

State of Maine
Department of Education

Testimony of Laura Cyr, Ph.D., Federal and State Legislative Specialist, Maine Department of Education

In Support of: L.D. 2046

An Act to Update Certain Duties Regarding Student Health Related to Communicable and Infectious Disease

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

Sponsored by: Senator Rafferty

Date: February 5, 2026

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs:

My name is Dr. Laura Cyr; I am here today representing the Department speaking in support of L.D. 2046, An Act to Update Certain Duties Regarding Student Health Related to Communicable and Infectious Disease.

The overall purpose of this bill is to align Maine statute to the realities and current practices in the field.

Section 1 updates §6301, the “Student Health” subchapter, and changes the title to “Infectious Disease,” which better defines the content of that section of statute. It updates and provides clarification around the responsibilities and duties of school personnel and the superintendent regarding infectious disease, specifically regarding student identification and notification. The statute, as currently written, is out of date with best practice. The newer language provides more general guidance on what constitutes a potential public health threat, such as communicable and infectious diseases. It also identifies a superintendent designee, should a superintendent be unable to respond at the time of an identified public health communicable or infectious disease threat. Furthermore, changing the language from “teachers” to “school personnel” is an important detail – all staff members at a school have an important role to play in protecting student health. In developing these changes to §6301, the Maine Department of Education (DOE) consulted with the Maine Center for Disease Control.

Section 2 makes a technical change regarding epinephrine use in schools. Specifically, it replaces the term “subinjector” in relation to epinephrine delivery devices to “automated device” to reflect advancements in available medical technology. “Subinjector” is related to subcutaneous injection in the subcutaneous muscle layers, whereas “automated device” is a broader term that can also include medical administration such as a nasal spray.

Sections 3 and 4 are simple clerical changes to statutory language to reflect the addition to §6401-B described in Section 5.

Section 5 updates statutes related to the duties of Maine DOE school nurse consultants and school nurse liaisons. Currently, there is no requirement for these positions to provide guidance to the field. This change will reflect a vital component of the Maine DOE's work in amplifying best practices and providing technical assistance to the field.

Sections 6 and 7 amend §6403-A regarding school nurses. In Section 6, school nurse duties have been revised to include reference to the Scope and Standards of Practice in School Nursing, along with the addition of applicable rules adopted by the State Board of Nursing and laws under Title 32, Chapter 31. These items are the basis of guidance for school nursing in Maine. Section 7 clarifies that guidelines to the field on the provision of school health must be based on national and state standards and updated at least every 3 years. These changes align with best practices and requirements for school nurses, who must follow all laws, regulations, and best practices in education and in the nursing field.

The Department of Education is in support of L.D. 2046, An Act to Update Certain Duties Regarding Student Health Related to Communicable and Infectious Disease. I am happy to answer any questions the Committee may have, and I will be available for work sessions on this bill.