

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 165

S. P. 62

In Senate, January 16, 1973

Referred to Committee on Education. Sent down for concurrence and ordered printed.

HARRY N. STARBRANCH, Secretary

Presented by Senator Cyr of Aroostook.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-THREE

AN ACT Relating to Bilingual and Bicultural Education.

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

Sec. 1. R. S., T. 20, § 102, sub-§ 7, amended. Subsection 7 of section 102 of Title 20 of the Revised Statutes, as amended, is further amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph.

Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, a pupil having proficiency in a foreign language taught in the high school he attends may pursue, at the discretion of the local school committee or board of directors and subject to the approval of the commissioner, no more than one nonlanguage course per ranking period to be taught in that foreign language.

Sec. 2. R. S., T. 20, § 102, sub-§ 16, amended. The 2nd paragraph of subsection 16 of section 102 of Title 20 of the Revised Statutes, as enacted by section 2 of chapter 234 of the public laws of 1969, is amended to read as follows:

Subject to the **annual** approval ~~annually~~ of the commissioner, the school committee or the school directors of any administrative district having a high concentration of such children may provide ~~early childhood~~ programs involving **bilingual and bicultural** education techniques designed to provide ~~these children during their pre-school, kindergarten and first and 2nd grades~~ with educational experiences which will enhance their learning and earning potential.

STATEMENT OF FACT

Current law permits bilingual education programs only from kindergarten through grade 2. Federal bilingual education grants are for a 5-year period

and cover 5 grades. An amendment to the statutes is necessary in order that Maine schools may participate in programs in grades 3 and 4. Many children enter school without a command of the English language and are seriously handicapped throughout their formal education when they are forced to learn in a curriculum taught entirely in English. Biculturalism is important if a nonEnglish speaking child is to develop self-esteem and a respect for his native culture.