

**MAINE**

**PRINCIPALS'  
ASSOCIATION**



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**TO: Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs**  
**FROM: Maine Principals' Association Legislative Committee**  
**RE: In Opposition of LD 322: An Act to Promote Student Attendance in Schools by Requiring the Commissioner of Education to Implement School Attendance Best Practices**  
**DATE: March 19, 2025**

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. My name is Dr. Holly Blair, and I am the Executive Director of the Maine Principals' Association – Professional Division. The MPA represents more than 700 PreK-12 principals and assistant principals, CTE Directors and Assistant Directors, and Athletic Directors of public and private schools in Maine.

The MPA Legislative Committee is in opposition to LD 322. Every educator wants to increase attendance for all of their students; however, we do not believe that this bill is not going to increase attendance or decrease truancy. Currently, there is a best practice identified in the truancy law – it requires schools to have a team to put plans in place for those students who are absent or truant. Those schools who have a team in place and are following the protocols that they created have demonstrated a decrease in the about of days that students are absent.

We argue that by taking parents out of providing transportation, which is a violation of the truancy law, more students will not be coming to school because the transportation would then become the responsibility of the individual schools. Schools do not have the time, personnel, or the ability to make special runs to pick these students up on a regular basis.

We are also concerned that truancy and chronic absenteeism could be a result of abuse and neglect. LD 322 removes this as a possibility and therefore removes another data point that schools could use when accurately reporting a student as absent or truant.

For these reasons, the MPA urges the Committee to Oppose 322.