

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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121st MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2003

Legislative Document

No. 699

H.P. 516

House of Representatives, February 14, 2003

Resolve, To Address Multicultural Education Needs of Maine Teachers

Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

Millicent M. MacFarland

MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND

Clerk

Presented by Representative McKEE of Wayne.
Cosponsored by Senator ROTUNDO of Androscoggin and
Representatives: CRAVEN of Lewiston, EDER of Portland, FINCH of Fairfield, GAGNE-
FRIEL of Buckfield, LAVERRIERE-BOUCHER of Biddeford, O'BRIEN of Lewiston,
SULLIVAN of Biddeford.

2 **Whereas,** the State has both long-standing diverse cultural
groups such as Native Americans, Franco-Americans, African
4 Americans, Asians and Latinos and significantly increasing
numbers of immigrants from all over the world; and

6 **Whereas,** the multicultural communities of Maine are
expanding rapidly beyond the Portland area and resettlement of
8 immigrants is beginning to occur throughout the State; and

10 **Whereas,** understanding and awareness of cultural differences
are crucial to a harmonious society, with schools functioning as
12 the primary vehicle of multicultural education; and

14 **Whereas,** education that is multicultural provides an
environment that values cultural diversity and portrays it
16 positively; and

18 **Whereas,** educators have the responsibility under the
statewide system of learning results to help students recognize
20 and understand the diverse nature of society as responsible and
involved citizens; now, therefore, be it

22 **Sec. 1. Commission established. Resolved:** That the Commission
24 to Assess the Multicultural Education Needs of Maine Teachers,
referred to in this resolve as "the commission," is established;
26 and be it further

28 **Sec. 2. Commission membership. Resolved:** That the commission
30 consists of 11 members appointed by the Speaker of the House of
Representatives as follows:

32 1. One member from the Joint Standing Committee on
Education and Cultural Affairs;

34 2. One representative of the Department of Education with
36 specific expertise, knowledge, background and oversight of
Maine's multicultural communities or minorities and their needs;

38 3. One curriculum coordinator with specific experience in a
40 school or school district with high multicultural enrollment or
one kindergarten to grade 12 teacher with experience and interest
42 in multicultural education;

44 4. One representative from each of the following groups:
Passamaquoddy Tribe; Penobscot Indian Nation; Franco-Americans;
46 and African Americans, or 4 representatives from African, Latino,
Asian and Native American groups, ALANA;

48

2 5. One representative of the University of Maine System
with specific background in the preparation of teachers for
kindergarten to grade 12;

4
6 6. One teacher of English as a 2nd language, ESL, with at
least 5 years' experience in a Maine multicultural classroom;

8 7. One member of the State Board of Education; and

10 8. One at-large member with demonstrated knowledge,
experience and interest in multicultural education; and be it
12 further

14 **Sec. 3. Chair. Resolved:** That the chair must be elected by
the full commission; and be it further

16 **Sec. 4. Appointments; convening of commission. Resolved:** That
18 all appointments must be made no later than 30 days following the
effective date of this resolve. The appointing authority shall
20 notify the Executive Director of the Legislative Council upon
making appointments. When the appointment of all members is
22 complete, the appointing authority shall call and convene the
first meeting of the commission no later than November 1, 2003;
24 and be it further

26 **Sec. 5. Duties. Resolved:** That the commission shall study the
28 problems Maine teachers face or will face in culturally diverse
schools and classrooms. The commission shall determine what
needs to be done to prepare teachers to be effective both in
30 providing an appropriate educational program for multicultural
classrooms and in helping all students to recognize and
32 understand the diverse nature of society. In conducting this
study, the commission shall:

34 1. Request the assistance of the Department of Education,
36 the State Board of Education and ALANA and invite the
participation of other experts and interested parties;

38 2. Conduct a survey of Maine teachers to determine current
40 levels of completed multicultural education; success in
multicultural classrooms; problems encountered in multicultural
42 classrooms; knowledge of effective strategies in multicultural
education; resources available to teachers in multicultural
44 classrooms; skills needed for success in multicultural education;
and anecdotal evidence of needs and prior knowledge of dominant
46 Maine minority cultures, including, but not limited to, Native
Americans, Franco-Americans, African Americans, Asians and
48 Latinos; and

50 3. Evaluate the survey and analyze its findings; and be it
further

