



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

JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

PENDER MAKIN  
COMMISSIONER

March 21, 2023

Senator Rafferty, Senate Chair  
Representative Brennan, House Chair  
Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and Distinguished Members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee:

LD 477, Resolve, Directing the Department of Education, Maine School Safety Center to Convene a Stakeholder Group to Develop Best Practices for Lockdown Drills and Allowing Parents to Opt Out of Lockdown Drills for Their Children, directs the Maine Department of Education to convene a workgroup to study lockdown drills implemented by school administrative units (SAUs) to develop a compilation of best practices that minimize the traumatic impact these drills may have on students and staff. The workgroup will deliver a report to the Second Regular Session of the 131<sup>st</sup> Legislature and the Department jointly with the State Board of Education will adopt rules amending Chapter 125: *Basic Approval Standards: Public Schools and School Administrative Units*, to allow parents to opt out of lockdown drills for their child.

Title 20-A, §1001(16) outlines the responsibility for SAUs to have a comprehensive health and safety emergency management plan. Rule Chapter 125 outlines the expectations for the numbers of evacuation and safety drills, however the specifics of those plans are local decisions. Lock down drills should be part of a larger school safety plan and are important for emergency preparation beyond active shooter or high threat scenarios. Currently, neither statute nor rules outline common standards or best practices for these drills.

It will be important to have appropriate experts and stakeholders as part of the workgroup. In addition to representatives from the Maine School Safety Center and the Office of Special Services and Inclusive Education, the Department recommends the following public safety professional groups be included: Maine School Resource Officer Association, Maine State Police, Maine Sheriffs Association, Department of Public Safety, State Emergency Management Services Director, State Fire Marshalls, and the Maine Criminal Justice Academy.

Convening a workgroup and producing a report requires dedicated staff time. The Department recommends a fiscal note of \$5,000.

The Department will be available to provide additional information on LD 477 and respond to any questions during the upcoming work session.

Sincerely,

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

0B40FA8916BE4BC...  
Jonathan Shapiro  
Director, Maine School Safety Center

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