

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the
LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from scanned originals with text recognition applied
(searchable text may contain some errors and/or omissions)

ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 1141

H. P. 924

House of Representatives, March 19, 1975

Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs. Sent up for concurrence and 1700 copies ordered printed.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Mr. Garsoe of Cumberland.

Cosponsor: Mrs. Najarian of Portland.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-FIVE

AN ACT to Improve the Dental Health of Maine Children.

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

Sec. 1. 22 MRSA Pt. 4-A, is enacted to read:

PART 4-A

DENTAL HEALTH

CHAPTER 421

CHILD DENTAL CARE

§ 2101. Dental health program

There is established within the Office of Dental Health, Department of Health and Welfare, a Children's Dental Health Fund for the purposes of encouraging local towns, school units and school administrative districts to adopt comprehensive dental prevention and education programs for the purposes of improving dental health within the kindergarten through grade 8 school age population.

§ 2102. Administration

The fund will be administered by the Office of Dental Health which will establish procedures for applying for aid and other eligibility criteria not specified in section 2103.

§ 2103. Eligibility of applicants

Any town, school unit, school administrative district or private, nonprofit

corporation on behalf of the aforementioned governmental units, may apply for funds provided under this chapter. Said units must continue a maintenance of current school-based dental health efforts in operation on the effective date of this Act. Only new programs or expansion of existing programs are eligible for funding. Local governmental funds used for current dental programs as described in this chapter can be used as the local share provided for in this chapter.

§ 2104. Services eligible for funding

Only those services as defined by the Office of Dental Health, directly related to prevention and education programs, including personnel, equipment and material are eligible for funding. No corrective care, direct treatment or restorative services are eligible for funding under this chapter.

Sec. 2. Appropriation. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Health and Welfare Office of Dental Health the sum of \$110,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1976, and \$198,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1977. The breakdown shall be as follows:

	1975-76	1976-77
HEALTH AND WELFARE, DEPARTMENT OF		
Office of Dental Health		
Personal Services	\$ 20,000	\$ 21,000
All Other	88,000	176,000
Capital Expenditures	2,000	1,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$110,000	\$198,000

Any unit as described in Title 22, section 2103 is eligible to receive up to \$2 per year per child enrolled in the grades served, but this amount shall be matched by an equal amount from the town, school administrative district or unit applying for aid.

STATEMENT OF FACT

Maine is reported to have the highest rate of dental disease in the nation. Present efforts to correct diseased teeth are inadequate if not accompanied by preventive and educational programs to teach the fact that dental disease is preventable and unnecessary.

The only dental health services currently funded by the State are for treatment and corrective care. Only children on AFDC, in the custody of the State or in the populations of various state institutions are covered by these state supported services.

The purpose of this Act is:

To bring to the 98% of Maine children who will suffer from dental disease the skills necessary to prevent serious dental problems;

To reduce, over time, the cost of the increasingly expensive Medicaid (Title XIX) which provides corrective treatment only and does not include prevention or educational services;

To encourage schools and towns to provide dental health services at the local level;

To improve Maine children's teeth; and

To eliminate dental disease among Maine children as described by the Director of Dental Health: "Dental statistics on the State of Maine level can and should be classified as truly frightening when the whole picture is viewed. For example, 35% of our 6-year-olds have decayed permanent teeth, even though only 12 of their 32 permanent teeth have been present for a year or so. Ninety-eight percent of 14-year-old youngsters have 10 decayed teeth. This compares with the 10 decayed teeth in the mouths of average 18-year-old high school graduates in the nation. Furthermore, 42% of 14-year-olds have lost 2 permanent teeth and in dental parlance are classified as dental cripples."

Budget figures were calculated by using state school population figures times \$2 per pupil with the assumption that $\frac{1}{4}$ (44,000 children) of the K-8 school population (176,000) will be enrolled in the dental program in the 1975-76 school year and $\frac{2}{4}$ (88,000) in the 1976-77 school year.