Strategies should replicate those within the Multiple Tiers of Student Support (MTSS) utilized by schools. Schools should employ multiple pathways and extended learning opportunities where possible. The Department of Education needs to identify existing resources and develop additional appropriate measurement tools, sharing effective interventions developed by their curriculum experts. Funding should be provided to support implementation. (Adopted 2021) **Proposed Revision, 2025**

Replaces:

~~**2.B.5.b. — Learning Support**—Efforts should be made to support learning opportunities affected by summer vacation, prolonged student absence or the disruption caused by the pandemic. The Maine School Boards Association believes a student-centered approach, which looks at individual academic achievement and informs what support systems are needed and for whom, is a more effective approach. Strategies should replicate those within Multiple Tiers of Student Support (MTSS) utilized by school units. The Department of Education needs to be involved in this work by identifying existing resources, developing additional appropriate measurement tools and sharing effective interventions developed by~~

~~their curriculum experts. Consideration of appropriate funding provided by the Maine Department of Education also is recommended. (Adopted 2021)~~

3A3 Consolidation/Unification

The Maine School Boards Association (MSBA) continues to support voluntary school administrative unit consolidation, regionalization, and collaboration among school administrative units with local voter approval. MSBA continues to oppose mandatory merging of school administrative units. Historical success with voluntary consolidation relied on financial incentives provided to local communities and the improvement in effectiveness and efficiency in delivery of educational programs. **Proposed Revision, 2025**

Replaces

~~3.A.3. **Consolidation/Unification**—The Maine School Boards Association has historically supported voluntary school unit consolidation, regionalization and collaboration among and between school administrative units. MSBA supports the recent efforts of the Governor and Legislature to explore these issues.~~

~~—Maine has had a successful experience with consolidation through the school administrative district and community school district unit structures. These early consolidations were successful because of the financial incentives provided to local communities, and the improvement in program offerings for students. There are many examples across the state of voluntary regional collaboratives that have enhanced effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of educational programs.~~

~~—MSBA believes that:~~

- ~~• Student achievement is of primary importance and should be the first priority in any regionalization/consolidation plan;~~
- ~~• All of the options associated with consolidation, regionalization, and collaboration must be fully developed and based on a balanced research review;~~
- ~~• The Governor and Legislature must provide financial incentives to encourage such consolidation/unification activities;~~
- ~~• Current laws and rules should be examined and, if necessary, amended to make it easier to develop and maintain regional program delivery models;~~
- ~~• Flexibility and creativity must be encouraged; and~~
- ~~• The MSBA opposes the mandating of any plans for school unit consolidation that does not require local voter approval of any proposed consolidated units.~~

~~—MSBA is opposed to the mandatory merger of school units, but is supportive of and recognizes the value of voluntary consolidation, regionalization and collaboration. MSBA also opposes financial penalties for units that choose not to voluntarily consolidate, regionalize or collaborate. MSBA believes that our students, local communities, taxpayers, and all citizens can benefit from any such cooperative efforts. (Adopted 1995—Amended 1998, 2003, 2005)~~

3B1 (had been 4.11) Technology in the Classroom for Education

The Maine School Boards Association reaffirms its support of federal and state initiatives to provide internet access and technology for education and asks the legislature to continue to strive for broadband internet connections in all parts of the state. Technology in schools is essential for enhancing learning by providing students with access to vast resources, interactive tools, and personalized educational experiences. It fosters critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving skills while preparing students for a technology-driven world. By integrating digital tools, educators

can create engaging lessons, support diverse learning styles, and bridge gaps in education, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to succeed in the modern workforce. (Adopted 2017) Proposed Revision, 2025

Replaces

~~4.11—Technology in the Classroom—The Maine School Boards Association reaffirms its support of technology in schools and asks the Legislature to pass legislation to provide broadband internet connections to all parts of the state. A state plan also is needed for the future of technology in schools that takes into account the dynamic nature of the computer industry and addresses how best to use technology to enhance teaching and learning. (Adopted 2017)~~

3B2b Funding of Universal School Meals

Recognizing the impact adequate nutrition has on a child's ability to learn, the Maine School Boards Association calls upon Congress to pass an act to make breakfast and lunch free for all children, without adversely affecting federal funding to the State. Proposed Revision, 2025

Replaces

~~3B2b—Funding of the Universal School Meals Act of 2021—The Maine School Boards Association calls upon Congress to pass the Universal School Meals Program Act of 2021 which would amend the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 and the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to make breakfasts and lunches free for all children, without adversely affecting federal funding formula that may use free and reduced lunch rates. (Adopted 2022)~~

3B2c Maximizing Federal and State Assistance through Economically Disadvantaged Rates

The Maine School Boards Association (MSBA) urges the State of Maine to continue to use best available poverty data to identify economically disadvantaged students and verify eligibility for the National School Lunch Program. Accurate identification through available and acceptable methods is essential for securing maximum federal and state funding for many programs. Among others, these include federal grant programs and the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) of the National School Nutrition Program, which MSBA encourages all eligible school administrative units to participate in. Proposed Revision, 2025

Replaces

~~3.B.2.c.—Free-Reduced Lunch Qualification—The Maine School Boards Association urges Congress and the Administration to define poverty level requirements for the Free and Reduced Lunch Program by utilizing Area Median Income as used by the Department of Housing and Urban Development or the national federal poverty level, whichever is higher. MSBA believes these are initiatives that should be established federally while in no way being confused with Maine's meal program. (Adopted 2022)~~

3B3g Taxpayer Dollars Support Public Education

The Maine School Boards Association (MSBA) believes taxpayer dollars should support public schools that are open to all and regulated by the state. MSBA opposes any effort, such as vouchers or tax credits that would siphon off public resources to support any form of private education. If parents wish to send their children to private schools, it is their choice, but it is not an option that should come at taxpayer

expense. We also believe it is not appropriate to use public dollars to advance any particular religion or dogma. (Adopted 2019) **Proposed Revision, 2025**

Replaces

~~3.B.3.g. — Taxpayer Dollars Support Public Education — The Maine School Boards Association believes taxpayer dollars should support public schools that are open to all and regulated by the state and opposes siphoning off public resources to support religious education. If parents wish to send their children to private religious schools, it is their choice, but it is not an option that should come at taxpayer expense. We also believe it is not appropriate to use public dollars to advance any particular religion or dogma. (Adopted 2019)~~

3B5d Probationary Employment Period

The Maine School Boards Association supports the return to a three-year probationary employment period prior to placement of a teacher on continuing contract. **Proposed Revision, 2025**

Replaces

~~3.B.5.d. — Probationary Employment Period — The Maine School Boards Association supports changes in current Maine law to better meet the personnel needs of Maine schools and to provide more fairness to teachers and students when determining whether or not to place teachers on continuing contract. MSBA proposes that individuals employed as teachers in Maine schools, who have less than three years teaching experience, be given the opportunity to have up to three one year probationary contracts prior to the making of a determination on granting continuing contract status. Teachers who have more than three years of teaching experience would be eligible for continuing contract consideration after completing two years as probationary teachers. (Adopted 1983 — Amended 1984, 1998~~

3B6e Professional Development to Support Student Achievement

The Maine School Boards Association urges the Legislature and the Governor to appropriate funds in addition to General Purpose Aid to support professional development. Schools must have the necessary financial resources to offer sustained, research-based professional learning opportunities that foster instructional excellence and improve student outcomes as prescribed by the Maine System of Learning Results. Without sustained dedicated funding for professional development, school districts face significant challenges in providing meaningful, ongoing training for teachers, administrators, and support staff. **Proposed Revision, 2025**

Replaces

~~3.B.6.e. — Professional Development to Support Learning Results — The Maine School Boards Association urges the Legislature and the Governor to appropriate funds in addition to the General Purpose Aid, to develop and sustain a system of comprehensive staff development to support the implementation of the Learning Results for Maine Students. Such an important undertaking must be accompanied by the training support necessary to assist teachers to meet the diverse learning needs of all students. (Adopted 1996)~~

4.4 Maine Public Charter School Law Implementation Performance and Regulations

from Section 4

Move

The Maine School Boards Association (MSBA) believes that Maine's Public Charter Schools should be required to provide performance data similar to other public school administrative units. Such data should include progress on student academic outcomes, financial sustainability, and organizational viability. Similar to other Maine public schools, this data should be reviewed annually. MSBA encourages Maine public charter schools to have this review completed by the Maine Charter School Commission, the Maine Department of Education and the Maine Legislature's Joint Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. **Proposed Revision, 2025**

Replaces

- 4.4 — ~~Charter School Law Implementation~~** — The Maine School Boards Association believes the law passed in 2011 to allow charter schools in Maine lacks clarity in several critical areas and needs to be amended through legislation or rule making. Specifically, the MSBA urges the state to:
- ~~■ — Require the State Charter School Commission to go through the major and substantive rule-making process for adoption of all the rules guiding its operation. These should include, but are not limited to the rules determining what criteria it will use to evaluate applications; the academic, operational and financial performance measures and expectations it will include in charter contracts; its renewal criteria; and what constitutes an educational need by which the need for a charter school in a given area will be determined.~~
 - ~~■ — Stipulate that authorizers have to submit annual reports on the charter schools under their purview to the State Board of Education and the Legislature's Education Committee to assure there is transparency and public review of the reports. Current law only requires the reports to go to the Commissioner of Education.~~
 - ~~■ — Strengthen the required audit language to include: A) Accountability of all revenues and expenditures; B) A determination of whether or not proper budget controls are in place; C) A determination of whether or not the annual financial data submitted to the department is correct; and, D) An audit of all federal programs in accordance with applicable federal law.~~
 - ~~■ — Spell out the responsibilities a charter school authorized by the State Charter School Commission has in regard to students with special needs and in providing transportation services to students. (Adopted 2011)~~

4.6 Shifting Retirement Costs

The Maine School Boards Association remains opposed to any legislation that shifts additional costs of retirement benefits from the state to local school districts, and by extension local property taxpayers. We also oppose the shifting onto local districts the unfunded liability portion of retirement costs for those enrolled in the state's teacher retirement plan. (Adopted 2011, Amended 2013, proposed revised 2025) **Proposed Revision, 2025**

Replaces

4.6 — ~~Shifting Retirement Costs~~ — The Maine School Boards Association remains opposed to any legislation that shifts additional costs of retirement benefits from the state to the local school district, and by extension local property taxpayers.

MSBA is concerned about two possible cost-shifting scenarios.

~~One involves shifting onto local districts the unfunded liability portion of retirement costs for those enrolled in the state's teacher retirement plan. We see this scenario as possible given the cost shift that was enacted in 2013, where legislation made school administrative units responsible for paying normal retirement costs. The obligation to pay off the unfunded liability—estimated at \$142 million in 2013—is and should remain with the state.~~

~~The second scenario involves the proposed creation of a new state retirement plan that would be a supplement to Social Security. Legislation has been drafted to do just that, but was not introduced in 2013. MSBA opposes any move to ask school districts to pick up the employer share of Social Security costs if this legislation is introduced in the future. (Adopted 2011—Amended 2013)~~

4.8 Local Control of Student Transfers

~~The Maine School Boards Association strongly supports the position that a student transfer should be an annual, local decision made by the two superintendents involved in a request. Proposed Revision, 2025~~

Replaces:

~~**4.11 (4.8). Local Control of Student Transfers:**—The Maine School Boards Association would like to reconfirm our position that a student transfer should be a local decision made by two Superintendents involved in the request. We see three steps in this process to pass such legislation.~~

- ~~• There should be a legislative review that examines the current criteria used by the Department of Education and the State Board of Education to make their decision in an appeal of a local decision.~~
- ~~• A commission should be created composed of stakeholders to review that information and develop criteria that would then be subject to substantive rulemaking that would be used to guide superintendents in their decision making.~~
- ~~• If both superintendents agree on a transfer request, it should be enshrined in statute that their decision is binding and should only be appealed within the scope of bullets one and two.~~

~~(Adopted 2014—Revised 2016) Remove from section 4 and move to 2.B.4. Or 2.B.5.~~

4.12 or 3B2e School Construction

~~The Maine School Boards Association (MSBA) recognizes the need for improvement in the process and funding for the Maine Department of Education's Major Capital School Construction Program to improve the pace of replacement of Maine's often dated and inadequate stock of school facilities. Consequently, MSBA urges legislators and the Maine Department of Education to:~~

- ~~• seek innovative ways to increase the levels of funding for major capital construction without detracting from existing funding for school operations;~~
- ~~• alter the project approval process so that smaller projects can move forward as well as massive building replacements, thereby increasing the total number of projects completed, either by requiring a number of smaller projects to be approved alongside whole-school replacement, or expanding the School Revolving Renovation Fund to accommodate projects larger than \$2 million;~~
- ~~• improve transparency and predictability in the funding process by extricating construction funding from the Essential Programs and Services formula;~~
- ~~• look for opportunities to streamline and accelerate the process from approval of a project through construction;~~

- update guidance in the design process to ensure that the standards new schools are built to reflect the evolving needs of students in the State of Maine;
- strengthen contractor and subcontractor prequalification by evaluating effectiveness after construction to ensure that these limited state funds are expended on quality vendors going forward; and
- incentivize districts to commit sufficient funds in their budgets toward maintenance of facilities, such that buildings can provide a longer service life, and enforce expectations of the same for beneficiaries of new state-funded construction. Proposed Revision, 2025

Replaces:

~~**4.12—Funding to Support Rebuilding Infrastructure of Local Schools—**The Maine School Boards Association supports action by the Legislature that would provide \$30 million from the state’s Rainy Day fund to begin the process of rebuilding the infrastructure of our local public schools. This money would support small maintenance and construction projects with a fund separate from the major construction fund. Funding for small projects has been cut in recent years and it is estimated there are \$1 billion in deferred maintenance and facility improvements in Maine schools—a situation that will continue to affect the quality of education if not addressed. (Adopted 2018)~~

November 5, 2024: Recommended Revisions in Yellow; underlined included; ~~strike through~~ eliminated – approved by Board of Directors, May 17, 2025.

