



To: Maine Legislature Committee on Education & Cultural Affairs

Date: April 12, 2025

Re: LD 828 An Act to Allow Chiropractors to Act as School Health Advisors

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and distinguished members of the Committee on Education & Cultural Affairs. My name is Robert Reed, I am the Executive Director of the Maine Chiropractic Association (MCA) testifying on behalf of my employer. The MCA represents over two hundred Chiropractic Doctors, their staff and most importantly, the patients they serve. We present today offering additional information to assist in your decision-making process.

As stated in the testimony of Dr. Zev Myerowitz, Jr & Dr. Aaron MacArthur, our goal was to be able to provide school sports physicals and return to play permissions for the school athlete here in Maine. To do so, we found the only legislation addressing the subject and requested changes to meet our request. The School Health Advisor rules are spelled out in more detail and defined under Title 20-A and are printed at the end of this letter.

You will note that Section 2 “Other functions” indicates a school health advisor may examine students for participation in physical activity and athletic activities. We find this to be the only place in Maine statute that designates who can provide a school physical at this time. Chiropractic doctors are trained to do these physicals and in fact do them almost daily for new and existing patients appearing for care and are allowed to do them for other entities and we find any obstruction by other parties to be discriminatory. Our doctor’s participation would be limited to existing patients already seen and with known conditions outside the treatment they receive from the Chiropractor.

As to qualifications, and to correct misinformation suggested at the committee public hearing, all Chiropractic Doctorate students are required to have undergraduate education that is the same or very similar to graduate school requirements of MD’s and DO’s, including coursework including biology, physics, chemistry, anatomy, and physiology. As a doctoral student they take coursework during the first year that includes courses in biochemistry, anatomy, physiology,

histology, embryology, radiology, cell physiology, microbiology, and in their second year – a course in comprehensive physical examinations. By their third year they have also completed or are taking coursework that includes pharmacology and psychology. I am including a comparison of medical doctors and chiropractic doctors for your review which clearly shows that a chiropractic doctor does obtain training necessary to provide school physicals. Chiropractors' education also focuses more on musculoskeletal conditions and their treatment making a chiropractic doctor an authority on back to sports certification after sports related injuries.

Additionally, the Council on Chiropractic Education is recognized by the United States Department of Education as the accrediting body for those chiropractic schools in the United States. The US Department of Education considers Chiropractic to be a "first professional degree" which is the same designation given to a Doctor of Medicine (MD) or Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO).

Our doctors already provide physical examinations before treating any patient and for anyone needing a physical for workplace requirements including United States Department of Transportation (DOT) physicals to ensure workplace health and safety. Our doctors also serve on sports teams at the collegiate and professional level, being recognized for their expertise in treating and approving injured athletes for re-entry into their sport.

Our doctors are required to participate in Continuing Education to maintain their license and the MCA has provided the Chiropractic Licensing Board with suggestions for expanding the training even further. That training could include refreshers on sports, back to playing physical, concussions or other relevant training.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert Reed, Executive Director

Maine Chiropractic Association

CURRENT MAINE LAW

402-A. School health advisor

Each school board shall appoint one or more physicians or family or pediatric nurse practitioners to act as school health advisor. [PL 2013, c. 78, §1 (AMD).]

1. Duties. The school health advisor shall advise the administrative unit on school health issues, policies and practices and may also perform any other health-related functions assigned by the board.

[PL 2013, c. 78, §1 (AMD).]

2. Other functions. A school health advisor may perform other medical and health-related duties assigned by the school board, which may include all or some of the following:

A. Examine and diagnose students referred by teachers and other school employees to protect against the outbreak of contagious diseases in the schools; [PL 1985, c. 258, §2 (NEW).]

B. Examine students for participation in physical education and athletic activities; [PL 1985, c. 258, §2 (NEW).]

C. Advise and serve as medical consultant to the school nurse; or [PL 1985, c. 258, §2 (NEW).]

D. Examine school employees and property if the school health advisor believes it is necessary to protect the health of students. [PL 2013, c. 78, §1 (AMD).]

[PL 2013, c. 78, §1 (AMD).]

3. Prohibition. A school health advisor may not treat any student examined under this subchapter unless the school health advisor is also the student's personal health care provider. A school health advisor that advises a school board pursuant to [subsection 1](#) or performs other functions under [subsection 2](#) may not act outside the scope of practice of the physician or nurse practitioner who functions as a school health advisor as established by law or rule of the applicable licensing board.

[PL 2013, c. 78, §1 (AMD).]

4. Appointment. Appointment is on a yearly basis.

Comparison of Overall Curriculum Structure

Characteristics	Chiropractic Schools		Medical Schools	
	Average	Percentage	Average	Percentage
Total Contact Hours	4826	100	4667	100
Basic Sciences hours	1420	29	1200	26
Clinical Sciences hours	3406	71	3467	76
Chiropractic Sciences hours	1975	41	N/A	N/A
Clerkship	1405	29	3467	76

Doctors of chiropractic receive more training in anatomy and physiology while physicians received more training in public health. Chiropractic colleges focus on chiropractic principles, diagnosis, orthopedics, physiologic therapeutics and nutrition. Three areas—manipulative/adjustive technique/spinal analysis, physical/clinical laboratory diagnosis and diagnosis imaging—account for more than half of the education in clinical sciences. During their internship, doctors of chiropractic complete two years of hands-on clinical experience focusing on manipulation/adjustment as the primary treatment procedure. Studies show that chiropractic students receive more training than their medical counterparts in the following areas: anatomy, physiology, bacteriology, diagnosis, X-ray and orthopedics. They also show that chiropractic institutions actually devote more time to the basic and clinical sciences than do medical schools.

Chiropractic vs. Medical

Chiropractic	Subject	Medical
540	Anatomy-Physiology	508
240	Physiology	326
360	Pathology-Geriatrics-Pediatrics	401
165	Chemistry	325
120	Microbiology	114
630	Diagnosis, Dermatology, Ears, Eyes, Nose, Throat	324
320	Neurology	112
360	Radiology	148
60	Psychology-Psychiatry	144
60	Obstetrics-Gynecology	148
210	Orthopedics	156
3065	Total	2706

Sources: "Chiropractic Education: A Comparison to Medical Education," MAC Journal (April 2009); Coulter, Ian, "A Comparative Study of Chiropractic and Medical Education," *Alternative Therapies* (September 1998), Vol. 4, No. 5; Parker Foundation, "How Well Educated is Your Chiropractor?"

CLEVELAND CHIROPRACTIC COLLEGE

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