

As a former teacher with forty years of classroom experience, I feel strongly that students and their families need to feel comfortable and safe when entering, leaving and being at school. How else can children learn?

It's important to note that school personnel are responsible for students once they are dropped off at school until they leave at the end of the day. There's a list of authorized adults given by students' guardians to remove them from staff's responsibility. No one else can take students from school! I remember frantically looking through a child's records to verify that a safe adult was picking up a student. I would NEVER give a child to an unauthorized person!

Students are also protected by school staff when on the playground. "Outside people" aren't permitted on any of the grounds when school is in session. How can staff and students feel safe when ICE could come onto school grounds and into the buildings without authorization? When I had playground duty, and I saw an adult who wasn't staff (with a badge to show they are allowed to be present), I would ask them to go to the Maine Office to sign in. They wouldn't often like to do that, but that's the process to keep students safe. We were constantly watching.

Please understand that schools are sanctuaries for some students: places to learn! It could be the one place where they can get a decent meal, interact with trusted adults, and learn.

LD 2106 protects the rights and safety of vulnerable Maine residents, including children and workers at public schools, healthcare facilities, daycares, and libraries, and serves key public policy interests, including making sure all Maine children receive an education and public health information is freely shared. Please pass this important legislation.

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