June 9, 2025: Recommended Revisions in Green Font; to be considered and approved by Board of Directors, *July 21, 2025*.

MAINE SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION
49 Community Drive, Augusta, Maine 04330

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

CONSTITUTION

- PREAMBLE -

Recognizing that the nation's future is dependent upon the effective education of its youth; that school boards bear a significant responsibility to bring about needed improvement in public education; that an exchange of ideas is important at all times; that coordination of effort on the part of all educational interests is necessary; we believe that a strong state organization of Maine school board members will aid in accomplishing these goals.

ARTICLE I NAME AND DEFINITION

Section 1. Name - The name of this organization shall be the Maine School Boards Association, hereinafter referred to as the Association.

Section 2. Definition - For the purposes of this Constitution and its Bylaws enacted hereunder, the term "School Board" shall be interpreted to mean School Committees, Boards of Directors, District School Committees, or any other group legally established to govern the local school administrative unit.

ARTICLE II MISSION

The mission of the Association is to enhance the education of all students in Maine's public schools by identifying and serving the needs of local school boards through board development, information and support services, and by advocating for all Maine public schools at the state and national levels.

ARTICLE III PURPOSES

Purposes - The purposes of this Association shall be:

- a) to serve and represent the School Boards comprising the Association,
- b) to promote and maintain local control of public schools,

- c) to promote closer cooperation among the individual School Boards,
- d) to represent the combined interests of School Boards in the legislative process,
- e) to cooperate with other agencies in the State interested in the improvement of public education,
- f) to provide information for School Boards and the general public about the needs and the accomplishments of the public schools, and
- g) to sponsor, develop, and encourage those projects and programs that promote better public education in Maine.

ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP

Classes: There shall be four classes of membership in the Association:

- a) Active Regular Membership - All School Boards in Maine are eligible and shall be considered active regular members upon payment of dues as required by the Bylaws. This membership allows voting privileges within elections of officers, directors, and resolutions and formal involvement in the Association's policy adoption process for the policies that govern the work of the Association.

- b) Associate Memberships

Career and Technical Regions - Any cooperative board of a Career and Technical Region shall be considered an associate member upon payment of dues as required by the Bylaws. This membership, although not considered a School Board as defined in Article I, Section 2, allows voting privileges at the annual Delegate Assembly.

State and Private Schools - State operated schools, private schools, or other formally organized school supervisory entities not considered School Boards as defined in Article I, Section 2, shall be considered associate members upon payment of dues as required by the Bylaws. This membership shall not allow voting rights, nor shall it entitle the member to labor relations and legal services.

Municipalities - Municipalities or quasi-municipal corporations shall be considered associate members upon payment of dues as required by the Bylaws. This membership shall not allow voting rights, nor shall it entitle the member to labor relations and legal services.

Education Service Centers - Education Service Centers, as defined in Title 20-A M.R.S.A., Chapter 123, §3801, shall be considered associate members upon payment of dues as required by the Bylaws. This membership shall not allow voting rights, nor shall it entitle the member to labor relations and legal services.

- c) Individual Membership - Any individual duly elected or appointed member of a Maine School Board, which itself is not an active member of the Association, shall be considered an individual member upon payment of dues as required by the Bylaws. This membership shall not allow voting rights, nor shall it entitle the member to labor relations and legal services.
- d) Honorary Individual Membership - This honor may be conferred by the Delegate Assembly, when so recommended by the Executive Board of Directors, upon individuals who have rendered outstanding service to public education. This membership shall not allow voting rights, nor shall it entitle the member to labor relations and legal services.

ARTICLE V OFFICERS

Section 1. Officers - The officers of the Association shall be a President, President-Elect, and Vice President.

Section 2. Succession - The current President-Elect shall automatically assume the office of the President for one (1) year following their term as President-Elect.

Section 3. Elections - President-Elect and Vice President, for the following year, shall be elected annually at the Delegate Assembly for a term of one (1) year. ~~In the absence of a President-Elect, the President shall also be elected at the annual meeting of the Delegate Assembly for a term of one (1) year.~~ If the President-Elect is unable to assume the office of the President, the President shall also be elected at the annual meeting of the Delegate Assembly for a term of one (1) year.

Section 4. Duties

- a) The President shall preside at all meetings of the Executive Board of Directors and of the Association. The President shall perform all duties specified in this Constitution, as well as such duties as usually pertain to the office of President.
- b) The President-Elect and the Vice President shall render the President assistance as needed in carrying out the work of the Association. In cases of absence ~~or disability~~ for any reason of the President, the President-Elect shall serve in that capacity, and in cases of absence ~~for any reason or disability~~ of the President-Elect, the Vice President shall serve in that capacity.

Section 5. Vacancies - In the event that a vacancy occurs in one or more officer positions, the Executive Board of Directors may call a meeting for the purpose of appointing an interim officer to each position with a vacancy. The most senior officer present at the meeting or, in the case that no officer remains or is available, the Executive Director of the Association, shall preside. A person serving as Interim President-Elect shall not automatically assume the office of President at the beginning of the next term unless decided at the regular Delegate Assembly.

If more than eight months remain until the next regular Delegate Assembly, the Executive Board of Directors shall vote on whether to convene the Nominating Committee and call for a special Delegate Assembly to formally elect replacement officers for the duration of the term.

ARTICLE VI

EXECUTIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Members

- a) The Executive Board of Directors shall consist of the three (3) officers of the Association, one member from each of the nine (9) regions selected according to Section 2 (a) under this Article, six (6) members at-large and, as a voting ex officio, the immediate Past President of this Association.
- b) Not more than three officers and/or directors shall be members of School Boards in any one MSBA region, and only one member of an active regular member School Board shall be eligible to serve on the Board of Directors.
- c) The term of office shall be for three (3) years except in the case of the election to fill a vacancy in which case the term shall be for the unexpired portion of the term to be filled.
- d) If, during the term of their office, a Director ceases to be a member of their School Board, or their School Board ceases to be a member of the Maine School Boards Association, they may serve until the next annual meeting of the Delegate Assembly, at which time a replacement shall be elected.
- e) A Director who is absent for two (2) consecutive Executive Board meetings without cause or reason as determined by the Executive Board of Directors, shall be considered disinterested in the work of the Association, whereupon the Executive Board of Directors shall declare that a vacancy exists and notify that Director.

Section 2. Elections and Vacancies

- a) Directors shall be elected according to (b), (c) and (d) of this Section.

- b) Annually, three of the nine regional Directors shall be elected for terms of three (3) years each with the exception of a Director elected to fill the unexpired portion of a vacant position at the Delegate Assembly.
- c) At-Large Directors shall be elected by ballot at the Delegate Assembly. Annually, two of the six At-Large Directors shall be elected at the Delegate Assembly for terms of three (3) years each with the exception of a director elected to fill the unexpired portion of a vacant position.
- d) Vacancies on the Executive Board of Directors shall be filled by the President, with the approval of the Executive Board of Directors. Those Directors appointed by the President shall serve until the next meeting of the Delegate Assembly at which time new Directors shall be elected to fill the unexpired terms.

Section 3. Duties - The Executive Board of Directors is the governing body of this Association and all voting power is reserved to it except as otherwise provided in this Constitution. The Executive Board of Directors shall:

- a) meet at least six (6) times annually at the call of the President and at such other times as may be designated by the President or requested in writing by three Directors,
- b) propose and initiate programs and activities that are in harmony with the adopted policies of the Association,
- c) transact business of the Association between meetings of the Delegate Assembly,
- d) act as the policy-making body of the Association,
- e) in the event of dissolution of the Maine School Management Association, appoint and set the salary of the Executive Director, and receive, disburse, and account for all funds of the Association through the Executive Director, and
- f) assign the duties of the Executive Director which include the keeping of the records of the Association and of the Executive Board of Directors, and direct the activities of the Association according to adopted Association policies.

Section 4. Voting - Each member of the Executive Board of Directors shall be eligible to vote.

Section 5. Quorum - At any meeting of the Executive Board of Directors, the attendance of a majority of sitting directors and officers shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE VII COMMITTEES

Section 1. Standing - The MSMA Policy Committee, the MSBA Nominating, Constitution and Bylaws, Legislative, and Resolutions Committees shall be the standing committees of this Association.

Section 2. Ad Hoc - Special committees may be authorized by the Executive Board of Directors for specific purposes.

Section 3. Membership - Members of committees shall be nominated by the President and approved by the Executive Board of Directors, with the exception of the Nominating Committee and the MSMA Policy Committee which will be chosen by the Executive Board of Directors.

Section 4. MSMA Policy Committee

- a) The MSMA Policy Committee is the governing body of Maine School Management Association.
- b) The five-member Policy Committee shall consist of the President, President-Elect, and Immediate Past President of the Maine School Boards Association, and two members nominated and elected by and from the Executive Board of Directors. The two elected members will be elected for alternating two-year terms. (Takes effect at the 2024 MSMA Fall Conference)
- c) The Executive Board of Directors of the Maine School Boards Association shall be empowered to fill any and all vacancies of the Policy Committee of the Maine School Management Association for the unexpired term.
- d) The full term of a Policy Committee member will begin immediately following the MSBA Delegate Assembly and will expire at the conclusion of the MSBA Delegate Assembly in the second year thereafter.
- e) The MSMA Policy Committee shall elect and set the salary of the Executive Director of the Maine School Management Association who shall also serve as the Executive Director of the Maine School Boards Association.
- f) In the eventuality of the dissolution of the Maine School Management Association, the Policy Committee shall cease to exist.

Section 5. Nominating Committee/Nominations

- a) The Nominating Committee shall solicit nominations for Director vacancies to be filled at the Delegate Assembly from member School Boards. Based on interviews of candidates, the Nominating Committee shall prepare a written ballot to recommend Officers and Directors to be elected at the Delegate Assembly. In the case of regional Director nominations, the member School Boards filing such nominations shall be located within

the region in question. The Nominating Committee shall make provision on the ballot for write-in voting for Directors.

- b) Director Nominations - Nominations for regional and at-large Directors may be made in advance of the Delegate Assembly by the filing of written statements by at least two member School Boards submitted at least thirty (30) days prior to the Delegate Assembly. Nominations from the floor may be made and seconded by member School Board delegates in accordance with the requirements of this Section.
- c) Officer Nominations
 - 1. Officer candidates must have completed at least one year on the MSBA Executive Board of Directors by the time of their election.
 - 2. Candidates who wish to be nominated by the Committee must submit an application by the deadline set by the Committee.
 - 3. Persons not nominated by the Committee, who wish to be candidates, must submit an official, written endorsement of their candidacy from two MSBA member boards by the deadline set by the Committee.
 - 4. All officer candidates will be permitted to submit a written statement of no more than 150 words, to be circulated prior to the Delegate Assembly. The format/content of the statement is to be outlined by the Committee.
 - 5. No nominations from the floor or write-in candidates will be permitted for officer positions.

