

**MAINE  
PRINCIPALS'  
ASSOCIATION**



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**TO: Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs**  
**FROM: Maine Principals' Association Legislative Committee**  
**RE: In Support of LD 261: Resolve, Directing the  
Department of Education to Study Truancy Trends in  
the State and Develop Recommendations for Increasing  
Student Attendance and Reducing Truancy**  
**DATE: February 24, 2021**

Senator Daughtry, Representative Brennan and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. My name is Dr. Holly Couturier, and I am the Executive Director of the Maine Principals' Association – Professional Division. The MPA represents more than 800 PreK-12 principals and assistant principals of public and private schools in Maine.

Truancy, as well as chronic absenteeism are a significant issues across the United States and Maine is no exception. The issue of students chronically not attending school was a problem prior to COVID and has only become worse ever since. We are aware of the problem, but we do not know a solution. Contacting parents or guardians, home visits from administrators, School Resource Officers, local police departments, letters home, contacting the Department of Health and Human Services, attending workshops to discuss the issue and so many other ways to address this growing epidemic have taken place and yet the truancy and absenteeism rates continues to climb throughout the state. The MPA is in hopes by having the Department of Education conduct a thorough study, that we may be given guidance, if not laws, that support the schools to better our current truancy and attendance policies that are consistent throughout the state. We need to find our lost students.

The MPA strongly urges the Committee to vote unanimously Ought to Pass on LD 261.