

Maureen Clancy
Cape Elizabeth

Hello, my name is Maureen Clancy and I reside at 11 Hemlock Hill Rd in Cape Elizabeth. I am writing today to voice my support for LD 474, and I truly wish this bill was extended through middle school at least. As a parent and a school district employee, I see the issue of suspension as one of concern and one of equity. I have seen data on suspension and equity and I know that suspension hurts children much more than it helps or protects safety. Schools are a place for children to learn, to grow, to find belonging. Schools are safe places by and large but schools are not equitable and not all children are thriving at school, or belong, or feel safe. Our resources should be spent on more social work, guidance and mental health support and less on police and discipline. Our focus should be on help and guidance, not punishment. Removing children from school hurts them emotionally and academically. We must find better alternatives. We must address root causes, address childhood trauma, inequitable disciplinary actions, and provide the resources for schools to support our children and address root causes of unsafe behavior. Thank you.