Section 6. Constitution and Bylaws Committee

- a) The Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall monitor the state of the Constitution and Bylaws and propose revisions, as needed, to the Executive Board of Directors, for ultimate consideration by the Delegate Assembly.
- b) The Committee shall be comprised of the Vice President, who shall serve as Chair of the Committee, and at least one (1) member from at least five (5) MSBA regions. Directors new to the Executive Board of Directors are encouraged to sign up for ~~will be placed on~~ this committee. ~~(Mix of new and veteran—President's call.)~~
- c) A quorum of membership from at least three (3) MSBA Regions is necessary to conduct business and vote.
- d) The Committee will meet annually, as needed.

Section 7. Legislative Committee

- a) The Committee shall review proposed legislation as printed and made available from the Maine Legislature. The Committee will recommend testimony based on adopted resolutions of MSBA.
- b) The Committee will meet as needed, once printed bills become available from the Legislature, and will continue to meet until all bills to be considered have been reviewed with the Legislative Session.
- c) The Committee shall be comprised of the President, who shall serve as Chair of the Committee and represent the MSBA region they are from, and one (1) member, if possible, from each of the other eight (8) MSBA Regions. These nine (9) members will be the voting members of the committee.
- d) An alternate from each region will be assigned (if possible) and will be able to vote should the assigned member not be present for the meeting. The alternates are invited to attend each meeting.
- e) A quorum of membership from at least five (5) MSBA Regions is necessary to conduct business and take votes on bills up for consideration.

Section 8. Resolutions Committee

- a) The Resolutions Committee shall annually review the previously adopted resolutions of the Association and meet to determine if there are new resolutions to present to the Executive Board of Directors, who would then present them to the Annual Delegate Assembly.
- b) The Committee shall be comprised of the President-Elect, who shall serve as Chair of the Committee and represent the MSBA region they are from, and one (1) member, if possible, from each of the other eight (8) MSBA Regions. These nine (9) members will be the voting members of the committee.
- c) An alternate from each region will be assigned (if possible) and will be able to vote should the assigned member not be present for the meeting. The alternates are invited to attend each meeting.
- d) A quorum of membership from at least five (5) MSBA Regions is necessary to conduct business and vote.
- e) The Committee will meet as needed, beginning in the winter of each Association year, following the election of officers at the Annual Delegate Assembly.

ARTICLE VIII MEETINGS OF ASSOCIATION

Section 1. Annual - There shall be an annual meeting of the Delegate Assembly. All plans and arrangements for the meeting of the Delegate Assembly shall be the responsibility of the Executive Board of Directors. Quorum - Twenty (20) delegates or their alternates, with representation from at least five (5) MSBA regions present at any meeting of the Delegate Assembly shall constitute a quorum.

Section 2. Special - Special meetings of the Delegate Assembly may be called by the President or shall be called by the President upon the written request of six (6) members of the Executive Board of Directors. Quorum - Twenty (20) delegates or their alternates present at any meeting of the Delegate Assembly shall constitute a quorum.

Section 3. Members - Each member School Board and member CTE Region Board shall be entitled to be represented at annual and special meetings of the Delegate Assembly by a voting delegate. An alternate may be elected to serve in the absence of the delegate. The delegate and alternate shall continue in office during membership on the School Board or until replaced by that School Board. No one individual shall represent more than one School Board or CTE Board.

Section 4. Duties - The Delegate Assembly shall:

- a) elect officers and directors as nominated,
- b) adopt policies and resolutions that express the beliefs and purposes of the Association, and
- c) transact such other business as presented to it prior to the opening of the Delegate Assembly by any delegation or the Executive Board of Directors.

Section 5. Voting - Adoption of policies and resolutions shall require a two-thirds majority of those voting. All other business shall be by simple majority vote.

ARTICLE IX AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Procedure - Any proposed amendments to this Constitution shall be presented to the Executive Board of Directors at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting of the Delegate Assembly. Such proposed amendments shall be circulated with the agenda prior to the Delegate Assembly together with the recommendations of the Executive Board of Directors.

Section 2. Vote - This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of those voting at the Delegate Assembly.

Section 3. Emergency - In case of emergency, so declared by the Executive Board of Directors, this Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the MSBA member School Boards and CTE Regions ~~Board memberships~~, said vote to be taken by e-mailed ballots.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the Association shall run from July 1 ~~to~~ through June 30.

ARTICLE II ASSOCIATION PROPERTY

The real and personal property of the Association shall be managed by the Policy Committee of the Maine School Management Association.

ARTICLE III VOTING

The Executive Board of Directors is authorized to conduct meetings with electronic participation by its members as long as there exists a quorum for the meeting. Members attending the meeting electronically shall have the right to full participation within the meeting.

Committees of the Executive Board of Directors of MSBA also shall operate as in the above paragraph with two exceptions as noted below.

There are ~~three~~ four instances when voting by email will be allowed: 1) By the Legislative Committee of MSBA when a timely opinion is needed and testimony needs to be crafted to support or object to proposed Legislation; 2) to vote on replacement members for the Nominating Committee when circumstances require; 3) to conduct a vote on an emergency consideration of an Amendment to the MSBA Constitution, per Article IX, Amendments; and 4) to cast an initial vote on the MSBA dues at least ten (10) days prior to the MSBA Delegate Assembly. Said vote must be confirmed at the MSBA Board of Directors meeting held prior to the MSBA Delegate Assembly.

ARTICLE IV DUES

Dues for all classes of membership shall be fixed by the Executive Board of Directors on the recommendation of the MSMA Policy Committee, at least ten (10) days before the annual meeting of the Delegate Assembly. However, the Delegate Assembly at their annual meeting may disapprove the action of the Executive Board of Directors and fix the annual dues in a different amount or amounts. Dues for any class of membership may be waived by the Executive Board of Directors subject to the same approval or disapproval action by the Delegate Assembly at their annual meeting.

ARTICLE V

MSBA REGIONS

Section 1. Organization - The Association shall be divided into MSBA regions as determined by the Executive Board of Directors in each of which regions there may be formed a regional association. Any change in the number of regions shall be approved by the Delegate Assembly at their annual meeting.

Section 2. Purpose - The purpose of the MSBA regions shall be to further the purposes of the Association through local meetings and conferences for discussion, study, and interpretation of educational problems of common interest to School Boards and members in their region, and to promote additional opportunities for School Board member participation in the activities of the Association.

ARTICLE VI AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of those voting at any meeting of the Delegate Assembly ~~or the Executive Board of Directors.~~

ARTICLE VII PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the proceedings of the Association, except in such cases as are governed by the Constitution and Bylaws.

2024 – 2025 MSBA RESOLUTIONS

**MAINE SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION
DELEGATE ASSEMBLY**

**MSMA FALL CONFERENCE
Virtual Delegate Assembly
Saturday, October 19, 2024**

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MAINE SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION
49 Community Drive
Augusta, Maine 04330

RESOLUTIONS
2024-2025

1. **MSBA MISSION STATEMENTS**

These resolutions address the broad mission and goals of the Association.

- 1.1. **MSBA Mission Statement** – To enhance the education of all students in Maine’s public schools by identifying and serving the needs of local school boards through board development, information and support services, and by advocating for all Maine public schools at the state and national levels. (Adopted 1995)
- 1.2. **Governance Role of the Local School Board** – The MSBA resolves herewith to adopt this mission statement as a means to guide Maine’s school boards in this era of change in the local school setting.

NSBA’s Vision for Public Education

The National School Boards Association believes local school boards are the nation’s preeminent expression of grass roots democracy and that this form of governance of the public schools is fundamental to the continued success of public education. Adequately funded, student-centered public schools will provide, in a safe and supportive environment, a comprehensive education for the whole child and will prepare all of America’s children for a lifetime of learning in a diverse, democratic society and an interdependent global economy. By focusing on raising student achievement and by actively engaging the community, school boards will provide leadership for academic success in the nation’s public schools. America’s school boards, by creating a vision of excellence and equity for every child, will provide performance-oriented schools that meet today’s problems as well as the challenges of tomorrow. (Adopted 1992 – Amended 2008)

- 1.3. **Support for Public Education** – The public education system is open to all children and provides learning opportunities and support systems to prepare them to be life-long learners, productive workers and good citizens. It also must support innovations that assure traditional public schools remain the schools of choice. This resolution officially puts Maine School Boards on the record as standing with other states to support the National School Boards Association’s “Stand Up for Public Schools” campaign. It calls for the adoption of local resolutions; better publicity around the excellent work going on in our districts; and public celebration of the educators and school leaders who support that work. (Adopted 2017)
- 1.4 **Legislative Focus on Students** – The Maine School Boards Association would like to stipulate that Legislators and our own legislative review committee view every legislative proposal affecting public education through the lens of whether or not it is in the best interest of the students we serve. The impact on children should be spelled out in both the language of the proposed law and in the testimony we present. If the legislation does not have the students’ best interest as its focus, legislators should require it to be clearly explained, redrafted, rejected or sent back with an amendment. (Adopted 2019 – Amended 2024)

- 1.5. **Legal Advice** – We resolve to furnish legal advice to all member school boards by making the opinions and research of the Association's attorneys readily available. We pledge to continue our effort to inform all school boards of the latest developments in education law. (Adopted 1970 – Amended 1976 and 1982)
- 1.6. **In-Service Education Programs** – MSBA recognizes the value of continuous in-service education programs for school board members and resolves itself to encourage the development of such state-wide and regional programs as are necessary to provide the information and skills required to assure effective local school board service by Maine's elected public school officials. (Adopted 1982)
- 1.7. **School Board Leadership** – The Maine School Boards Association is encouraged to take a leadership role in developing and directing a broad coalition of education interest groups for the purpose of supporting quality public education in the State of Maine. (Adopted 1991 – Amended 2002)
2. **POLICY STATEMENTS**
These resolutions represent the Association's views regarding substantial issues affecting a) how local school boards function and operate, and b) matters that directly relate to education.
- 2.A. **BOARD FUNCTIONS/OPERATIONS**
- 2.A.1. *Administration*
- 2.A.1.a. **Administrator Evaluation/Effectiveness** – The Maine School Boards Association urges local school boards to develop comprehensive evaluation policies designed to measure and improve the effectiveness of the superintendent and other school administrators. The development of such policies should recognize the need for constructive input from the superintendent and other administrators, thereby helping establish a commonly understood structure for the management and supervision of the schools. The evaluation procedure should address all aspects of individual administrative performance and recognize the importance of educational leadership. (Adopted 1981 – Amended 1982, 1986, 1999)
- 2.A.1.b. **Management/Administrative Teams** – The Maine School Boards Association strongly encourages local school boards to establish management/administrative teams that meet the identified needs of their school system. (Adopted 1977 – Amended 1982, 1994, 1999)
- 2.A.2. *Recommended Local Board Policy*
- 2.A.2.a. **Religious Interference** – In planning school events, school boards should require administrators to consider the significance of holy days of all recognized religions. (Adopted 1976 – Amended 1982)
- 2.A.2.b. **Nepotism** – The Maine School Boards Association urges local school boards to consider the adoption of employment policies that address issues of nepotism. (Adopted 1977 – Amended 1982, 1999)

