



**State of Maine**  
**131st Maine Senate**  
**Senate Republican Office**

**PRESS BRIEFING – PARENTS RIGHTS AND TRANSPARENCY IN EDUCATION**  
**MAY 9, 2023 – AFTER SESSION (approximately 12:30 p.m.)**  
**WELCOME CENTER/PRESS ROOM**

**What:** Issues surrounding Parents Rights and Transparency in Education

**Who:** Senators Lisa Keim and James Libby

**Introduction & Background (Sen. Keim & Sen. Libby)**

*“Schools and teachers benefit from parental involvement because involved parents develop a greater appreciation for the challenges that teachers face in the classroom. Communication also helps to dispel any mistrust or misperceptions that may exist between teachers and parents.” ~ Grace Chen, Public School Review*

**Background facts**

- A [nationwide Gallup poll](#) conducted in 2022 found that 55% of respondents are either “completely dissatisfied” or “somewhat dissatisfied” with the U.S. education system.<sup>i</sup>
- According to the National PTA and National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education, parental involvement is the [No. 1 predictor](#) of student success.<sup>ii</sup>
- Parental involvement leads to better classroom behavior.<sup>iii</sup>
- Schools and teachers benefit from parental involvement through [equal partnership](#), especially school systems that build capacity and training programs teachers/parents.<sup>iv</sup>
- Conversely, lack of school communication and parent involvement can lead to [unfortunate outcomes](#) seen nationally and here in Maine:<sup>v</sup>
  - Maine Dept. of Education whole student approach intentionally omits families/parents.
  - Statewide graduation rates fell from 87.4% in 2020 to 86.1% in 2021 and 2022.
  - Chronic absenteeism ballooned in the 2021-2022 school year to as high as 40%.
  - Maine parents report that nearly one in four children ages 12-17 experienced “anxiety problems,” with higher rates exhibited in females than males.
  - Some districts face accusations of intentionally hiding information from parents.

**Schools must communicate effectively with parents:**

- **Parents Rights in Education (LD 1800)** (Sen. Keim)
  - Bill establishes various rights of parents and guardians
  - Provides family educational and privacy rights, requiring schools to involve the parent in education or mental health issues
  - Provides parents more control of classes or activities deemed controversial
- **Parents-first, customer-oriented school communication** (Sen. Libby)
  - Transparency in curricula, pedagogy, materials and school budgets
  - Empower parents with alternative options more closely aligned with values

**Closing remarks, Q/A**

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<sup>i</sup> <https://news.gallup.com/poll/399731/americans-satisfaction-education-low-side.aspx>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.rasmussen.edu/degrees/education/blog/parental-involvement-in-education/>

<sup>iii</sup> <https://www.publicschoolreview.com/blog/parental-involvement-is-key-to-student-success>

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.publicschoolreview.com/blog/parental-involvement-is-key-to-student-success>

<sup>v</sup> <https://mainechildrensalliance.org/databook/>