



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
23 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, ME 04333-0023

JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

PENDER MAKIN  
COMMISSIONER

May 4, 2021

Senator Joseph Rafferty, Co-chair  
Representative Michael Brennan, Co-chair  
Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

Dear Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and Members of the Joint Committee,

LD 1502, An Act To Clarify Safety Issues in Schools with Respect to Health-related States of Emergency (EMERGENCY) requires each school administrative unit (SAU), during a health-related state of emergency to follow emergency directives provided by the Governor and the Director of the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention within the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Each SAU must also regularly report compliance to the Maine CDC Director. The bill specifies that monthly report during the state of emergency must include 1) the number of students and staff affected; 2) cases of disease occurring within the SAU; and 3) details regarding cleaning, sanitization, segregation or any other approaches to remain in compliance with directive.

Current best practices in school emergency management necessitate that each school and district develop and utilize a collaborative planning team to ensure they are prepared to follow emergency directives and keep students and staff safe during a state of emergency. A collaborative planning team should have a wide range of membership based upon expertise, role in the school/community, and ability to constructively inform the process of making the school safe. A collaborative planning team must be continually operational, not only during a state of emergency. Last summer, the Department's Maine School Safety Center (MSSC) team facilitated a series of professional development sessions focused on emergency management planning for SAUs and their collaborative planning team members. Throughout the 2020-2021 school year, the MSSC has provided ongoing technical assistance to collaborative planning teams.

The reporting process that LD 1502 outlines may create a fiscal impact at the State and local levels. More specifically, SAUs may need to hire staff to manage a comprehensive monthly compliance reporting process. The Maine CDC may also need to hire staff to review and analyze monthly reports submitted by Maine's 219 public districts.

The Department looks forward to continued conversations around LD 1502 and will be happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:  
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonathan Shapiro".  
Jonathan Shapiro

Director, Maine School Safety Center

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