



Maine School Superintendents Association

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June 30, 2016

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The Honorable Gov. Paul LePage
Office of the Governor
1 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0001

RE: Appointment of a permanent Commissioner of Education

Dear Governor LePage,

We are writing to express our concern regarding the lack of clarity surrounding leadership at the Department of Education. As school leaders, we depend on the department in our day-to-day operations and look to it for guidance on critical issues from statewide assessments to implementation of the new federal Every Student Succeeds Act.

Our concern stems not only from the lack of stability in the commissioner's office in recent years, but the disruption it causes among DOE staff, whom we rely on for information and guidance.

School districts and the DOE must work together when it comes to required data reporting; compliance with state and federal rules; distribution of General Purpose Aid; student transfer requests; compliance with special education law; Medicaid reimbursement; and so much more.

The department also has an important role to play in giving ongoing support in areas critical to our students. Many of those areas were touched upon at the recent Commissioner's Conference, including how to help schools improve their academic performance, implementation of project-based learning, and the undeniable link between poverty and student outcomes. Now we need action.

ELAINE M. TOMASZEWSKI
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Honorable Gov. Paul LePage

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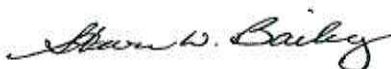
We urge you to exercise your leadership and outline the process and qualifications you envision for finally naming a permanent commissioner. The uncertainty around that position has diminished its stature and also created instability among DOE staff. It has been an ongoing problem since the end of 2014, and our concern is it will continue for the remaining two-and-half years of your second term.

School administrators, and their boards, need a well-run DOE to effectively run their schools and provide the best education possible for our students. We believe restoring that relationship is essential.

Sincerely,



Susan Pratt
MSSA President



Steven Bailey
MSSA President-Elect

cc: Acting Deputy Commissioner William Beardsley
Aaron Chadbourne, senior policy advisor