

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 393

S. P. 153

In Senate, February 10, 1977

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

MAY M. ROSS, Secretary

Presented by Senator Usher of Cumberland.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-SEVEN

**AN ACT to Provide State Support for Preschool Programs for
Handicapped Children.**

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

20 MRSA § 3123, sub-§ 1-A is enacted to read:

1-A. Exceptional children who are age 3 and age 4. Where local education agencies, either through the superintendent of schools or school board choose to serve preschool exceptional children who meet the criteria of exceptionality as stated in this chapter and in regulations promulgated by the Commissioner of Educational and Cultural Services, said local education agencies shall be reimbursed at the rate of 90% of the costs of approved programs by the Department of Educational and Cultural Services.

STATEMENT OF FACT

There is ample evidence which points to the benefits of providing early intervention and education services to the exceptional child. At the federal level, P.L. 94-142 authorizes the states for federal financial participation for education services provided to children below Maine's current minimum age of 5 years.

There are approximately 4,800 Maine children ages 3 and 4 who are estimated to be in need of special education. This bill, since it allows for local option on providing such services, estimates that approximately 500 additional preschool exceptional children will be served by the enactment of this bill.