

Testimony of Cecilia Sirianni, Lyman, Sanford Outreach Worker

LD 1769: An Act Concerning Students Who Experience Educational Disruption due to Temporary or Permanent Changes Where They Live

Good afternoon Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and distinguished members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, my name is Cecilia Sirianni.

I am in favor of LD 1769: An Act Concerning Students Who Experience Educational Disruption due to Temporary or Permanent Changes Where They Live

Keeping Maine's Children Connected (KMCC) was vital in enabling communication to happen quickly and efficiently between providers, parents and schools. It allowed for a single point of contact for information sharing. It took the burden of the initial contact with school off of the family which most importantly, granted families the ability to be present and focus on the crisis at hand.

When an educational disruption occurred whether it be due to hospitalization; loss of housing; foster placement; Kin Care or involvement with the juvenile justice system, accurate information was shared to the school point of contact who then would follow up with the appropriate school support person for that student. KMCC's liaison network allowed for well informed and mindful preparation for transitioning back into school. Liaisons are key to facilitate more effective support, seamless transitions, and better outcomes for students. I also have witnessed how KMCC and the mindset helped to build stronger relationships and trust between families and schools. The partnerships led to building bridges and helping to remove stigmas that might otherwise result from those crises.

Time and time again it was extraordinarily helpful to receive information in a timely fashion to help support students and families and to permit them to be present to tend to the crisis in which they needed to attend and to allow the service providers to work together collaboratively to support families. What has happened since KMCC lost support we've gone back in time. We're all working much more in isolation and students and families' needs are not necessarily met. Reentry planning is not as effective, efficient or mindful of a student as it could be and once was.

Lastly there was a component of KMCC in which students were celebrated for overcoming adversity and experiencing success in school engagement. From this celebration came empowered youth, student leaders and strong community members.

For these reasons, I strongly encourage you to support **LD 1769: An Act Concerning Students Who Experience Educational Disruption due to Temporary or Permanent Changes Where They Live**

I am happy to further discuss our position or answer any questions.

Thank you for your time today.

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