

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 2195

S. P. 686

In Senate, February 6, 1976

Reported by Senator Katz of Kennebec from Committee on Education pursuant to Joint Order S. P. 600 and printed under Joint Rules No. 3

HARRY N. STARBRANCH, Secretary

Filed under Joint Rule 3 pursuant to S. P. 600.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-SIX

AN ACT to Revise Statutory Provisions Relating to Dropouts.

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

Sec. 1. 20 MRSA § 917, as enacted by PL 1975, c. 599, § 1, is repealed.

Sec. 2. 20 MRSA c. 106 is enacted to read:

CHAPTER 106

DROPOUTS

§ 931. Statement of purpose

Because education is essential to the preservation of the rights and liberties of the people, school attendance is required of children and youth. To further preserve these rights and liberties, it should be a purpose of the schools to help certain youths find appropriate alternatives to school and to maintain contact with youths who have withdrawn from school before graduation or completion of a program of studies.

§ 932. Definitions

As used in this chapter, unless the context indicates otherwise, a "dropout" shall be defined as any person who has not yet reached the age of 17, has withdrawn from school for any reason except death before graduation or completion of a program of studies and has not enrolled in any other educational institution or program.

§ 933. Positive action committee

Each school superintendent in the State, who has responsibility for any grade level from 9 through 12, shall cause to be established a positive action committee, which shall be convened no later than October 1, 1976.

1. Membership. Each positive action committee shall include as members the following persons:

- A. A member of the school committee selected by that committee;
- B. A school administrator selected by the superintendent;
- C. Two teachers selected by the local teachers' organization;
- D. Two parents of students enrolled in any grade level from 9 through 12, selected by any organized parent group, or if no such group exists, by the school committee;
- E. Two students enrolled in any grade level from 9 through 12 and 2 recent dropouts selected by the members of the positive action committee as already chosen above; and
- F. Two residents of the community or communities within the school unit selected by the members of the positive action committee as already chosen above.

Members of each positive action committee shall serve for a term of 2 years, after which term they may be reappointed. All vacancies in the positive action committee shall be filled through the same process specified for the original selections.

2. Chairman. Each fully constituted positive action committee shall select a chairman, who shall serve for a period not longer than 2 years.

3. Duties. Each positive action committee shall study factors affecting persons in grade levels kindergarten through 12, which are related to the problem of dropping out, shall develop a specific plan to address this problem, and shall submit the plan to the school committee for appropriate action. The school committee shall file the plan with the department no later than January 1, 1978.

Each positive action committee shall convene at least annually after the submission of its original plan and shall make recommendations to the school committee as necessary. All amendments to the plan shall be filed with the department.

4. Technical assistance. The department shall provide reasonable technical assistance as needed to any positive action committee.

5. Existing positive action committees. Members of positive action committees established heretofore pursuant to section 917 may continue to serve on these committees for the duration of their terms.

STATEMENT OF FACT

The purpose of this bill is to revise provisions relating to dropouts, which were enacted as PL 1975, c. 599. Most importantly, the bill changes c. 599

by adding a statement of purpose, tightening up the definition of "dropout", postponing the required implementation of the law for one year, providing that positive action committees be established in only those school units which include any grade level from 9 through 12 and reducing the number of members on these committees. This bill is based on the findings of the Committee on Education relative to SP 600, a study on various forms of socially disruptive and self-destructive behavior among youth.