

# MAINE PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION



50 Industrial Drive  
Augusta, Maine 04330  
(207) 622-0217

Email: [mpa@mpa.cc](mailto:mpa@mpa.cc)

Websites:  
<https://mpaprof.org>  
<https://mpa.cc>

**Stephen Bell**  
Dexter Regional High  
School  
President

**Ben Lothrop**  
Limestone Community  
School  
President-elect

**Michael R. Burnham**  
Executive Director  
Interscholastic Division

**Holly D. Blair**  
Executive Director  
Professional Division

**Michael G. Bisson**  
Assistant Director

MPA is an Equal  
Opportunity Organization

**TO: Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs**  
**FROM: Maine Principals' Association Legislative Committee**  
**RE: Neither For Nor Against LD 2204: An Act to Allow Schools to Expel Students for Committing Sexual Assault**  
**DATE: February 26, 2026**

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 MPA Legislative Committee is neither for nor against LD 2204. We are deeply committed to ensuring that all students are safe from any type of harm. Schools must have the ability to respond decisively when student behavior threatens the safety and well-being of others. We appreciate the bill's inclusion of language allowing a principal to act when a student poses an "imminent danger of serious physical injury to the student or others." In such cases, school leaders must be empowered to make appropriate, case-by-case disciplinary decisions.

However, we have several concerns. Current law under LD 474 restricts suspension for students in grade five and below, and this proposal could create statutory conflict. Additionally, mandatory expulsion for young students may be developmentally harmful and does not reflect the nuanced realities of elementary-aged behavior. The bill's language would benefit from clarification, as terms such as "must" and "shall" may unnecessarily limit professional judgment.

For students above grade five, principals already have the authority to recommend expulsion when warranted. This legislation may create an additional mandate in a state that values local control, without providing new tools beyond what is currently available.

If the State wishes to support schools in addressing serious student misconduct, we respectfully suggest focusing on resources—mental health supports, behavioral interventions, and specialized services—so schools can respond effectively while protecting all students.

We remain committed to student safety. We simply believe this bill, as written, is not the most effective path to achieving that goal.

*Please note that this testimony was submitted based on the original version of the legislation.*