

**Maine School Boards Association  
49 Community Drive  
Augusta, Maine 04330**

**Actions of the MSBA Delegate Assembly  
October 23, 2021**

**I. MSBA Elections:**

- A. President-Elect: Peggy Lembo-Splaine, Region V, Boothbay/Boothbay Harbor CSD
- B. Vice President: Jane Osborne, Region IV, Deer Isle/Stonington CSD
- C. Region III Director: James Bohanon, Baileyville, AOS 90
- D. Region VIII Director: Sandra Devaney, Palermo, RSU 12
- E. At-Large Director: Greg Buccina, Rumford, RSU 10

**II. Adopted Resolution Deletions, Revisions and Additions**

**A. DELETED**

- 1. ~~**3.A.2. Regional Service Centers**~~—The Maine School Boards Association (MSBA) has serious concerns about the legislation passed by the 128<sup>th</sup> Legislature regarding Chapter 123 and the Development of Regional Service Centers. MSBA urges the legislature and the governor to review the impact on Maine schools before implementation begins. We urge the legislature to delay the implementation by at least one year in order to simplify the implementation process and to provide a mechanism for withdrawal if the projected savings are not realized. Furthermore, MSBA requests a review of the penalties assessed for non-participation with participation consideration given for existing regional efforts, including municipal and school district programs, and the present level of school district efficiencies. (Adopted 1995—Amended 1998, 2003, 2005, 2017)
- 2. ~~**2.A.2.g. Teacher/Student Absenteeism**~~—The Maine School Boards Association encourages local school boards to examine, in detail, the rates of absenteeism among teachers and students in order to enable them to consider the implications that findings may have for board policy. (Adopted 1991—Amended 1999)
- 3. ~~**2.A.7.a. Child Safety**~~—The Maine School Boards Association encourages local boards to consider effective means of parent/guardian school communications regarding absent students to help ensure the safety of absentee students. (Adopted 1985—Amended 1999, 2008)
- 4. ~~**2.B.1.i. Alternative Programs**~~—The Maine School Boards Association urges local boards to develop alternative programs that motivate each student to realize their potential. (Adopted 1988—Amended 1999, 2020)
- 5. ~~**2.B.3.a. Improving Instruction Through Administrative Supervision and Evaluation**~~—The Maine School Boards Association urges local school boards to recognize the importance of formal administrative supervision and evaluation to the improvement of the instructional program by requiring, through policy, a planned and systematic program tied to educational outcomes. Minimum standards for the number and frequency of formal supervisory experiences, observations, and evaluative summaries should exist. Variations in such standards should recognize the crucial need

for closer support and performance review during the probationary status of a teacher or administrator, while requiring other assessment criteria which recognize valued service and experience, and expectations related to trust, leadership and exemplary performance. Supervision and evaluation policies are not negotiable in collective bargaining. (Adopted 1993—Amended 1999)

~~6. **2.B.3.d. (previous version) Teacher Evaluation and Compensation**~~

~~The Maine School Boards Association urges local school boards to develop comprehensive teacher evaluation policies that are designed to measure and improve the effectiveness of instruction on a continuous basis and to consider compensation that will recognize and reward meritorious teaching performance. While the adoption of such policies is the responsibility of local boards, their development should recognize the need for constructive input from teachers, in order to help establish the firm basis of mutual understanding and respect that is essential to a productive teacher evaluation program. The evaluation procedure should address all aspects of teaching performance and recognize that the fulfillment of student needs is of primary importance. (Adopted 1979—Amended 1983, 1999)~~

~~7. **3.B.5.d. Performance Standards for Teachers**~~

~~The MSBA encourages the State Board of Education to consider the feasibility of establishing performance standards for teachers. Among the questions to be considered are: Should standards be established at all? Should standards be established by the state or local school units? How can performance be assessed to determine whether or not standards are met? (Adopted 1991)~~

~~8. **3.B.5.a. Binding Interest Arbitration/Right to Strike**~~

~~We strongly oppose changing the teacher negotiations law to include binding arbitration on salaries, pensions and insurance or the right to strike. (Adopted 1977—Amended 1982 and 1983)~~

**B. ADOPTED CHANGES - 2021**

**1. 2.A.4.g. School Board Training**

The Maine School Boards Association (MSBA) 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. 2.B.1.c. – Curriculum Policy**

School boards are legally responsible for adopting policies with respect to curriculum. Therefore, the Maine School Boards Association (MSBA) 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)

**3. 3.B.3.e. – 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)

**4. 3.A.3. – Administrator Shortage**

The Maine School Boards Association (MSBA) 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)

**5. 2.A.2.g. Student Absenteeism**

The Maine School Boards Association (MSBA) 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)

**6. 2.B.1.i. 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)

#### **7. 2.B.3.d. Teacher Evaluation**

The Maine School Boards Association urges local school boards to develop a comprehensive systematic teacher evaluation policy designed to measure and improve the effectiveness of instruction on a continuous basis. Feedback is critical for all teachers regardless of where they are in their career. Evaluation systems need to be based on high performance standards and supported by ongoing professional development and mentorship. The process should address all aspects of teaching performance and recognize the fulfillment of student needs and achievement of educational outcomes are of primary importance. (Adopted 1979 - Amended 1983, 1999, 2021)

### **C. NEW/REVISED – ADOPTED 2021**

#### **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)

#### **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)

#### **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)

#### **Dropout Prevention**

The Maine School Boards Association (MSBA) 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)