

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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(EMERGENCY)
(After Deadline)

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 1696

H.P. 1279

House of Representatives, May 26, 1983

Reference to the Committee on Education is suggested. Ordered printed and sent up for concurrence.

Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council, pursuant to Joint Rule 27.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Representative Mitchell of Vassalboro.

Cosponsors: Senator Carpenter of Aroostook, Representative Diamond of Bangor and Representative Davis of Monmouth.

STATE OF MAINE

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

AN ACT to Create a Maine Commission on
Excellence in Education.

Emergency preamble. Whereas, Acts of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, the purpose of this Act is to create a commission to examine the quality of education in this State in light of the recent report of the National Commission on the Excellence in Education; and

Whereas, this commission should make its report to the Governor, Legislature and the people of this State; and

Whereas, the commission must commence the performance of its duties immediately if it is to complete

1 the review in time to propose necessary legislative
2 changes to the Second Regular Session of the 111th
3 Legislature; and

4 Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature,
5 these facts create an emergency within the meaning of
6 the Constitution of Maine and require the following
7 legislation as immediately necessary for the preser-
8 vation of the public peace, health and safety; now,
9 therefore,

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

12 Sec. 1. Commission; duties. The Maine Commis-
13 sion on Excellence in Education shall be created to
14 make recommendations to the Governor, the public of
15 this State and the Second Regular Session of the
16 111th Legislature concerning policies, laws and prac-
17 tices which should be adopted to insure excellence in
18 the educational system in this State. The commission
19 shall review the work of the National Commission on
20 Excellence in Education to determine its applicabil-
21 ity to public education in Maine. The commission
22 shall assess the quality of teaching and learning
23 throughout the public educational system of this
24 State, but give particular attention to the course of
25 study in elementary, secondary and vocational
26 schools; identify educational programs and opportuni-
27 ties which result in notable student success in col-
28 lege or vocational training schools; assess the
29 degree to which student performance in schools has
30 declined or improved and identify proposals to
31 encourage improvement; and define problems in our
32 current educational system which must be overcome in
33 order to pursue a course of excellence in education.
34 This review shall culminate in a report that includes
35 specific recommendations, suggested methods of imple-
36 mentation, and the costs and methods of funding its
37 proposals, whether by public or private means. This
38 report, including necessary legislation, shall be
39 made to the Governor and the Legislature by January
40 31, 1984.

41 Sec. 2. Membership. The membership of the com-
42 mission shall consist of 21 persons: The Speaker of
43 the House of Representatives and the President of the

1 Senate shall jointly appoint a chairman; 2 members
2 trained as educators and currently teaching elemen-
3 tary and secondary schools; 2 members, each of whom
4 is currently serving as an elected member of a local
5 school board; one member from the State Board of Edu-
6 cation; the Commissioner of Educational and Cultural
7 Services, or his designee; one member who is a
8 teacher educator in a state college or university;
9 one representative of a private college; the
10 Chancellor of the University of Maine, or his design-
11 nee; one member who is a school administrator; one
12 vocational educator; and 5 members of the public.
13 The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the
14 President of the Senate are directed to seek the
15 broadest diversity of membership considering both
16 urban and rural representation and type of educa-
17 tional experience or interest. Two members of the
18 Senate shall be chosen by the President of the Senate
19 and 2 members of the House of Representatives shall
20 be chosen by the Speaker of the House of Representa-
21 tives.

22 **Sec. 3. Meetings.** The commission shall be
23 appointed promptly and the Speaker of the House of
24 Representatives and the President of the Senate shall
25 notify all members of the time and place of the first
26 meeting. At that time, the commission shall organ-
27 ize, elect a vice-chairman and secretary-treasurer,
28 adopt rules as to the administration of the commis-
29 sion and its affairs and thereafter shall meet as
30 often as necessary until its work is completed. The
31 commission may organize subcommittees as needed to
32 carry out its duties. In all matters as to which
33 there is a disagreement, a majority vote shall pre-
34 vail and a quorum shall consist of at least 11 mem-
35 bers. The commission shall maintain minutes of its
36 meetings and such financial records as may be re-
37 quired by the State Auditor.

38 **Sec. 4. Public hearings; meetings.** The commis-
39 sion shall hold at least 3 public hearings throughout
40 the State in order to seek public participation in
41 its deliberations and prior to the issuance of the
42 final report.

43 **Sec. 5. Assistance.** The commission may employ
44 such clerical assistance as needed to carry out its

1 duties. The commission may also employ consultants
2 and contract for research projects. The Commissioner
3 of Educational and Cultural Services and the
4 Chancellor of the University of Maine system are
5 directed to provide maximum assistance possible in
6 light of current funding in order to reduce the com-
7 mission's need for outside consultants.

8 **Sec. 6. Reimbursement of expenses.** The members
9 of the commission shall serve without compensation,
10 but may be reimbursed for their reasonable expenses
11 in attending meetings, procuring supplies and other
12 related and necessary expenditures.

13 **Sec. 7. Appropriation.** The following funds are
14 appropriated from the unappropriated surplus of the
15 General Fund to carry out the purposes of this Act.

16 1982-83

17 MAINE COMMISSION ON EXCELLENCE
18 IN EDUCATION

19 All Other \$20,000

20 **Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited
21 in the preamble, this Act shall take effect when
22 approved.

23 STATEMENT OF FACT

24 This bill seeks to create a Maine Commission on
25 Excellence in Education in order to review the work
26 of the National Commission on Excellence in Educa-
27 tion, examine the state's educational system and make
28 practical recommendations to improve the state's sys-
29 tem by January 31, 1984.

30 3996051983