20 June 2017

The 128th Legislature of the State of Maine
State House
Augusta, ME

Dear Honorable Members of the 128th Legislature:


I do not agree that measures of teacher effectiveness do not need to include student growth. While other measures of teacher effectiveness are certainly important, whether students grew and learned seems fundamental.

During the 127th Legislature, the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee made a firm commitment not to change the rules in the middle of the game. This bill does that. It seems that this bill would require every district in the state to revisit and revise their teacher evaluation plans, many of which are just ending their pilot phase.

This bill requires new rulemaking—without providing funding to the Department to write those rules—and it will require districts to collect data on student growth. This not only triggers privacy concerns, but it also promotes a system for collecting inconsistent measures across school districts that cannot be compared to determine whether an individual teacher, school or district is performing effectively.

The fact that this bill does nothing to alleviate administrative burden (and may actually increase administrative time and expense) only adds insult to injury.

In sum, this bill raises questions about the legislature’s commitment to ensuring that every Maine student has access to a high quality educator. For these reasons, I return LD 633 to you unsigned and vetoed. I urge you to sustain it.

Sincerely,

Paul R. LePage
Governor