- 2.A.2.c. **Child Abuse Reporting** – The Maine School Boards Association urges local school boards to adopt a policy requiring that appropriate staff be informed periodically of their responsibility to report neglect and abuse pursuant to State law. (Adopted 1984 – Amended 1999)
- 2.A.2.d. **Gender Neutral Language Policies** – The Maine School Boards Association encourages local school boards to adopt policies that would promote the use of gender-neutral language in all communications. (Adopted 1990 – Amended 1999)
- 2.A.2.e. **Advertising in the Schools** – The Maine School Boards Association encourages local school boards to adopt policies on advertising in schools, including a prohibition on advertisements for products that do not meet minimum nutrition standards or which are otherwise incompatible with the educational mission of the schools. Boards should evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of advertising prior to entering into any contractual arrangements for enhancement of school facilities, instructional programming or extracurricular activities. (Adopted 1990 – Amended 1999, 2007)
- 2.A.2.f. **Student Absenteeism** – The Maine School Boards Association supports the Department of Education’s goal of having all students be in attendance at least 95% of their academic year. This goal can only be achieved if there are interventions and supports for those students who are too often absent. Communication with parents/guardians around chronic absenteeism is critical as are school-based academic supports. Multiple pathway programs for at-risk students either on a local or regional level also should be supported. Should efforts not be successful through traditional communication with parents/guardians, MSBA urges proactive efforts for improved communication and supports through the Maine Department of Health and Human Services and/or other local or state agencies. (Adopted 2021)
- 2.A.2.g. **Administration of Medication** – The Maine School Boards Association urges local school boards to adopt policy governing the administration of medications to students at school. In the interest of student health and safety, MSBA opposes legislation that would limit or prohibit options available to school systems in the administering of medications to students. (Adopted 1996 – Amended 1999, 2022)
- 2.A.2.h. **Board Fiduciary Responsibility** – The Maine School Boards Association believes that every school board has a fiduciary responsibility in its oversight of the school unit’s finances. The MSBA urges local boards to adopt policies that require the Superintendent, in consultation with appropriate school unit personnel, auditor(s) and others, to develop and implement administrative procedures for internal accounting and records management; audit compliance; prevention and detection of fraud, financial irregularities or fiscal improprieties; and to provide regular and timely financial reports to the Board or its Finance Committee. MSBA also recommends that new Board member orientation include sufficient information concerning school unit finances to enable members to make informed decisions. (Adopted 2006)
- 2.A.2.i. **School Safety** – Recognizing that the threat of violence exists, the Maine School Boards Association urges local school boards to be increasingly vigilant in seeking to promote a safe school culture. To support a public school’s responsibility to keep students and staff safe, the MSBA advocates the following comprehensive approach: ongoing risk assessments not only for active shooter attacks but other disruptors that could put students or staff at risk; increased focus on social and emotional support; training on early warning signs around student perpetrators of violence and programs like “Say Something”, which encourage students to go to an adult with

their concerns about a potentially violent peer; close connections with the Maine Department of Education School Safety Center for resources and recommendations; increased funding in the Revolving School Renovation Fund that includes school safety projects as priorities; support for state and federal funding for School Resource Officers where appropriate; the use of core values to develop and implement local codes of conduct; and staff training as appropriate. We also support tasking the Department's School Safety Center to collect, advise and disseminate best practices on keeping students safe. (Adopted 2018 – Amended 2020, 2024)

2.A.2.j. **Gun-Free Schools** – The Maine School Boards Association supports the current state ban on guns, loaded or unloaded, on school property and opposes any legislative attempts to amend that prohibition. The ban is both symbolic and practical. It affirms ours and the nation's belief that schools should be safe havens and does not invite intended or unintended tragedy by allowing loaded guns on school grounds. Suggestions that schools can somehow monitor whether guns in cars are safely locked and unloaded are unworkable. Furthermore, MSBA supports evidence-based public health interventions to reduce gun violence in schools. (Adopted 2018 –Amended 2024)

2.A.2.k. **Staff Use of Social Media** – The Maine School Boards Association supports development of local board policy and guidelines around the appropriate use of social media by employees during the workday and outside of work, and expectations and consequences for staff using social media to bully or disrupt the school learning environment. Schools need to be clear about who has authorization to create and monitor school-sponsored sites on Facebook and other platforms and are encouraged to do appropriate training for staff around good digital citizenship. (Adopted 2019)

2.A.2.l. **School Board Use of Social Media** – In recognition that many School Board members use social media to communicate, the Maine School Boards Association would like to affirm the same standards apply to social media as other more traditional means of communicating. Those standards include making clear you are speaking as an individual and not on behalf of the full board; directing concerns or complaints about the district to the administration; conducting yourself online in a manner that reflects well on the district; using caution about inadvertently revealing confidential information; avoiding altogether conversations about contract disputes, investigations or any other matters where the board must be impartial in its deliberations; and, remembering that if a quorum of the board is discussing school business on social media or via email, it constitutes a meeting. (Adopted 2019)

2.A.3. *Community Relations*

2.A.3.a. **Citizen Involvement in the Schools** – The Maine School Boards Association urges school boards to implement programs that foster constructive parental or guardian involvement and that make use of adult volunteers as a means of enriching the learning experiences of students while building better school-community relationships. (Adopted 1979 – Amended 1982, 1999, 2020)

2.A.3.b. **Report Public School Education Success** – The Maine School Boards Association believes that, in order to strengthen public confidence in education, the many positive accomplishments of the public schools should be publicized. MSBA, therefore, urges school boards, superintendents and state educational leaders to actively and appropriately share the achievements of public education through media reporting, presentations to groups of parents and citizens, and other communications with the public. Local school boards are urged to produce supplementary reports

highlighting the accomplishments as well as the needs of their local schools. (Adopted 1982 – Amended 1988, 1999)

- 2.A.3.c. **Shared Responsibility in Education** – The Maine School Boards Association believes that public school personnel can best meet the personal and educational needs of students where there is meaningful communication and continuous interaction between the school and parents or guardians. MSBA urges local school boards to take a leadership role in developing policies that foster communication and programs for constructive parental or guardian involvement that will help to assure all students an equal opportunity to succeed. Procedures should be developed by local boards that allow for input from individuals and parent groups with regard to policy-level decision making, yet which recognize the ultimate responsibility of the elected school board to provide the lay governance of the schools as prescribed in law. (Adopted 1985 – Amended 1989, 1992, 1999, 2020)
- 2.A.3.d. **Parental/Guardian Engagement in the Education of Their Children** – The Maine School Boards Association believes parents/guardians are pivotal partners in the education of their children. MSBA supports the opportunities for parents/guardians to be involved in their children's education as described and designated within federal and state laws and school district policies, handbooks, procedures, and other guidance related to parental involvement and engagement. These times for engagement include the opportunity to be heard by school district leadership, opportunities for consultations with teaching staff about what is being taught, and the opportunity to receive and review information about school budgets and spending. Parents/guardians also have the ability to opt their child(ren) out of programming they do not feel is appropriate for their child. These opportunities for involvement should be communicated clearly and consistently through documentation in school district policies, school websites, handbooks and through other forms of communication, which are publicly available and easily accessible. Times to raise questions of school personnel about these engagement opportunities should be offered to all parents/guardians. MSBA also believes that parental/guardian opportunities for involvement in the education of their own child(ren) should not inhibit the education of other children. (Adopted 2023)
- 2.A.3.e. **State Assessments** – The Maine School Boards Association is committed to raising student achievement in all districts and believes statewide standardized assessments, used appropriately, have to be only one of multiple measures of progress toward that goal. The selected state assessment tool should include English language arts, literacy, math, science, and social studies/civics. MSBA calls on the Department of Education to give adequate time to allow rigorous review of potential vendors before a contract is awarded, and to maintain consistent assessment for no less than five years. Any state assessment selected or developed should be relevant, provide timely feedback to inform instruction, and not consume undue amounts of instructional time in its execution. (Adopted 1991 – Amended 1999, 2007, 2015, 2020, 2024)
- 2.A.3.f. **Business Employment of Students** – The Maine School Boards Association reminds local school boards of the statute which restricts employment of students during the school year, as well as limits work permits to students with appropriate attendance and grades. Moreover, boards are urged to direct the schools to work closely with parents or guardians, businesses, and potential employers of students to obtain recognition and support of the need for balance between work and schooling to enhance the development of young people. The MSBA urges the Maine Legislature to refrain from passing legislation that prescribes a date certain for the opening of Maine schools. MSBA believes that decision is best made at the local level. (Adopted 1991 – Amended 1999, 2007, 2020)

2.A.4. *Roles & Responsibilities of School Boards/Board Members*

- 2.A.4.a. **Representation** – The Maine School Boards Association believes that school boards should function in a nonpartisan, broadly representative, cooperative manner. Each member of a school board should represent to the best of their ability and in an open-minded fashion, the entire unit and in consequence must let their consideration for the entire unit take precedence over every form of partisanship and special interest. (Adopted 1963 – Amended 1982, 1999, 2020)
- 2.A.4.b. **Non-Partisan School Board Members** – The Maine School Boards Association recognizes and supports the non-partisan practice of the election of local school board members. School board members are elected on a general ballot and once elected are to focus on what’s in the best interest of the school district and all its students. MSBA supports the position that school board members shall conduct school board business in a non-partisan manner, without favoring or taking direction from a political party. (Adopted 2023)
- 2.A.4.c. **Written Policies** – The Maine School Boards Association believes that policymaking is an essential part of the school board’s governance role. MSBA recommends that local school boards develop and adopt clear written policies to establish and communicate their priorities and expectations. In developing policies, boards should seek input from school administrators, staff, and groups affected by proposed policies. Boards should recognize that while they are the policy-making bodies, they need to delegate responsibility for implementation of policy and the development of appropriate regulations to the Superintendent and their designees. Boards should monitor policies to ensure that they are followed, evaluate policies to see if they are producing the intended results, and establish a process to provide for periodic comprehensive review of the board’s policy manual. (Adopted 1963 – Amended 1982, 1986, 1988, 1999, 2007, 2020)
- 2.A.4.d. **Board-Teacher Relations** – The Maine School Boards Association is committed to providing training and support to its members on ways to validate and improve the meet-and-consult process when adopting or amending education policy. The goal is to improve communication around key policies that most directly affect teachers and review and collaborate with staff on policies that need updating. In concert with that effort, MSBA would like to encourage and help train boards in interest-based bargaining to further support collaborative relationships between school boards and our teaching staff by welcoming their input. We also believe boards should create more avenues to provide teachers’ voice. (Adopted 2019)
- 2.A.4.e **Local School Board Responsibility** – School boards are the governing bodies of school administrative units, comprised of locally elected individuals whose duty is to represent and ensure the best interests of students and staff, and oversee the operation of their schools while following state law and district policies. The Maine School Boards Association supports local board control of educational programs which allows communities to tailor their educational approach to the specific needs of their students. School boards have direct involvement in developing school policies, budgets, curriculum, and safety for all students and staff within their respective districts. Open dialogue between school boards and stakeholders can ease conflict and promote educational objectives. MSBA strongly supports the well-established tradition of local board control of education where school boards directly oversee policy development, curriculum, budget, and facilities management, and work towards the advancement of quality public education. Local board decision making empowers educators to collaborate and innovate, leading to more effective and responsive educational programs. MSBA urges legislators and Maine’s

congressional delegation to oppose laws that may hinder or erode local board control. (Adopted 1974 – Amended 1976, 1982, 2020, 2024)

- 2.A.4.f. **Board Member Ethics** – The Maine School Boards Association encourages each school board to adopt a locally-developed code of ethics to guide members’ conduct and behavior as they relate to parents or guardians, students, school administrators and staff, the community, and to each other. (Adopted 1985 – Amended 1986, 1994, 1999, 2008, 2020)
- 2.A.4.g. **School Board Training** – The Maine School Boards Association is committed to sharing and expanding training opportunities, utilizing, in part, a regional approach and tapping local board members and others as trainers. MSBA encourages local boards to adopt policies that incorporate the local board’s commitment to the education of its board members and reflect its need to annually budget the funds necessary to fulfill this important responsibility. Possible areas of discussions based on district needs may include equity of educational opportunity for all students (as defined by MSBA Resolution, 4.22 – 2020), the Freedom of Access Act (FOAA), explanation of MSBA services, school board governance, parliamentary procedures, school board self-evaluation, on-boarding of school board members, local committees’ purpose and structure, or school board leadership training. (Adopted 1989 – Amended 1999, 2017, 2021)
- 2.A.4.h. **Child Advocacy** – As advocates for children, the Maine School Boards Association urges school boards to incorporate in their mission statements language which clearly establishes that the thorough and efficient education of children is their primary statutorily based responsibility. (Adopted 1993 – Amended 1999)
- 2.A.4.i. **State and Local Relations** – In an effort to keep legislators well-informed, the Maine School Boards Association urges local school boards to initiate and maintain ongoing communication with members of their local legislative delegation as to the impact of new laws and rules related to public schools. (Adopted 1985 – Amended 1999)
- 2.A.4.j. **DOE Interference with Local Authority** – The Maine School Boards Association urges the Commissioner of Education, the State Board of Education and the Department of Education to limit their exercise of state education responsibility to that permitted by state and federal law, so as not to interfere with the local responsibilities of school boards and superintendents. (Adopted 1990 – Amended 1999)
- 2.A.4.k. **Nomination and Approval of the Employment of Teachers** – The Maine School Boards Association urges local school boards and superintendents to acknowledge and support their respective responsibilities pertaining to the nomination (or non-nomination) and approval (or non-approval) of teacher employment as provided for in state law. (Adopted 1990 – Amended 1999)
- 2.A.4.l. **Support of Education as a Civic Responsibility** – The Maine School Boards Association urges local school boards to promote the need for adequate support of schools as a civic responsibility to be shared by all citizens. (Adopted 1993 – Amended 1999)
- 2.A.4.m. **Legislative Mandates** – The Maine School Boards Association opposes any unfunded legislative mandates and supports the inclusion of geographically diverse citizen input in the development of mandatory programs proposed either by the Maine Legislature or Congress. MSBA believes that should the Maine Legislature pass mandates that impact schools, the state should provide additional, continuous funding to support affected schools in their implementation of such

mandates. By adequately funding educational mandates, schools can support initiatives that promote student success, such as professional development for teachers and access to essential resources and technology. It is crucial for our state to invest in our schools through the funding of these mandates. (Adopted 1977 – Amended 1982, 1986, 1988, 1998, 1999, 2008, 2022, 2024)

