

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST REGULAR SESSION

ONE HUNDRED AND TENTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 1400

H. P. 1176

House of Representatives, March 19, 1981

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

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Representative Mitchell of Vassalboro.

Cosponsors: Representative Thompson of South Portland, Representative Rolde of York, Representative Gowan of Standish.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-ONE

AN ACT to Add a Class Size Adjustment to the School Finance Act.

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

Sec. 1. 20 MRSA § 809 is enacted to read:

§ 809. Elementary grades 1 to 3; pupil-teacher ratio

1. Policy. It is the declared policy of the State to encourage school administrative units to maintain low student-teacher ratios in grades 1 to 3.

2. Local plan. School administrative units electing to comply with this policy shall submit a plan for maintaining a low student-teacher ratio in grades 1 to 3. The plan shall be developed with the active participation of teachers, administrators and school board members and shall include:

A. A statement of policy by the school board declaring it to be the policy of the district to maintain a low student-teacher ratio;

B. A description of the educational benefits to be achieved by the low student-teacher ratio; and

C. An analysis of class size trends in the school units.

3. Financing. School administrative units complying with the requirements of this section are eligible for aid under section 4749, subsection 9.

Sec. 2. 20 MRSa § 4749, sub-§§ 9 and 10 are enacted to read:

**9. Low student-teacher ratio maintenance adjustments.** School administrative units may for each grade K to 3:

A. Compute an average student-teacher ratio by dividing the number of resident students in the grade on October 1st and April 1st of the base year by the average number of classroom teachers for that grade on October 1st and April 1st of the base year. In computing this ratio, transition classes, resource rooms, combination rooms and split grades shall be excluded; and

B. When the average student-teacher ratio is below 20, add a low teacher-student ratio maintenance adjustment to their basic elementary allocation not to exceed the products of:

- (1) Five hundred dollars;
- (2) The difference, not to exceed 5, between 20 and the average teacher-student ratio; and
- (3) The number of classroom teachers.

**10. Low student-teacher ratio promotion adjustment.** To the extent that a school administrative unit has increased cost by reducing the student-teacher ratio from the base year to the prior year, a unit which complies with section 809 may, for each grade K to 3:

A. Compute an average student-teacher ratio for the fiscal year prior to the year of allocation by dividing the number of resident students in the grade by the number of classroom teachers on October 1st of the year. In computing this ratio, transition classes, resource rooms, combination rooms, and split grades shall be excluded; and

B. When the average student-teacher ratio is less than 20, compute a low student-teacher promotion adjustment to their basic elementary allocation not to exceed the products of:

- (1) Five hundred dollars;
- (2) The difference, not to exceed 5, between 20 and the average teacher-student ratio; and
- (3) The number of classroom teachers.

#### STATEMENT OF FACT

The bill would encourage lower student-teacher ratios and insure that the cost of the reduction would be shared by the State through the School Finance Act. For a teacher salary of \$12,000 and classroom size of 21, the per pupil cost of the salary is slightly over \$570.