



Peggy Rotundo
Senator, District 21

THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

September 25, 2025

To the Members of the Right to Know Advisory Committee:

I am writing to ask that the Right to Know Advisory Committee consider a serious issue related to school hirings that has come up in my district and is not a unique problem.

Issue

The issue involves how educators and schools share information about educators' investigations related to sexual misconduct, including investigations that are never completed.

Specific Circumstance

This issue was raised to me by a constituent who personally experienced sexual harassment in the past by an educator who now works at her child's school. When she realized the person who had harassed her was working at her daughter's school, she was worried. After some brief online research, she discovered that he had left another school district during another sexual misconduct investigation. This experience made her concerned about the lack of accountability and information sharing between school districts about sexual misconduct investigations of educators.

Existing Maine Statutes and Rules

There are existing statutes intended to address this issue, and they include responsibilities of schools and the Department of Education and rights of the employee. Currently, school districts are required to notify the Department of Education if an employee leaves the district while the employee is being investigated for conduct that could jeopardize their certification status, including conduct that involves alcohol, illegal drugs, physical abuse, emotional abuse, inappropriate contact between a credentialed holder and a student, stalking or similar behavior that endangers the health, safety or welfare of a student. See 20-A M.R.S. §§13025,13026.

A school department is also required to inform the department if an investigation results in findings of wrongdoing, and the employee is disciplined, suspended, or terminated because of a covered investigation in which the school entity determined that a student's health, safety, or welfare was endangered. *Id.*

Possible Remedy

While these safeguards are important, some school employees subject to investigation have escaped notice, moving from one school district to another. A possible way to address this problem is to require applicants to provide notice to potential school employers if the applicant has been subject to investigation by a former school employer. It has come to my attention that the Committee may consider similar issues regarding the hiring of other public employees, and I would respectfully ask that you consider these school hirings, too. Information about states who have already passed similar legislation and model legislation can be found here: <https://enoughabuse.org/get-vocal/laws-by-state/screening-school-employees/>



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Here is a list of potential proposed legislative changes we are hoping you will consider:

- Requiring applicants to disclose any current or previous investigations, which is addressed at length in the above model legislation
- Requiring schools to ask the Department about any current or previous investigations, again addressed at length in the above model legislation
- Requiring schools to begin and complete these investigations as soon as they have notice, even if the educator leaves their employment.
- If the above recommendations are implemented, a report back from the DOE to your Committee and the Legislative Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs to see if these changes are increasing the number of schools participating in informed hiring practices
- Reviewing potential expansions to our current law [barring non disclosure agreements](#) to include NDAs initiated by educators investigated for sexual misconduct
- Reviewing any provisions that might potentially prevent disclosure of these personnel records such as [Title 1 MRSA, Chapter 13](#)

I appreciate the expertise and thoughtfulness of the Right to Know Committee in considering my request. I hope that the Committee has time to take up the issue and make recommendations to strengthen processes and safeguards to ensure that school employers, school employees and the department are working together to ensure the safety of Maine students in your communities. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peggy Rotundo".

Peggy Rotundo
Senate District 21