

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 384

S.P. 150

In Senate, February 4, 2025

An Act to Prevent Student Homelessness

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator RAFFERTY of York.

Cosponsored by Representative MURPHY of Scarborough and

Senators: BALDACCI of Penobscot, CURRY of Waldo, INGWERSEN of York, NANGLE of Cumberland, PIERCE of Cumberland, Representative: DODGE of Belfast.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA c. 223, sub-c. 12** is enacted to read:

3 **SUBCHAPTER 12**

4 **STUDENT HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION**

5 **§6691. Student Homelessness Prevention Program**

6 The Student Homelessness Prevention Program, referred to in this section as "the
7 program," is established within the department in the office of the department responsible
8 for school and student supports.

9 **1. Purpose.** The purpose of the program is to help elementary students and secondary
10 students avoid homelessness by identifying students and families of students who are at
11 risk of homelessness and providing direct financial assistance to help them maintain stable
12 permanent housing.

13 **2. Fund established.** The Student Homelessness Prevention Fund is established as a
14 nonlapsing fund within the department for the purposes of supporting the program. The
15 fund may receive money from any available state, federal or private source.

16 **3. Program requirements.** The department shall provide a local educational agency
17 liaison for students experiencing homelessness designated pursuant to the federal
18 McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001, 42 United
19 States Code, Section 11431 et seq. The liaison shall:

20 A. Identify students who are at risk of homelessness but not yet homeless; and

21 B. In addition to any federal assistance available, provide up to \$750 per academic year
22 to the family or guardian of a student at risk of homelessness for services authorized
23 under the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act
24 of 2001, in addition to other housing-related needs such as rental assistance, utilities,
25 critical home repairs and other assistance that will help the student avoid homelessness.

26 **4. Assistance not income or asset.** Financial assistance received under the program
27 is not income for purposes of the State's income tax laws and is not income or an asset for
28 the purposes of determining eligibility for or the benefit amount to be paid from any public
29 assistance program administered by the State or by a municipality pursuant to Title 22,
30 chapter 1161.

31 **5. Rules.** The department may adopt rules to implement the program. Rules adopted
32 pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375,
33 subchapter 2-A.

34 **Sec. 2. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and
35 allocations are made.

36 **EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF**

37 **School and Student Supports Z270**

1 Initiative: Provides ongoing funds to help students avoid homelessness by providing
2 liaisons designated pursuant to the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Education
3 Assistance Improvements Act of 2001 access to emergency financial assistance for the
4 family of a student in an amount of up to \$750 per student.

5	GENERAL FUND	2025-26	2026-27
6	All Other	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000
7			
8	GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>\$1,500,000</u>	<u>\$1,500,000</u>

9

SUMMARY

10 This bill establishes the Student Homelessness Prevention Program within the
11 Department of Education. The purpose of the program is to provide direct financial
12 assistance to prevent student homelessness and support students and their families in
13 maintaining stable permanent housing.