

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 1461: An Act to Prohibit School Boards from Implementing or Enforcing Mask Mandates
DATE: April 30, 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 Maine Principals' Association Legislative Committee is in opposition to LD 1461.

While the intention behind this bill may be to limit the use of mask mandates in schools, LD 1461 would, in effect, create a prohibition that undermines local control and places school boards in direct conflict with potential future state or federal public health requirements.

Maine is a local control state. Local school boards—elected by their communities—have long held the authority to make decisions that best serve the health and safety needs of their students and staff. Stripping them of the ability to respond to evolving health circumstances not only erodes that local authority, but also removes a critical tool that may be necessary in the event of future public health emergencies.

Additionally, if the State of Maine were to enact a mask mandate in response to a future crisis, LD 1461 would effectively place school boards in a legal and ethical dilemma: either violate state law or violate this proposed statute. This would create confusion, unnecessary conflict, and potential liability for schools across the state.

The future is uncertain. Schools must retain the flexibility to respond to local and statewide health emergencies as they arise. For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to vote Ought Not to Pass on LD 1461.

Please note that this testimony was submitted based off of the original bill and not additional amendments that may be presented.