2.A.4.n. **Role of Maine Department of Education** – The Maine School Boards Association believes that the major effort of the Maine Department of Education should be to provide support to local educational units. The Department should keep information gathering and regulatory functions to a minimum. MSBA believes that the Department should support local school units in implementing Maine’s System of Learning Results. MSBA strongly urges the Commissioner of the Department to thoroughly review all new state policy proposals and initiatives with local school board representatives as well as other school officials prior to their proposal. (Adopted 1979 – Amended 1988, 1998, 2002, 2008)

2.A.4.o. **District-sponsored Email Accounts** – The Maine School Boards Association Delegate Assembly recommends local school units establish system email accounts for use by school board members. (Adopted 2010)

2.A.5. *School Business/Finance*

2.A.5.a. **Facilities** – The Maine School Boards Association believes that public school facilities should be used as centers for the integration of the community activities and the encouragement of family participation in wholesome character building activities conducive to good citizenship. MSBA further recommends that local school units, in conjunction with other public and private agencies, particularly when schools are closed during summer months, make every effort to provide summer educational programs, career and technical education (CTE) experiences and training, recreation and work opportunities for students. (Adopted 1963 – Amended 1968, 1982, 1999, 2020)

2.A.5.b. **Energy Conservation and Management** – The Maine School Boards Association supports the implementation of comprehensive energy conservation and management programs which will reduce the drain on energy supplies and minimize the cost of energy to Maine taxpayers. (Adopted 1979 – Amended 1981, 1994, 1999)

2.A.5.c. **Securing Liability Insurance Protection** – The Maine School Boards Association encourages local school districts to examine their insurance coverage to assure that provision is made for comprehensive liability protection due to the potential for significant financial losses to school systems from lawsuits. Such coverage should provide that the carrier will pay, on behalf of the board and its members and all employees, monetary and non-monetary relief arising from wrongful acts. (Adopted 1982 – Amended 1997, 1999)

2.A.6. *Staff/Labor Relations*

2.A.6.a. **Staff Relationships** – The Maine School Boards Association urges school boards to enact and publicize procedures that give voice to district employees. While boards have the final say in matters of policy, staff impacted by policy should have the means to provide input through a robust meet and consult process. School Board Policy Committee members, through administrators who attend policy committee meetings, should seek input from affected staff. (Adopted 1969 – Amended 1999, 2020, 2023)

- 2.A.6.b. **Job Descriptions** – The Maine School Boards Association recommends that local school systems formulate specific job descriptions for all school personnel. The job descriptions need to be current, accurate and sufficiently detailed to identify the functions and expectations of covered positions. (Adopted 1978 – Amended 1999)
- 2.A.6.c. **Reduction in Force** – The Maine School Boards Association recognizes that there are circumstances under which local boards must reduce the number of administrative, teaching and support staff. MSBA urges its member units to develop and adopt criteria and procedures to be used in a reduction in force involving professional and support staff. Such criteria should be based on the relative qualifications of the staff members involved while keeping the overall best interest of the unit and its students uppermost in mind. (Adopted 1982 – Amended 1986, 1999)
- 2.A.6.d. **Professional Staff Recognition** – The Maine School Boards Association urges local school boards to develop and implement public information and awards programs that recognize professional staff for significant accomplishments and noteworthy community service. (Adopted 1982 – Amended 1983, 1999)
- 2.A.6.e. **Just Cause** – The Maine School Boards Association urges school boards to reject undefined “just cause” bargaining proposals presented by employee unions. In the event, however, that the board includes “just cause” language in a collective bargaining agreement, MSBA strongly urges that it be clearly defined so that both parties to the agreement have a full and common understanding of its intent and application. (Adopted 1983 – Amended 1984, 1999)
- 2.A.6.f. **Staffing and Promotions** – The Maine School Boards Association urges local school boards to adopt policies for the promotion of staff which include that when qualifications and performance support upward movement, staff members should be provided opportunities and incentives for promotion to higher levels of responsibility. (Adopted 1985 – Amended 1999)
- 2.A.6.g. **Collegial Bargaining** – The Maine School Boards Association urges local school boards to explore with their associations the possible use of non-adversarial methods of collective bargaining. (Adopted 1989 – Amended 1999, 2020)
- 2.A.6.h. **Negotiation of Educational Policy** – The Maine School Boards Association strongly opposes any legislative efforts to weaken the ability of local school boards to set education policy. MSBA directs its Executive Board of Directors and staff to work with other educational organizations in order to form a coalition to oppose legislation that would broaden the current negotiability of educational policy. MSBA supports the decision of the Maine Supreme Court in the MSAD #58 Board of Directors v. Mt. Abrams Teachers Association case and endorses the arbitration decisions rendered in the Lisbon School Systems v. Lisbon Teachers Association report. MSBA encourages local boards to work with their professional staff to achieve a meaningful meet and consult process on subjects of educational policy. (Adopted 1991 – Amended 1999, 2002)
- 2.A.6.i. **Recruitment of Staff from Other Districts** – The Maine School Boards Association urges all school boards and superintendents to be cognizant of the problems involved with personnel recruitment and to demonstrate reciprocal ethical responsibility in the recruitment of staff. (Adopted 1977 – Amended 1982, 1999, 2008)

2.A.7. *Miscellaneous*

2.A.7.a. **Social Service Supports** – The Maine School Boards Association recognizes poverty and food insecurity are adverse childhood experiences that impact child well-being and contribute to the achievement gap. MSBA continues to support funding for free universal school meals for the children of Maine. MSBA also encourages legislation that provides support to children and families that address poverty, food insecurity, and social and emotional needs, with programs like the Community School Model and other community wrap-around services. (Adopted 1993 – Amended 1999, 2024)

2.B. **POLICY STATEMENTS - EDUCATION PROGRAM**

2.B.1. *Curriculum/Programs*

2.B.1.a. **Wellness** – The Maine School Boards Association recognizes that wellness is related to students' overall well-being and their readiness to learn. MSBA believes that local school boards should promote a school environment that supports and encourages wellness, including healthy food choices, nutrition education, regular physical activity, and an awareness of suicide prevention and the seriousness of violence and bullying within the school. MSBA urges boards to adopt a comprehensive wellness policy that sets goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school efforts that support a healthy lifestyle. MSBA also urges local school boards to provide for instruction to increase awareness of the threats to health associated with use of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, and performance enhancing substances. (Adopted 1976 – Amended 1982, 1987, 1998, 2007)

2.B.1.b. **Responsible Leadership in the Review of Instructional Materials** – The Maine School Boards Association believes the range of curricula, materials, and learning experiences available to students should reflect established professional criteria as well as the values and needs of the community. MSBA further believes that, while choosing what students shall read and learn can never be free from controversy, local school officials must exercise responsible leadership in assuring that the rights of freedom of appropriate expression and of free access to information are upheld. Therefore, MSBA encourages the adoption of appropriate procedures for the review of challenged educational materials. (Adopted 1982 – Amended 1986, 1999)

2.B.1.c. **Curriculum Policy** – School boards are legally responsible for adopting policies with respect to curriculum. Therefore, the Maine School Boards Association urges local school boards to recognize that it is imperative they develop and implement curriculum policies that reflect the best interests of the students and the community. These policies should, as much as possible and as appropriate, include plans for in-person, regional collaborative, and when necessary or beneficial, remote learning opportunities, keeping in mind disabilities and health concerns of all students to ensure equity and inclusiveness of all instruction. Recognizing the importance of a rigorous core curriculum for all students, MSBA urges local school boards to establish policies which require continuous evaluation of curriculum and graduation requirements. Such policies should reflect the goal of creating and maintaining rigorous standards designed to provide students with the skills necessary for them to succeed in a global society. Furthermore, these policies should lead to curriculum designed to achieve specific learning outcomes. MSBA also encourages local school boards to regularly review and revise these policies. (Adopted 1963 – Amended 1982, 1993, 1999, 2021)

2.B.1.d. **School Curricula** – The Maine School Boards Association urges school boards to adopt curricula which are designed to present a realistic view of the contributions made by the various ethnic and

racial groups in the development of our nation. (Adopted 1968 – Amended 1976, 1982, 1986, 1999)

- 2.B.1.e. **Multilingual Learners** – The Maine School Boards Association believes the needs of multilingual learners (MLs) should be addressed by creating a more inclusive school environment/climate for all students. In doing so students will feel their native language and cultural background are valued while reinforcing a sense of belonging and pride. When students receive adequate support, they are empowered and are more likely to excel academically, contribute positively to their learning environment, and navigate educational challenges with resilience, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and enriching school environment for all. Resources such as English for speakers of other languages, bilingual education or language support services are essential to ensuring equitable access to education, fostering academic success, boosting self-esteem, and preparing students to thrive in a globalized world where multilingualism is increasingly valued. (Adopted 1974 – Amended 1976, 1982, 1999, 2024)
- 2.B.1.f. **Career and Technical Education Opportunities** – With a growing demand that public schools better prepare students for work as well as college, the Maine School Boards Association supports expanded opportunities for students to participate in Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes. Exposure to CTE beginning at the PreK level to hands-on skills helps students discover interests and visualize career paths. CTE also makes traditional learning more relevant and keeps students engaged. We support efforts to make CTE classes more available, understanding it will take local coordination efforts and greater flexibility in scheduling to make it work. It also is critical that our CTE programs form alliances with local businesses and industry to support this effort, and that the state provides adequate funding to support CTE services and programs to include transportation, equipment, special education capacity, and support for English language learners. (Adopted 2017 – Amended 2023)
- 2.B.1.g. **Programs for Gifted Students** – The Maine School Boards Association supports the concept that it is the responsibility of educators to identify and develop the special gifts that each child may possess, whether the child be talented academically, artistically, vocationally or athletically. MSBA urges the development of the best in each child through a program of instruction that accommodates every student. MSBA strongly advocates the development of state rules that allow maximum flexibility to local school boards in the development of gifted and talented programs. (Adopted 1976 – Amended 1982, 1986, 1999, 2017)
- 2.B.1.h. **Foreign Languages/International Studies** – The Maine School Boards Association urges local school boards to consider the integration of foreign languages and international studies in local curriculum programs at all grade levels. (Adopted 1981 – Amended 1983, 1999)
- 2.B.1.i. **Values Education** – The Maine School Boards Association encourages local school boards to promote high standards of human behavior within the educational community. As a vital link between communities and their schools, school boards must help create an environment in which values that are central to a democratic society can be discussed and nurtured among students in order to help them develop and clarify their own values. MSBA supports activities that facilitate the study of U.S. foundation documents and broader efforts to identify a common set of values to be discussed and fostered among Maine public school students. (Adopted 1987 – Amended 1990, 1999)

