

# Testimony in Support of LD 1097 - An Act to Provide De-escalation and Behavior Intervention Training for School Personnel

Submitted by: David Motel  
Maine State Parent Ambassador  
Waterville, ME resident & parent of a 7-year-old student

Dear Members of the Committee,

As a parent raising a child in Maine's schools and as a Maine State Parent Ambassador, I'm writing to express my wholehearted support for LD 1097. This legislation would provide critical training to help school staff handle behavioral challenges with skill and compassion - something I've seen make all the difference in my own family's life and in communities across our state.

My sister-in-law's difficult journey with her son in Albion illustrates why this bill is so necessary. My nephew, a bright but sensitive kid in their local school system, spent years caught in a cycle of classroom removals and restraints when he became overwhelmed. Rather than receiving support, he was repeatedly isolated - missing learning time and falling behind socially. Each exclusion made the next outburst more likely, creating a heartbreaking downward spiral.

Only through my sister-in-law's relentless advocacy was she finally able to secure proper behavioral support. With trained staff who understood de-escalation techniques, my nephew went from being seen as a "problem student" to a thriving learner. But many children across Maine never get that chance because their families can't wage the same exhausting advocacy battle.

LD 1097 matters because it would:

- Prevent trauma caused by restraint and isolation
- Keep more students engaged in learning
- Give educators practical tools for challenging situations
- Create schools where all children feel understood

As both a Waterville parent and Maine State Parent Ambassador, I've seen how transformative these approaches can be. My son's first-grade experience has shown me the difference skilled educators can make. This bill will help ensure every Maine child has access to that same level of support.

I urge you to vote "Ought to Pass" on LD 1097. Our educators want these tools, our children need these protections, and our communities will benefit from these positive changes.

Sincerely,  
David Motel  
Maine State Parent Ambassador  
Waterville, ME resident

dmotel87@gmail.com

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter facing Maine families. As both a parent and Parent Ambassador, I'm happy to provide any additional perspective that would be helpful to the committee.