



## Maine Education Association

Grace Leavitt President | Jesse Hargrove Vice President | Beth French Treasurer  
Rebecca Cole NEA Director | Rachelle Bristol Executive Director

### Testimony

#### Neither For Nor Against

#### LD 1315: An Act to Require Instruction in Schools on Substance Abuse Prevention and Administration of Naloxone Hydrochloride

John Kosinski, Government Relations Director, Maine Education Association

Before the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee

April 11, 2023

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan and other esteemed members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee,

My name is John Kosinski (he/him) and I am proud to serve as the Director of Government Relations for the Maine Education Association (MEA). The MEA represents 24,000 educators in the state of Maine, including teachers and other professionals in nearly every public school in the state and faculty and other professional staff in the University of Maine and Community College Systems.

I submit this testimony on behalf of the MEA neither for nor against LD 1315, *An Act to Require Instruction in Schools on Substance Abuse Prevention and Administration of Naloxone Hydrochloride*.

The MEA is fully aware of the opioid crisis in our state. We support efforts for the state to address the scourge of opioid addiction through treatment, education, and the distribution of Narcan to address the most dire of situations. Public schools have seen the opioid crisis up close. Public schools educate the children of those struggling with substance abuse. We fully support substance abuse prevention education and many schools are already engaged in various programs to educate students about the dangers of substance abuse. In fact, substance abuse is often central to the health and physical education curriculum in most if not all schools.

However, as we have testified already this session, we are deeply concerned about the number of bills this session proposing mandates on the school day and various elements of curriculum. We appreciate the Committee has settled on a study of the school day instead of passing various bills that impact the schedules of schools. But there are several other bills before this Committee or coming before this Committee to mandate various programs and courses in our prek-12 schools. Each proposal on its own, including this one, may have merit. In fact, we agree with the intent of LD 1315. But we are deeply concerned about the various mandates when evaluated in their totality. We hope the Committee will hold all mandates to the end of the Committee schedule, so you can see the various curriculum or program mandates together, and make decisions about the priorities worth moving forward. In the unlikely scenario that all or even most of the mandates before this Committee pass, the impact on schools would be crushing. Each new proposed mandate, if passed, would have a ripple effect in some or all schools. The impacts can only be fully understood when viewed together.

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## **Maine Education Association**

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Thank you for your time and your service to the people of Maine.

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