- 2.B.1.j. **AIDS And Other Infectious Disease Education and Prevention** – The Maine School Boards Association urges local school boards to adopt a policy which includes guidelines to provide instruction to students and staff about AIDS and other infectious diseases, which gives them factual information about its infectious risks and which will help dispel unfounded fears and misconceptions about the disease. (Adopted 1987 – Amended 1999, 2008)
- 2.B.1.k. **Multiple Pathways** – The Maine School Boards Association urges local school boards to approve educational programs that interest, engage, and motivate each student to realize their potential and result in successful completion of their high school experience by earning a high school diploma or its equivalent. (Adopted 2021)
- 2.B.1.l. **Dropout Prevention** – The Maine School Boards Association supports the Maine Department of Education’s goal of a 90 percent or better graduation rate. MSBA recognizes there are many factors that can lead to a student dropping out of school. There need to be early interventions for at risk students and support both at the state and local level for multiple pathways, such as credit recovery and adult education, to earn a diploma. This is an imperative not only for our students but for our society, which needs an educated and engaged workforce and citizenry. MSBA additionally and proactively urges the Maine Department of Education and US Department of Education to redefine high school dropouts so that high school graduates include students who attain that achievement within 6 years of initiating grade 9 and those who have utilized one or more of the multiple pathways within the 6-year timeline. (Adopted 2021)
- 2.B.1.m. **Instructional Time Policy** – The Maine School Boards Association believes that school boards should develop and review policies regarding optimum instructional time, recognizing that ideally the school calendar should not be measured in number of days, but by the number of instructional hours per year. Instructional time, moreover, should be distinguished from other uses of time spent in school (recess, passing between classes, clubs, etc.). This is a matter of major impact on educational policy and effectiveness, and it should be a preeminent concern of school boards. (Adopted 1992 – Amended 1999)
- 2.B.1.n. **Instructional Time** – The Maine School Boards Association encourages local school boards to reexamine and study current school day schedules in an effort to find ways to increase and make better use of the instructional time available to students in order to assure that they more nearly fulfill their learning potential. In such a study of instructional time schedules, MSBA encourages boards to consider the effects that the scheduling and rescheduling of regular and post-season interscholastic athletic activities might have on the proper education of its student athletes. (Adopted 1983 – Amended 1984, 1999)
- 2.B.1.o. **Parenting Education** – The Maine School Boards Association urges school boards to collaborate with other community organizations to provide parenting programs in their communities. (Adopted 1993 – Amended 1999)
- 2.B.1.p. **Striving for Excellence** – The Maine School Boards Association believes that school boards must strive to provide excellence in education and hold themselves accountable to the community for their efforts. Board policies should be adopted that assure the greatest possible use of the most effective techniques and results of education research, evaluation and development. (Adopted 1982 – Amended 1999)

- 2.B.1.q. **Scheduling of Students** – The Maine School Boards Association urges school units in each of the state’s career and technical and centers regions to coordinate their daily schedules and annual calendars to assure that all students are able to benefit equitably from the educational program offerings. (Adopted 1986 – Amended 1999, 2020)
- 2.B.1.r. **Study of Secondary Scheduling** – The Maine School Boards Association urges the Department of Education, in partnership with educational associations, to gather appropriate research data on scheduling and adolescent learning to study the feasibility of changes to the scheduled school day for secondary students in light of this data and propose actions based on that research. Any changes to the schedule are and should remain the purview of the local school board. (Adopted 1997 – Amended 1999, 2008, 2020)
- 2.B.1.s. **Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Schools** – The Maine School Boards Association recognizes the use of AI (including generative AI) in schools as a tool to enhance student education. Its purpose should be to support all students to achieve their educational goals. All use of AI should adhere to existing policies. The goal of the use of AI is to promote literacy, providing students the opportunity to learn to question and evaluate information while making informed decisions about generated content. Appropriate use of AI will guide students to think critically about the results they obtain through AI. AI is not a substitute for schoolwork that requires original thought. (Adopted 2024)
- 2.B.2. *School Business/Finance*
- 2.B.2.a. **Accountability** – The Maine School Boards Association endorses the concept that school boards, in order to manage their schools more effectively, must adopt criteria and standards by which to measure the results of the educational process. MSBA encourages local boards to include a self-assessment of the board in these criteria. Such criteria and standards should be adopted in board policy. (Adopted 1976 – Amended 1999)
- 2.B.3. *Staff/Labor Relations*
- 2.B.3.a. **Professional Development** – The Maine School Boards Association urges local school boards to ensure the continuing professional development needs of the education professionals with whom they share the responsibility for school improvement are met. MSBA believes in better preparation of instructional staff and encourages professional development that will exemplify the highest ideals in education through: a) development of in-service programs related to the specific needs of their school systems; b) encouragement of full utilization of such programs; and c) compensation for additional credits if such additional training is in the area of competency of the individual staff, or as otherwise deemed appropriate by the school board. School boards should work to ensure maximum opportunities are provided for all staff so that year by year their effectiveness increases as educators and as leaders in the community. Feedback from district education professionals should be considered when designing or selecting professional development options. Attainment of the Maine System of Learning Results requires sustained devotion of time, effort, and financial resources to the continuing education of the instructional staff. (Adopted 1972 – Amended 1982, 1983, 1999, 2023)
- 2.B.3.b. **Teacher Preparation Programs** – The Maine School Boards Association believes there should be ongoing review of teacher preparation programs through collaboration with colleges and universities, local school boards, the Department of Education and MSBA along with other groups

and individuals as appropriate. The goal of the collaboration is to determine if teachers are being prepared appropriately with best practices to help all students achieve the standards within the Maine System of Learning Results, improving the quality of teaching and certification procedures. Additionally, MSBA recommends that approved teacher preparation programs include best practice training to help teachers assist in the identification of students who may have mental, physical, or behavioral health (substance use) or academic issues. (Adopted 2012 — Amended 2022, 2023)

2.B.3.c. **Labor Relations Legislation** – The Maine School Boards Association through its Executive Board of Directors should constantly review existing collective bargaining legislation and evaluate proposed labor relations legislation with the aim of retaining the authority and responsibility of school boards in all aspects of the management of Maine’s public schools. (Adopted 1970 – Amended 1976, 1999)

2.B.4. *Students*

2.B.4.a. **Freedom of Expression (Students and Teachers)** – The Maine School Boards Association promotes the principles that: a) freedom of speech is a constitutional right guaranteed to all citizens and that the school must make every effort consistent with the good of the school to provide for the free expression of ideas; b) students have the right to hear different points of view consistent with their maturity and teachers have the obligation to present contrasting views with objectivity and impartiality; and c) students must be free to express their points of view while respecting the rights of others to agree or to disagree without interference. (Adopted 1971 – Amended 1982, 1999)

2.B.4.b. **Students' Rights/Conduct** – The Maine School Boards Association urges school boards to ensure that a student code of conduct and a student handbook are developed and distributed each school year so that students understand their right and responsibilities, the types of conduct that are expected, those that are unacceptable, and the consequences for each. MSBA encourages boards to adopt policies that set high standards for acceptable student conduct in order to maintain a respectful and supportive learning environment in every school and to support school administrators in their implementation of such policies. Policies that are adopted after the issuance of the student handbook should be disseminated to students and parents during the school year. (Adopted 1978 – Amended 1982, 1987, 1989, 1999, 2002, 2007)

2.B.4.c. **Equitable Educational Opportunities** – The Maine School Boards Association recognizes that students differ in interests, motivation, and ability, yet MSBA is committed to providing equitable opportunities in education for all students and urge that local boards follow through on that commitment. In order to develop the best possible educational program for all students, MSBA urges school boards to evaluate educational philosophies, policies and programs periodically in order to make the greatest possible use of new research and techniques in education, teaching and management. Local boards are encouraged to consider statewide assessment program test results in their ongoing evaluations of educational programs. (Adopted 1975 – Amended 1976, 1982, 1985, 1999, 2024)

2.B.4.d. **Student Aspirations** – The Maine School Boards Association believes that raising the aspirations of Maine youth requires that attention be paid to several fundamental aspects of the home, school and community environment. Central to any such effort is the recognition that in order for students to aspire to greater achievements they be given opportunities to experience meaningful successes

which can foster a sense of self-worth and belonging. These fundamental qualities must be consistently nurtured by caring adults in school, at home, and in the community and by well-conceived school programs implemented within a supportive climate. MSBA urges all school officials, all school staff members, parents/guardians, and citizens to carefully examine their respective roles and contributions to the statewide effort focused on student aspirations. MSBA supports efforts by the Department of Education to identify related research and offers its assistance toward the sharing of such information with local units. (Adopted 1988 – Amended 1993, 1999, 2008)

2.B.4.e. **Equity in Education** – All students, regardless of their race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, ancestry, national origin, disability, age or economic status, deserve equitable opportunities and support to learn in Maine’s public schools. Maine School Boards Association believes all district leaders should, on an ongoing basis, facilitate a self-examination and discussion around recognizing bias and stereotyping, and adopt policies and practices that eliminate them, and that the Maine Department of Education should provide support for this purpose. School boards need to stand strongly against discrimination of any kind. (Adopted 1992 - Amended 1999, 2024)

2.B.5. *Miscellaneous*

2.B.5.a. **Educational Planning** – The Maine School Boards Association believes that each school board should develop a comprehensive educational plan reflective of long-term and short-term goals in order to meet the educational needs of its pupils. Each school board should consider the value of a self-evaluation process to determine the school system's goals. MSBA urges local school boards to recognize the contributions to overall educational planning that come from the knowledge and experience of staff members. In developing plans and general policies relating to the operation of the schools, each local school board should set up and publicize procedures, which enable staff members to present their ideas and recommendations. (Adopted 1967 – Amended 1982, 1986, 1988, 1999, 2008)

2.B.5.b. **Learning Support** – Efforts should be made to support learning opportunities affected by summer vacation, prolonged student absence or the disruption caused by the pandemic. The Maine School Boards Association believes a student-centered approach, which looks at individual academic achievement and informs what support systems are needed and for whom, is a more effective approach. Strategies should replicate those within Multiple Tiers of Student Support (MTSS) utilized by school units. The Department of Education needs to be involved in this work by identifying existing resources, developing additional appropriate measurement tools and sharing effective interventions developed by their curriculum experts. Consideration of appropriate funding provided by the Maine Department of Education also is recommended. (Adopted 2021)

2.B.5.c. **Pledge of Allegiance** – The Maine School Boards Association encourages school boards to incorporate the Pledge of Allegiance to our nation’s flag as a regular part of each morning’s opening classroom exercises. MSBA further urges that every effort be made to inform students of the true meaning of this pledge. (Adopted 1978 – Amended 1986, 1999)

2.B.5.d. **School District Collaboration** – The Maine School Boards Association applauds the efforts of many local school boards to establish programs that allow students options to learn in a manner

that is most productive to them. Therefore, MSBA encourages and supports continuation of efforts to provide multiple pathways via inter-district choices for voluntary efforts among public school units to establish and maintain regional programs for the benefit of their students. MSBA opposes mandated inter-district choice. (Adopted 1989 – Amended 1991, 1999, 2023)

3. **POSITION STATEMENTS**

These resolutions convey the Association's stance on specific issues. They either direct specific, immediate action be taken by the Association, staff, or others, or 2) set forth the Association's position on questions of public policy, i.e., statutory or administrative law.

3.A. **DIRECTIVES**

3.A.1. **State Funding to Support Students' Mental and Behavioral Health** – The Maine School Boards Association believes that additional funding needs to be allocated to school districts to support students' mental and behavioral health. The legislature needs to dedicate additional funding that can be distributed to all districts, including minimum receivers, through targeted funds within the EPS formula to support students. Action at the state level to help address waitlists, barriers to access, and the shortage of staff equipped to help address the needs is essential as is support for the provision of resources besides personnel, including best practices and other specialized trainings. (Adopted 2023)

3.A.2. **Essential Programs and Services** – The Maine School Boards Association recognizes both the joint responsibility of municipalities and the state as a whole to provide for the cost of education, as well as the need for a funding model to provide for the equitable and efficient distribution of state monies for education across all Maine school administrative units. While the Essential Programs and Services (EPS) model is used to fill this need, MSBA believes that the original underlying assumptions about school units upon which the model is based, the expectations for educational outcomes to which Maine school districts are presently held, and alterations in local, regional, and national economic conditions, may prevent EPS as currently formulated from realizing this ongoing responsibility.

