

GORHAM SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

Office of the Superintendent

75 SOUTH STREET, SUITE #2, GORHAM, MAINE 04038

Hollis S. Cobb
Business Manager
(207) 222-1000
FAX 839-5003

Heather J. Perry, PhD
Superintendent of Schools
(207) 222-1012
FAX 839-8885

Quinton S. Donahue, PhD
Assistant Superintendent
(207) 222-1025
FAX 839-8885

April 23, 2025

Senator Joseph Rafferty, Chair
Representative Kelly Murphy, Chair
Joint Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Re: Testimony in Support of LD 1248

Dear Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and Honorable Members of the Committee,

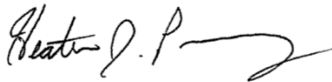
On behalf of the Gorham School Department, I write in strong support of LD 1248, which proposes thoughtful, necessary changes to Maine's Restraint and Seclusion law.

Our schools are facing a rising number of student behavior challenges that put the safety of students and staff at risk. Under the current law, our educators are often left in situations where they feel unable to intervene appropriately until a situation has escalated to a crisis level. LD 1248 would make important clarifications—particularly by allowing temporary physical contact (such as a gentle hold of the hand or shoulder) to safely guide students away from harm, and by adjusting the standard for intervention from “serious physical injury” to simply “injury.”

These changes are not about increasing restraint—they are about giving staff the practical tools they need to keep all students safe. In Gorham, we always prioritize using the least restrictive approaches. But when those fail, it is essential that educators have the legal clarity and support to act in the moment to protect both the student in crisis and those around them.

We respectfully urge your support of LD 1248. This bill strikes the right balance—preserving the rights and dignity of students while ensuring safe learning environments for everyone.

Sincerely,



Superintendent of Schools
Gorham School Department