

MAINE PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION



50 Industrial Drive
Augusta, Maine 04330
(207) 622-0217

Fax: (207) 622-1513
Email: mpa@mpa.cc

Website:
<http://www.mpa.cc>

Matthew Gilbert
Mountain Valley
High School
President

Matthew Haney
Mount Desert Island
Regional High School
President-elect

Richard A. Durost
Executive Director

Michael R. Burnham
Assistant Director

Holly D. Couturier
Assistant Director

Michael G. Bisson
Assistant Director

MPA is an Equal
Opportunity Organization

The Honorable Susan Collins
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

March 7, 2019

Dear Senator Collins:

The Maine Principals' Association (MPA) would like to express our strong support for the **Preparing and Retaining Education Professionals (PREP) Act** and urge you to become an original cosponsor of the legislation. MPA serves as Maine's primary organization for the training and supporting school leaders. Our vision is that Maine students deserve great schools, and great schools deserve great leaders.

Our nation's schools are currently facing drastic teacher and principal shortages that are leading to increased class sizes and an inability for students to learn at their full potential. This is especially true in rural areas where positions often go unfilled for prolonged periods of time. The PREP Act, S.3308 in the 115th Congress, would help address these educator shortages while also increasing the quality of teacher and leader training and preparation programs to ensure students receive high-quality instruction. The bill also places a particular focus on serving schools in rural areas to assist them in dealing with the unique challenges they face. Specifically, this bill would:

- Expand the definition of high need districts to include those experiencing teacher shortages in rural communities and in areas such as special education, English language, science, technology, engineering, math, and CTE, and the definition of high needs schools to those identified under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) for additional support and improvement;
- Support strong partnerships between school districts and institutions of higher education to ensure that programs of teacher and leader preparation are designed to meet the needs of K-12 students;
- Prioritize high-quality residency programs that research shows result in better prepared teachers and leaders who are more likely to stay in the profession, and Grow Your Own Programs to address subject or geographic areas of teacher or leader shortages.

MPA is committed to doing everything possible to provide Maine students with excellent schools. The PREP Act is an important bill that addresses many of the issues currently impacting Maine school districts and students. MPA urges your office to cosponsor the PREP Act once it is reintroduced by Senator Tim Kaine in the 116th Congress.

Sincerely,

Richard Durost
Executive Director