MSBA calls on the Governor, Commissioner, State Board of Education, and Legislature, to work with all deliberate speed, to ensure that changes are made to the EPS funding formula such that: its original intent for equitable, predictable, and sustainable distribution of funds is honored, and represents a model for adequacy in all of Maine's disparate, and very often, broad, rural, low-population regions, despite being designed around data from high-performing, cost-effective districts; metrics of communities' ability to pay more appropriate than state valuation are incorporated into EPS; the cost matrix of the formula is annually adjusted for inflation; and, alternatives to property tax for raising money to support the cost of education are made available to municipalities. (Adopted 1995 – Amended 1998, 2003, 2004, 2008, 2024)

3.A.3. **Consolidation/Unification** – The Maine School Boards Association has historically supported voluntary school unit consolidation, regionalization and collaboration among and between school administrative units. MSBA supports the recent efforts of the Governor and Legislature to explore these issues.

Maine has had a successful experience with consolidation through the school administrative district and community school district unit structures. These early consolidations were successful because of the financial incentives provided to local communities, and the improvement in program

offerings for students. There are many examples across the state of voluntary regional collaboratives that have enhanced effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of educational programs.

MSBA believes that:

- Student achievement is of primary importance and should be the first priority in any regionalization/consolidation plan;
- All of the options associated with consolidation, regionalization, and collaboration must be fully developed and based on a balanced research review;
- The Governor and Legislature must provide financial incentives to encourage such consolidation/unification activities;
- Current laws and rules should be examined and, if necessary, amended to make it easier to develop and maintain regional program delivery models;
- Flexibility and creativity must be encouraged; and
- The MSBA opposes the mandating of any plans for school unit consolidation that does not require local voter approval of any proposed consolidated units.

MSBA is opposed to the mandatory merger of school units, but is supportive of and recognizes the value of voluntary consolidation, regionalization and collaboration. MSBA also opposes financial penalties for units that choose not to voluntarily consolidate, regionalize or collaborate. MSBA believes that our students, local communities, taxpayers, and all citizens can benefit from any such cooperative efforts. (Adopted 1995 – Amended 1998, 2003, 2005)

- 3.A.4. **Administrator Shortage** – The Maine School Boards Association recognizes the significant decline in the number of qualified candidates for administrative positions at all levels, but particularly in the areas of school superintendency and the high school principalship. MSBA believes that the urgency of this matter should be addressed jointly by the Department of Education, the State Board of Education, the University of Maine System and other higher education institutions and the Maine Legislature. It also recommends the support and establishment of Leadership Academies to enhance this effort, as provided within Maine statute, Title 20-A, Ch. 502-C. (Adopted 1996 – Amended 2002, 2008, 2021)

3.B. PUBLIC POLICY

3.B.1. *Curriculum/Instruction*

- 3.B.1.a. **Citizen Literacy** – The Maine School Boards Association supports the nationwide efforts to erase functional illiteracy in the United States, and MSBA urges that all teacher-preparation institutions provide adequate instruction in reading and appreciation for the importance of students attaining the ability to read on grade level by grade 3. (Adopted 1972 – Amended 1976, 1998)

- 3.B.1.b. **Respect for Law** – We urge all Maine educators to foster respect and appreciation for the system of laws by which our nation strives to ensure justice and domestic tranquility, and also to educate students about the legislative and electoral processes. (Adopted 1976)
- 3.B.1.c. **Addressing the Shortage of Staff in Critical Areas** – The Maine School Boards Association urges business, industry, the Maine Department of Education and the State Board of Education to participate in public school programs in a wide variety of ways including addressing the critical shortages of staff, providing high technology equipment, cooperating in career and technical education, and other cooperative activities that will allow for the shared use of persons trained in technical and scientific areas. (Adopted 1982 – Amended 2000, 2008, 2020)
- 3.B.1.d. **Copyright** – The Maine School Boards Association supports the right of educators to the fair use of copyrighted instructional materials without permission of the copyright holder. MSBA supports the continued guarantee of such rights and believes that fair use rights extend beyond printed material to include off-the-air tapes, live performances and electronic media. (Adopted 1982 – Amended 1998)
- 3.B.1.e. **DOE Workshops Scheduling** – The Maine School Boards Association encourages staff development workshops sponsored by the Department of Education should be conducted at other times than during school hours in order to avoid any adverse impact on students and on budgets. Technology should be utilized as much as possible in the delivery of these workshops. The DOE should also provide realistic advance notice for these events. (Adopted 1990 – Amended 2008)
- 3.B.1.f. **Constitutional Amendment** – MSBA urges the Legislature and Governor to support passage of an amendment to the Constitution of the State of Maine that would require the State to assure educational equity for all Maine public school students and to provide the resources necessary to meet this requirement. (Adopted 1997)
- 3.B.2. *School Operations/Facilities*
- 3.B.2.a. **Siting of School Construction Projects** – The Maine School Boards Association opposes the passage of any legislation that unreasonably restricts the choice of school sites by local school units and/or prevents the State Board of Education from granting approval to proposed sites that do not take into account the wishes of local communities, transportation considerations, or other elements that may be factors in the siting decision. (Adopted 2005)
- 3.B.2.b. **Funding of the Universal School Meals Act of 2021** – The Maine School Boards Association calls upon Congress to pass the Universal School Meals Program Act of 2021 which would amend the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 and the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to make breakfasts and lunches free for all children, without adversely affecting federal funding formula that may use free and reduced lunch rates. (Adopted 2022)
- 3.B.2.c. **Free-Reduced Lunch Qualification** – The Maine School Boards Association urges Congress and the Administration to define poverty level requirements for the Free and Reduced Lunch Program by utilizing Area Median Income as used by the Department of Housing and Urban Development or the national federal poverty level, whichever is higher. MSBA believes these are initiatives that should be established federally while in no way being confused with Maine’s meal program. (Adopted 2022)

- 3.B.2.d. **Health Insurance Policy Requirements** – The Maine legislature in the past decade has mandated benefits for all health insurance policies marketed in the state. The legislature has also removed “community rating” as a means of determining premium structure (price) by competing insurance companies. The results of these legislative efforts are that, while there are several hundred legitimate health insurance companies in the United States, there are currently three insurance companies offering health insurance products to Maine consumers. The strictures of policy design and the limited number of companies offering health insurance products have resulted in a non-competitive market for health insurance policies sold in Maine. School boards across the state are confronted with the rising cost of health insurance in offering coverage to their employees. In some instances, the price of health insurance premiums is an issue in the successful resolution of contract negotiations between school boards and employee bargaining units.

The MSBA believes that health insurance policies marketed in Maine are excessively and needlessly expensive because of legislative activity and because of subsequent lack of competition in the marketplace. The MSBA supports the legislative removal of mandated benefits in health insurance products marketed in Maine and supports the legislative removal of the prohibition of “community rating” in determining premium structure for policies marketed in Maine. The MSBA believes that significant savings of scarcer tax dollars at both the local and state levels can be realized by such actions. (Adopted 2004)

3.B.3. *School Finance*

- 3.B.3.a. **Tuition Tax Credits and Vouchers** –The Maine School Boards Association opposes any proposal to provide federal funds (e.g., vouchers, tuition tax credits) to the parents or guardians of children who are enrolled in elementary or secondary private schools. Provision of such funds erodes financial support for public schools and disenfranchises local taxpayers by taking away their voice and vote on how education tax dollars are spent. We urge the legislature to oppose any attempts to allow a publicly funded voucher or tax credit programs to be established in the State of Maine. (Adopted 1981 – Amended 1986, 1998, 2024)
- 3.B.3.b. **School Board Responsibility for Development of Budgets** – State law clearly establishes budget development as a primary responsibility of locally elected school boards. The Maine School Boards Association opposes any attempt to limit this responsibility. The MSBA leadership is encouraged to initiate and support legislation that will reaffirm and clarify this important duty. (Adopted 1991 – Amended 2000, 2008)
- 3.B.3.c. **Funding of Services to Students with Severe Disabilities** – The Maine School Boards Association strongly urges the Commissioner of Education, the State Board of Education, and other commissioners in the Children’s Cabinet to maintain the mechanism for increased financial assistance to schools faced with high costs for students with severe disabilities and/or students who may need out-of-district placements. Furthermore, the Governor and Legislature are urged to provide full funding on an annual basis, and to add a provision to the law which would allow these reimbursable costs to be excluded from local school budgets. (Adopted 1988 – Amended 1989, 1992, 1998, 2021)
- 3.B.3.d. **Student Equity in School Finance** – The Maine School Boards Association is committed to the principle of equal access to education for all students regardless of the wealth of the school unit in which they reside. This principle should be addressed at both the state and federal levels. As the

State of Maine represents a diverse geographic and economic environment, it is only through a broad-based state educational subsidy program that this can be achieved. MSBA urges the Legislature to address the need for reliably consistent levels of annual general purpose aid (GPA) which will assure that statewide student equity is not jeopardized during periods of economic instability. While advocating for higher levels of GPA, the Association does not take positions relative to its distribution. (Adopted 1991 – Amended 1998, 2000, 2002, 2008)

3.B.3.e. **Tax Caps** – The Maine School Boards Association opposes any attempt to place a limit on the responsibilities of legislative bodies, state and local, to determine the amount of tax monies to be raised to meet the legitimate needs of those who are served by government services. (Adopted 1994 – Amended 1998)

3.B.3.f **Federal Special Education Program Funding** – Providing Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for all students in need of special education and related services is a federal mandate under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The need for these expensive services is growing as the age range of students covered has been expanded (3 years of age up to and including 21 years if not having graduated from high school) and COVID-related school closures, increased poverty, and other negative social pressures are impacting our students. It is vitally important that Congress provide the 40% reimbursement for locally expended funds called for in IDEA rather than the rate of 14% as recently as 2024. The Maine School Boards Association urges the Maine Congressional Delegation to continue to provide strong support for moving toward full funding of the federal reimbursement. (Adopted 2000, Amended 2008, 2024)

3.B.3.g. **Taxpayer Dollars Support Public Education** - The Maine School Boards Association believes taxpayer dollars should support public schools that are open to all and regulated by the state and opposes siphoning off public resources to support religious education. If parents wish to send their children to private religious schools, it is their choice, but it is not an option that should come at taxpayer expense. We also believe it is not appropriate to use public dollars to advance any particular religion or dogma. (Adopted 2019)

3.B.4. *Special Education*

3.B.4.a. **Court-ordered Placements of Students with Disabilities** – The Maine School Boards Association believes that locally developed Individualized Educational Plans (I.E.P.) should be the basis for educational placements of students with disabilities. Court-ordered placements that conflict with the local recommendations should be the financial responsibility of the state if the local unit could have provided an appropriate placement within the public school program. (Adopted 1982 – Amended 1998)

3.B.5. *Staff/Labor Relations*

3.B.5.a. **Binding Arbitration** – The Maine School Boards Association opposes any legislation that would allow binding arbitration on salaries, pensions, and insurance because the fiscal impact of these significant cost drivers in the school budget should be decided by locally elected School Boards, not outside arbitrators who have no stake in the community. (Adopted 2021)

3.B.5.b. **Right to Strike** – The Maine School Boards Association opposes any legislation that would give school personnel the right to strike. Strikes severely disrupt the education of children and the lives of their families. Even a short strike could upend an academic year, breaking educational

continuity for students and throwing off school calendars for instruction and in-school and after-school activities. Strikes also could put our students at risk if they are in unsupervised settings at home, remove their safety net experience at school, and remove food security by eliminating opportunities for scheduled meals. (Adopted 2021)

