



129th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2019

Legislative Document

No. 589

H.P. 433

House of Representatives, February 5, 2019

**Resolve, Directing the State Board of Education To Adopt Rules
Prohibiting Teachers in Public Schools from Engaging in Political,
Ideological or Religious Advocacy in the Classroom**

Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative LOCKMAN of Bradley.
Cosponsored by Senator GUERIN of Penobscot and
Representatives: ARATA of New Gloucester, BRADSTREET of Vassalboro, CAMPBELL of
Orrington, O'CONNOR of Berwick, PERKINS of Oakland.

1 **Preamble. Whereas,** the purpose of public education in America is to produce
2 knowledgeable and competent adults able to participate as informed citizens in the
3 democratic process; and

4 **Whereas,** education in a democracy is best served by teaching students how to
5 think, not telling them what to think; and

6 **Whereas,** our country is divided over many issues affecting its citizens; and

7 **Whereas,** it has been established through surveys that a majority of kindergarten to
8 grade 12 teachers discuss controversial issues in their classrooms; and

9 **Whereas,** it has been established that some teacher training institutions, teacher
10 licensing agencies, state education departments and professional teacher organizations
11 have condoned and even encouraged this behavior under the guise of "teaching for social
12 justice" and other sectarian doctrines; and

13 **Whereas,** time spent on political or ideological indoctrination takes time away from
14 instruction in the academic subjects taught by public educational institutions including
15 the foundational subjects of mathematics, science, English, history and civics and
16 prevents students from receiving the best possible public education as funded by the
17 taxpayers of the State; and

18 **Whereas,** parents and taxpayers have a right to expect that taxpayer resources will
19 be spent on education, not political or ideological indoctrination; now, therefore, be it

20 **Sec. 1. State Board of Education to adopt rules prohibiting teachers in**
21 **public schools from engaging in political, ideological or religious advocacy in**
22 **the classroom. Resolved:** That the State Board of Education shall adopt rules
23 prohibiting teachers in public schools from engaging in political, ideological or religious
24 advocacy in the classroom. Rules adopted under this resolve must be clear and provide
25 enforcement mechanisms for appropriate and professional ethical behavior by teachers
26 licensed in the State in tax-supported schools to prohibit teachers using the classroom to
27 engage in political, ideological or religious advocacy.

28 **Sec. 2. Rules criteria. Resolved:** That the rules required by this resolve must
29 prohibit a teacher in a public school during class time or while otherwise operating within
30 the scope of employment as a teacher from doing the following:

31 1. Endorsing, supporting or opposing any candidate or nominee for public office or
32 any elected or appointed official regardless of whether the official is a member of the
33 local, state or federal government;

34 2. Endorsing, supporting or opposing any pending, proposed or enacted legislation or
35 regulation regardless of whether the legislation or regulation is pending or proposed or
36 has been enacted at the local, state or federal level;

1 germane to the topic of the course being taught, with penalties for violations up to and
2 including termination of the teacher. This resolve requires the State Board of Education to
3 provide written notice of the rules to all affected teachers, parents and students and for
4 teachers to receive annually at least 3 hours of continuing teacher education to instruct the
5 teachers on the rules. Finally, this resolve requests professional teacher organizations and
6 unions to voluntarily adopt an educator's code of ethics and professional responsibility
7 that incorporates the rules and that specifically prohibits teachers in kindergarten to grade
8 12 instruction from using the classroom for political indoctrination.