



Date: January 31, 2026

Source of Report:

[LD 104](#) (PL 2021 Chapter 12) An Act To Protect the Health of Student Athletes by Requiring the Department of Education To Report on the Incidence of Concussions (MRS, [Title 20-A, §254, sub-§17](#))

Topic: Concussion Incidence in Maine Schools

Context

Public Law 2021, Chapter 12, *An Act To Protect the Health of Student Athletes by Requiring the Establishment of Procedures To Report Concussions*, directs the Commissioner of Education, in consultation with an organization representing school principals, to annually report to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs (ECA) any available data on the incidence of concussions sustained by student-athletes in the State. In addition, the report must also include recommendations on best practices for the collection of such data. This report represents a collaboration between the Maine Department of Education (DOE), the Maine Principals' Association (MPA), and other stakeholders.

A concussion is an injury to the brain itself. The injury impacts the way a person's brain works and is sometimes referred to as a traumatic brain injury (TBI). Using precise language will improve communication related to increased awareness, prevention, and management of injuries. It is recommended to use the term "concussion" or "TBI," which aligns with established best practices.

Pursuant to MRS, Title 20-A, §254, sub-§17, as enacted by PL 2011, c. 688, §1, Maine DOE was directed to develop a model policy on the management of concussions in school activities and athletics. It further required Maine DOE to establish a Concussion Work Group to complete this task. Membership in the group has varied over time but has consistently included representation from the Maine Principals' Association, Maine Athletic Trainers' Association, Maine Association of School Nurses, Maine Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association, and the Brain Injury Association of America - Maine Chapter. The work group previously included representation from the Maine Concussion Management Initiative, which ceased operations in March 2024.

Actions

Updated Guidance to the Field

Maine DOE and its partners in the Concussion Work Group have worked to improve the management of students with concussions in schools. In March 2025, a priority notice was sent to the field that highlighted the updated model policy (Appendix A) and supporting concussion

management resources (Appendix B) that are based on the best up-to-date practices, as published by the International Conference on Concussion in Sport, and represent input, collaboration, and edits from representatives of many groups and individuals that include: Maine Principals' Association, Maine Association of School Nurses, Maine Athletic Trainers Association, University of New England Athletic Training Program director and medical director, University of Southern Maine Athletic Training Program director, and the Korey Stringer Institute, University of Connecticut director of sports safety. This notice directed school administrative units to review their concussion management policies and procedures in order to update them to reflect the current updated model policy and best practices.

How Data Was Tracked

For this 2026 report to the ECA, the data sources include 2024-2025 School Health Annual Report and school-based health center data from the University of Southern Maine.

School Health Annual Report

Maine DOE added questions to the School Health Annual Report in 2024. This survey is sent to all public and non-public schools at the conclusion of each school year. Thus, we can provide two years of data. Additionally, we were able to break down the data at the county level to see if there were any major differences or trends. The data for 2025 is based on 188 school administrative units, including public schools, charter schools, and 60% publicly funded private schools and is represented in Table 1, shown below. Results from the 2025 survey show that 59.5% of the reported concussions were due to an organized athletic event, with 35.3% from routine daily life, and 5.1% that were of unknown cause. A comparison between 2024 and 2025 is also shown in Table 1.

Table 1. School Health Annual Report Two-Year Comparison					
Year	Total Student Population in reporting SAUs (n-234)	Total number of diagnosed concussions reported in survey	Organized athletic event (school athletic teams and organized recreation league teams)	Routine daily activities and/or play	Other or Unknown cause
2024 (n=234 SAUs*)	165,305	1871	1107(59.2%)	575(30.7%)	173 (9.2%)
2025 (n=188 SAUs**)	165,453	1824	1086 (59.5%)	644 (35.3%)	94 (5.1%)
*2024 As reported in the School Health Annual Report by 234 public and non-public school administrative units. **2025 As reported in the School Health Annual Report by 188 public school administrative units, charter schools, and 60-40% publicly funded private schools.					

