

**MAINE
PRINCIPALS'
ASSOCIATION**



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*MPA is an Equal
Opportunity Organization*

TO: Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
FROM: Maine Principals' Association Legislative Committee
**RE: Neither For Nor Against LD 1861: An Act to Reduce
Chronic Student Absenteeism**
DATE: May 9, 2023

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. My name is Dr. Holly Blair, and I am the Executive Director of the Maine Principals' Association – Professional Division. The MPA represents more than 700 PreK-12 principals and assistant principals, CTE directors and assistant directors of public and private schools in Maine.

The MPA Legislative Committee is neither for nor against LD 1861. Every school district is trying to reduce chronic student absenteeism. Many, if not all schools, have a team of people who work to address student absenteeism. They have practices and policies to address this issue.

The issue is not the response of the school, it is the lack of response from DHHS, etc. This bill does not address the “what now” that schools are fighting currently.

There are local policies in place to address this bill. Unless there is an amendment to the bill that gives a response to “what now,” we cannot support the bill.