- 3.B.5.c. **Teachers as Legislators** – The Maine School Boards Association urges the Legislature to amend the statute regarding teacher "leave of absence as legislators". (Title 20-A MRSA Section 13602) by establishing a limit on the number of terms that teachers may serve as legislators under this provision. (Adopted 1982 – Amended 1986)
- 3.B.5.d. **Probationary Employment Period** – The Maine School Boards Association supports changes in current Maine law to better meet the personnel needs of Maine schools and to provide more fairness to teachers and students when determining whether or not to place teachers on continuing contract. MSBA proposes that individuals employed as teachers in Maine schools, who have less than three years teaching experience, be given the opportunity to have up to three one-year probationary contracts prior to the making of a determination on granting continuing contract status. Teachers who have more than three years of teaching experience would be eligible for continuing contract consideration after completing two years as probationary teachers. (Adopted 1983 – Amended 1984, 1998)
- 3.B.5.e. **Unemployment Compensation** – We strongly urge the Legislature to continue to exempt from unemployment compensation coverage public school employees who are temporarily employed and/or temporarily away from official duties either during a school recess or during a vacation. (Adopted 1977 – Amended 1982)
- 3.B.6. *Staff Preparation/Certification*
 - 3.B.6.a. **Teacher Certification** – MSBA urges local boards to keep themselves apprised of developments in the area of teacher certification. Any changes in the certification law should consider the need to protect the interests of students and should carefully consider the acceptance of associated costs by the state. (Adopted 1986 – Amended 1994)
 - 3.B.6.b. **Administrative Skills** – The Maine School Boards Association believes that the demands on the schools have changed and that school administrators often need new skills to effectively perform school leadership tasks. Therefore, MSBA strongly supports efforts to update and strengthen administrator certification requirements. In addition, MSBA encourages local boards to ensure that their administrators are provided with opportunities to develop and improve their administrative and leadership skills. (Adopted 1985)
 - 3.B.6.c. **Professional Standards Board for Certification** – The MSBA opposes the transfer of authority for determining Teacher/Administrator certification standards and issuance of certificates from the State Board of Education and the Commissioner to a Professional Standards Board. (Adopted 1991)
 - 3.B.6.d. **Alternative Certification** – The Maine School Boards Association recognizes in order to address challenges during school restructuring and staffing shortages districts may wish to recruit and hire professional staff that possess appropriate skills often found in other employment sectors. MSBA therefore, pledges its support for the continuation of the effort to study and initiate legislation that

will create alternative routes to certification for teachers and administrators that maintain high standards and rigor. (Adopted 1991 – Amended 1994, 1998, 2022)

3.B.6.e. **Professional Development to Support Learning Results** – The Maine School Boards Association urges the Legislature and Governor to appropriate funds, in addition to General Purpose Aid, to develop and sustain a system of comprehensive staff development to support the implementation of the Learning Results for Maine students. Such an important undertaking must be accompanied by the training support necessary to assist teachers to meet the diverse learning needs of all Maine students. (Adopted 1996)

3.B.7. *State Governance*

3.B.7.a. **Legislative Policy Making** – It is the position of the Maine School Boards Association that all education policy decisions which the Legislature might consider should be preceded by appropriate hearings and/or consultations. Adequate opportunity should be provided for all interested parties to participate and contribute input for legislative review and consideration. In order for sound education policy to be developed, such a process is not only desirable but essential. (Adopted 1991)

3.B.7.b. **Comprehensive State and Community Planning** – We recommend that federal, state and municipal planning bodies and their respective agencies consult local school boards in the development of any projected plans affecting the education system within a particular area; and local school boards should make every effort to cooperate and communicate with these governmental bodies. (Adopted 1968 – Amended 1976, 1982)

3.B.8. *Miscellaneous*

3.B.8.a. **State Sponsored Sports Betting** – MSBA strongly opposes any legislation that would legalize betting on athletic contests, and supports legislation banning any kind of state-sponsored sports betting. (Adopted 1991)

3.B.8.b. **Voluntary Board Development** – The Maine School Boards Association endorses the time-proven concept of lay governance of schools by elected local citizens who provide policy-level direction and guidance for the superintendent as the school board's chief executive officer and staff. While it is incumbent upon school board members to avail themselves of opportunities to learn more about how to carry out their responsibilities on a continuing basis, legislative or other mandating of any such training is neither warranted nor advisable. MSBA opposes any additional qualification(s) for school board membership, or any specific training course work, and any form of state certification of board members. (Adopted 1992 – Amended 1998, 2008)

3.B.8.c. **Child Care** – MSBA recognizes the need for quality childcare services in the State of Maine. We urge cooperation among local municipalities and school administrative units, state agencies, service organizations, and parents in working together to insure the delivery of safe, reliable, and educationally-sound childcare services. (Adopted 1986)

3.B.8.d. **Research Institute** – The Maine School Boards Association supports the goals embodied in the Research Institute, statutorily created to collect and analyze data about the condition of local schools. The MSBA particularly endorses the use of such data by the Legislature and others to guide them toward the goal of equal educational opportunity for all of Maine's public school

students. Such research should always be performed by neutral parties who have no connection to the policy process. (Adopted 1995 – Amended 2008)

4. **SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS**

These resolutions are short-term, special legislative directives.

- 4.1 **Issuance of School Administrative Unit GPA Printouts** – The Maine School Boards Association urges the Legislature to adopt legislation that requires the Commissioner of Education to release individual SAU printouts based on the funding level proposed in the Governor’s Budget and issue updated printouts based on any final recommendations made by the Education or Appropriations Committee within ten days after such recommendations are released. (Adopted 2007)
- 4.2 **Affordable Health Insurance Through Competition** – The Maine School Boards Association supports all necessary legislative and administrative action that would enable school districts to have the ability to: (1) pursue all health insurance options existing in the marketplace; (2) conduct the purchase of health insurance through a competitive bid process; and/or (3) join the Maine state employee group health insurance plan. The MSBA believes that having all of these options is necessary to bring down the cost of health insurance for teachers, school employees, and school districts. In addition, the MSBA supports a requirement that any health insurer that is providing (or has provided) health insurance to teachers, school employees, and/or school districts, share with all other health insurers such information as may be reasonably necessary (including but not limited to utilization data) to enable such other insurers to be able to bid and/or offer health insurance to school districts and its employees. (Adopted 2010)
- 4.3 **Student Visas for Public Schools** – It is the position of the Maine School Boards Association that the present federal system, INA Section 214 (m) (1) (A) (B) (i), that allows 4-year visas in private schools but only a 1-year visa in public schools is discriminatory and inequitable. Furthermore, the current practice adversely impacts a public school’s ability to raise additional revenue to lower local taxes. MSBA requests an immediate change in this unfair system, thus permitting all eligible international students to acquire 4-year visas. (Adopted 2010)
- 4.4 **Charter School Law Implementation** – The Maine School Boards Association believes the law passed in 2011 to allow charter schools in Maine lacks clarity in several critical areas and needs to be amended through legislation or rule-making. Specifically, the MSBA urges the state to:
- Require the State Charter School Commission to go through the major and substantive rule-making process for adoption of all the rules guiding its operation. These should include, but are not limited to the rules determining what criteria it will use to evaluate applications; the academic, operational and financial performance measures and expectations it will include in charter contracts; its renewal criteria; and what constitutes an educational need by which the need for a charter school in a given area will be determined.
 - Stipulate that authorizers have to submit annual reports on the charter schools under their purview to the State Board of Education and the Legislature’s Education Committee to assure there is transparency and public review of the reports. Current law only requires the reports to go to the Commissioner of Education.

- Strengthen the required audit language to include: A) Accountability of all revenues and expenditures; B) A determination of whether or not proper budget controls are in place; C) A determination of whether or not the annual financial data submitted to the department is correct; and, D) An audit of all federal programs in accordance with applicable federal law.
- Spell out the responsibilities a charter school authorized by the State Charter School Commission has in regard to students with special needs and in providing transportation services to students. (Adopted 2011)

4.5 **Social Security: Repeal of Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision** – The Maine School Boards Association urges Congress to repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset to the Social Security Act to ensure that a quality pool of teacher candidates are available to be hired so as to meet the needs of students. (Adopted 2022)

4.6 **Shifting Retirement Costs** – The Maine School Boards Association remains opposed to any legislation that shifts additional costs of retirement benefits from the state to the local school district, and by extension local property taxpayers.

MSBA is concerned about two possible cost-shifting scenarios.

One involves shifting onto local districts the unfunded liability portion of retirement costs for those enrolled in the state's teacher retirement plan. We see this scenario as possible given the cost-shift that was enacted in 2013, where legislation made school administrative units responsible for paying normal retirement costs. The obligation to pay off the unfunded liability – estimated at \$142 million in 2013 – is and should remain with the state.

The second scenario involves the proposed creation of a new state retirement plan that would be a supplement to Social Security. Legislation has been drafted to do just that, but was not introduced in 2013. MSBA opposes any move to ask school districts to pick up the employer share of Social Security costs if this legislation is introduced in the future. (Adopted 2011 – Amended 2013)

4.7 **Professional Development** – In view of the ever-increasing expectations of all educators, but particularly teachers and principals, the Maine School Boards Association urges the Maine Department of Education, in consultation with the major education organizations, colleges and universities, and other groups and individuals as appropriate, to develop a plan of state financial assistance to support the professional development of our teachers and principals on a local, regional/state basis.

MSBA regards such an investment in professional development as critical to our students being given the opportunity to meet the expectations that we have developed for them. (Adopted 2012)

4.8 **Local Control of Student Transfers** – The Maine School Boards Association would like to reconfirm our position that a student transfer should be a local decision made by the two superintendents involved in a request. We see three steps in this process to pass such legislation.

- There should be a legislative review that examines the current criteria used by the Department of Education and the State Board of Education to make their decision in an appeal of a local decision.

- A commission should be created composed of stakeholders to review that information and develop criteria that would then be subject to substantive rulemaking that would be used to guide superintendents in their decision-making.
- If both superintendents agree on a transfer request, it should be enshrined in statute that their decision is binding and should only be appealed within the scope of bullets one and two. (Adopted 2014) (Revised 2016)

- 4.9 **Teacher Retirement Costs** – The Maine School Boards Association strongly reiterates its opposition to rising teacher retirement costs that were shifted onto school districts by the state in 2013 – costs which continue to grow. Those costs went from \$30 million a year in fiscal year 2015 to \$50 million in 2020. While the Maine Public Employees Retirement System has become more transparent in what drives these costs, they are an increasing burden on local property taxpayers. We urge the Legislature to consider reinstating a state share that reduces the statewide local liability. (Adopted 2015) (Revised 2016, 2020)
- 4.10 **Continuation of Maine Learning Technology Initiative (MLTI)** – The Maine School Boards Association reaffirms its support for the Maine Learning Technology Initiative (MLTI) that provides computers to seventh- and eighth-graders and teachers, and facilitates the purchase of them by school districts for other grades, including the state’s high schools. Funding for MLTI must be continued as more options are explored for using computers as teaching tools and relevant data on impacting student learning is documented. (Adopted 2016)
- 4.11 **Technology in the Classroom** – The Maine School Boards Association reaffirms its support of technology in schools and asks the Legislature to pass legislation to provide broadband internet connections to all parts of the state. A state plan also is needed for the future of technology in schools that takes into account the dynamic nature of the computer industry and addresses how best to use technology to enhance teaching and learning. (Adopted 2017)
- 4.12 **Funding to Support Rebuilding Infrastructure of Local Schools** – The Maine School Boards Association supports action by the Legislature that would provide \$30 million from the state’s Rainy Day fund to begin the process of rebuilding the infrastructure of our local public schools. This money would support small maintenance and construction projects with a fund separate from the major construction fund. Funding for small projects has been cut in recent years and it is estimated there are \$1 billion in deferred maintenance and facility improvements in Maine schools – a situation that will continue to affect the quality of education if not addressed. (Adopted 2018)
- 4.13 **Development of Distance-Learning Plan** – The coronavirus pandemic upended classroom instruction in school districts and revealed both positives and shortcomings in our ability to do distance learning. What was implemented by necessity should now be improved by design. Distance learning should not just be the fallback in a crisis, but rather used to provide equitable learning opportunities to all Maine students regardless of their location. The Maine School Boards Association calls for a plan that addresses professional development for teachers; assessment of devices; high-quality connectivity in all parts of the state; development of online curriculum appropriate to age groups; and, intentional use of online learning to enhance curriculum and expand learning opportunities for all students. Funding for online learning should be part of the school funding formula. MSBA will actively participate in the development and implementation of such a plan. (Adopted 2020)

- 4.14 **Building Stronger Family Support for Education** – The Maine School Boards Association believes greater involvement by parents or guardians in their child’s education is essential to assure better outcomes for students. Parents or guardians who are not engaged in their child’s early learning at home are less likely to be engaged when their child goes to school. Outreach to and support of those who care for children in the home are essential first steps in creating a successful partnership between caregivers and schools. The ultimate goal is to identify the needs of both adults and children in the household and connect them to appropriate services and learning opportunities. (Adopted 2020)
- 4.15 **School Funding** – The legislature and governor need to not only fund 55% of EPS but ensure that EPS increases in pace with inflation. And they need to restore the real dollar funding lost in recent years when EPS has fallen badly behind inflation (Adopted 2024)

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