

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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1 (New Draft of S.P. 769, L.D. 2089)

2 SECOND REGULAR SESSION
3

4 ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH LEGISLATURE
5

6 Legislative Document

No. 2359

7
8 S.P. 869

In Senate, March 23, 1984

9 Reported by Majority Report from the Committee on Education and
10 printed under Joint Rule 2.

11 Original bill presented by Senator Hayes of Penobscot and cosponsored
by Representative McCollister of Canton.

JOY J. O'BRIEN, Secretary of the Senate

12
13 STATE OF MAINE
14

15 IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
16 NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FOUR
17

18 AN ACT Concerning the Teaching of
19 Certain Subjects.
20

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

23 Sec. 1. 20 MRSA §1221 is amended to read:

24 §1221. Teaching of virtue and morality

25 The presidents, professors and tutors of col-
26 leges, the preceptors and teachers of academies and
27 all other instructors Instructors of youth in public
28 or private institutions shall use their best endeav-
29 ors to impress on the minds of the children and youth
30 committed to their care and instruction the princi-
31 ples of morality and justice and a sacred regard for
32 truth; love of country, humanity and a universal be-
33 nevolence; ~~sobriety~~, the great principles of humanity
34 as illustrated by kindness to birds and animals and

1 regard for all factors which contribute to the well-
2 being of man; industry and frugality; chastity, mod-
3 eration and temperance; and all other virtues which
4 ornament human society; and to lead those under their
5 care, as their ages and capacities admit, into a par-
6 ticular understanding of the tendency of such virtues
7 to preserve and perfect a republican constitution,
8 secure the blessings of liberty and to promote their
9 future happiness and the tendency of the opposite
10 vices; to slavery, degradation and ruin. All teachers
11 in the public schools of the State shall devote not
12 less than 1/2 hour of each week of the school term to
13 teaching to the children under their charge, in cor-
14 relation with other studies of the school curriculum,
15 the great principles of humanity as illustrated by
16 kindness to birds and animals and regard for all fac-
17 tors which contribute to the well-being of man.

18 Sec. 2. 20 MRSA §§1223 to 1230 are repealed.

19 Sec. 3. 20 MRSA §1224-A is enacted to read:

20 §1224-A. Release time for religious observance

21 Public school students who participate in a
22 course of moral instruction or a religious observance
23 at their place of worship or other suitable place may
24 be granted release time for the period actually spent
25 on that instruction or observance, up to a maximum of
26 one hour per week. The granting of release time
27 shall be at the option of the local school unit and
28 shall not result in any additional cost to the local
29 school unit. Release time shall be granted in ac-
30 cordance with policies established by the local
31 school unit.

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STATEMENT OF FACT

This new draft continues much of the current language on the teaching of virtue and morality which was deleted in the original bill; repeals provisions dealing with scripture reading which is unconstitutional; and repeals several sections dealing with providing moral instruction and replaces them with one section providing for release time for moral instruction or religious observances. The provisions of the original bill establishing a legislative policy on school curriculum and providing for instruction in several skill areas have been deleted.

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