

**Maine School Administrative District No. 75**

50 Republic Avenue

Topsham, Maine 04086

TEL (207) 729-9961 FAX (207) 725-9354

[www.link75.org](http://www.link75.org)



ROBERT J. LUCY  
Interim Superintendent

AMANDA HERSEY, Ed. D.  
Assistant Superintendent

MARK CONRAD  
Business Manager

HEIDI O'LEARY  
Director of Special Services  
(207) 729-1557

ALLEN LAMPERT  
Director of Adult and  
Community Education  
(207) 729-7323

April 6, 2021

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and Members of the Committee on Health and Human Services,

My name is Mary Booth. I am the School Health Coordinator for MSAD No. 75, and I am providing written support for **LD 979, An Act to Expand Maine's School-based Health Centers**.

Currently, there are 15 state-funded School-based Health Centers (SBHCs) in Maine. The SBHC at Mt. Ararat High School is one of these. Although the funding SBHCs receive from ME CDC covers only a portion of their operational budgets, the support is essential to leveraging other funds making these centers possible.


Approving the modest expansion outlined in LD 979, will enable more schools to partner with medical and behavioral health providers at a time when Maine adolescents need such care.

Consider the impact on school attendance when evaluating the investment LD 979 can make. Each year over 94% of students who visit our SBHC return to class, resulting in up to ~ 1,000 avoided student absences.

Consider the impact on adolescent mental health. We have seen a steady increase in the mental health needs of students in our SBHC, currently making up 59% of all visits. The cases seen within SBHCs in Maine have become very complex and would normally be referred to a specialist outside of school if SBHCs were not available. By having skilled professionals available within SBHCs (i.e. Nurse Practitioner and Licensed Social Worker), we can assess, diagnose, treat, and monitor students during the school day.

With over 100 public high schools in Maine, there are many students who can benefit from funding LD 979.

Respectfully,

  
Mary Booth, MS. RD/LD

School Health Coordinator