Table 2. School Health Annual Report 2025 County Comparison

County	Student Enrollment	Total number of diagnosed concussions reported in survey (rate per 100 students*)	Organized athletic event such as school athletic teams and organized recreation league teams (% of total diagnosed**)	Routine daily activities and/or play (% of total diagnosed**)	Other or Unknown cause (% of total diagnosed**)
Androscoggin	15837	150 (0.94)	94 (62.6%)	52 (34.6%)	4 (2.6%)
Aroostook	8173	68 (0.83)	26 (38.2%)	30 (44.1%)	12 (17.6%)
Cumberland	38960	466 (1.19)	314 (67.3%)	140 (30%)	12 (2.5%)
Franklin	3935	59 (1.49)	38 (64.4%)	19 (32.2%)	2 (3.4%)
Hancock	5576	49 (0.88)	15 (30.6%)	31 (63.2%)	3 (6.1%)
Kennebec	13659	167 (1.22)	114 (68.2%)	48 (28.7%)	5 (2.9%)
Knox	5793	66 (1.13)	21 (31.8%)	30 (45%)	15 (22.7%)
Lincoln	5518	79 (1.43)	32 (40.5%)	43 (54.4%)	4 (5%)
Oxford	4349	64 (1.47)	26 (40.6%)	29 (45.3%)	9 (14%)
Penobscot	17217	121 (0.7)	83 (68.5%)	34 (28.1%)	4 (3.3%)
Piscataquis	990	1 (0.1)	1 (100%)	0	0
Sagadahoc	2312	21 (0.98)	16 (76.2%)	5 (23.8%)	0
Somerset	3945	56 (1.42)	40 (71.4%)	14 (25%)	2 (3.5%)
Waldo	5856	111 (1.89)	61 (54.9%)	48 (43.2%)	2 (1.8%)
Washington	2891	9 (0.3)	5 (55.5%)	3 (33.3%)	1 (11.1%)
York	30442	337 (1.1)	200 (59.3%)	118 (35%)	19 (5.6%)
TOTAL	165453	1824 (1.10)	1086 (59.5%)	644 (35.3%)	94 (5.1%)

*Rate is calculated by dividing the number of reported concussions by the student enrollment, then multiplied by 100.

**Percent is calculated by dividing the answer provided in the category by the total number of reported concussions in that county.

The Concussion Work Group requested data from the University of Southern Maine team that serves as the evaluator for Maine CDC funded school-based health centers (SBHC). For the 2024-2025 school year period, SBHCs in Maine reported 72 unique users who received a concussion diagnosis during a total of 143 visits (any diagnosis code beginning with 'S06.0'). These include concussions reported by 6 different SBHC sites (Wheeler, 2025). There is no statistical analysis or conclusions that can be made with this data.

Table 3. Year to Year School-Based Health Center Data			
	2024-2025	2023-2024	2022-2023
Number of Students with concussion diagnosis	72	37	27
Number of Visits (for the identified students)	143	73	62
Number of SBHC sites	6	5	5
Data provided annually by T. Wheeler, Maine School-Based Health Center Mid-Year Data. Catherine Cutler Institute for Health and Social Policy, University of Southern Maine			

Recommendations

- Continue Concussion Work Group meetings and for the Maine DOE to maintain its concussion management toolkit for schools, including the most recent evidence-based materials.
- Reduce the frequency of this report to the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee to once every five years. The rationale for this recommendation is that changes in national data shows that the incidence of concussion is somewhat stable as stated in our 2023 report, and the International Conference on Concussion in Sports, who leads best practices, only convenes every few years (Patricios, Schneider, Dvorak, et al. 2023). Additionally, without a good data collection system in Maine, it is not possible to draw relevant conclusions or advisable to make actionable changes that diverge from national best practices. The Maine DOE has submitted a Department Bill to address this recommendation in the 2nd Session of the 132nd Legislature.
- Include the Department of Health and Human Services, Maine Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in any future consideration of legislation related to health data and research in Maine schools, as that entity is the leader in public health and safety in the State of Maine.

References

Patricios JS, Schneider KJ, Dvorak J, et al. Consensus statement on concussion in sport: the 6th International Conference on Concussion in Sport– Amsterdam, October 2022. *British Journal of Sports Medicine* (2023); 57:695–711. <https://bjsm.bmj.com/content/57/11/695>

Wheeler T, Baker M, Burke M. (2025). 2024-25 Maine School-Based Health Center Mid-Year Data. Catherine Cutler Institute for Health and Social Policy, University of Southern Maine.

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