

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
SENATE
114TH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A " to S.P. 63, L.D. 46, Bill, "An Act to Improve the Early Childhood Educational Plans Grants Program"

Amend the bill by inserting after the enacting clause the following:

Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §202, sub-§15, as amended by PL 1987, c. 395, Pt. A, §43, is further amended to read:

15. Educational bureaus. The Bureau of Adult and Secondary Vocational Education, the Bureau of Instruction, including the Office of Early Childhood Education and the Bureau of School Management;

Sec. 2. 20-A MRSA §260, as amended by PL 1985, c. 295, §28, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

§260. Early elementary school assistance program; Office of Early Childhood Education

1. Office of Early Childhood Education established. The commissioner shall establish the Office of Early Childhood Education within the Bureau of Instruction to administer an early elementary school assistance program. The office is responsible for providing technical assistance to schools in the area of early childhood education. The responsibilities of the office include, without limitation, the following.

A. The office shall develop a statewide kindergarten screening and assessment instrument as part of the statewide assessment program and provide technical assistance to schools in using the instrument.

B. The office shall direct the research, development and distribution of an integrated, standardized screening and assessment program for children from 4 to 9 years of age to assist schools and teachers in assessing performance and progress in early elementary grades.

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C. The office shall conduct or arrange for the conducting of research and the development of a kindergarten to grade 4 curriculum guide for distribution to schools.

D. The office shall administer the grants for early childhood educational plans and the model program grants under chapter 203, subchapter II.

2. Implementation. To implement this program, the commissioner shall take the following action:

A. Employ office staff to implement the assistance program;

B. Enter into such contracts as may be necessary to carry out the development and implementation of the assistance program;

C. Adopt rules to implement the program; and

D. As authorized by Title 5, chapter 379, appoint the Advisory Committee on Early Elementary Education of not more than 8 persons qualified and experienced in early elementary education to advise and assist the department in designing and implementing the program. Members shall be compensated according to Title 5, chapter 379.

Sec. 3. 20-A MRSA c. 203, sub-c. II, 3rd line, as amended is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

CHILDREN AGES 4 to 9'

Further amend the bill by inserting after section 1 the following:

'**Sec. 2. 20-A MRSA §4252, sub-§1, as enacted by PL 1983, c. 576, §1, is amended to read:**

1. Class size. Reduce the student-teacher ratio in all classrooms within one or more grades, ~~kindergarten through grade 3,~~ serving children from 4 to 9 years of age to a recommended ratio of 15 to 1 and maximum ratio of 18 to 1;

Further amend the bill in section 6 by striking out all of that part designated "§4253-A." (page 2, lines 10 to 18 in L.D.) and inserting in its place the following:

'§4253-A. Model program grants

1. Establishment of program. The department shall establish and monitor a competitive grant program for model early childhood programs designed to serve as demonstration and

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1 training sites. In awarding grants for model programs, the
2 commissioner shall ensure geographic distribution of program
3 sites. The department shall develop models to be tested based on
4 an assessment of regional early childhood program needs. School
5 administrative units or those units in association with other
6 service providers may apply for grants. The grant maximum under
7 this section is \$50,000.

9 2. Application; coordination. School administrative units
10 which apply for these grants must, at a minimum, coordinate the
11 application with the local Head Start program. The application
12 must:

13 A. Identify how resources will be shared and activities
14 coordinated between the Head Start program and the public
15 school;

16 B. Identify the process for coordination with other service
17 providers, both public and private; and

18 C. Provide for the establishment of an advisory committee
19 for the project.

20 3. Training. Training provided at the model program site
21 shall be made available to public school staff and Head Start
22 program staff. Provision may be made for other service providers
23 to participate in the training.

24 4. Rulemaking. The department shall adopt rules
25 establishing the criteria upon which grants are awarded under
26 this section.'

27 Further amend the bill by striking out all of sections 7 and
28 8 and inserting in their place the following:

29 'Sec. 7. 20-A MRS §4254, sub-§§2 and 3, as enacted by PL 1983,
30 c. 576, §1, are amended to read:

31 2. First and 2nd years. Allowable costs in the first and
32 2nd years shall be funded through a grant made ~~on the same~~
33 ~~matching basis as the division of state and local shares in the~~
34 ~~unit's state and local allocation in the year prior to the year~~
35 ~~of allocation~~ from funds appropriated for that purpose.

36 3. Third and subsequent years. For plans which have been
37 evaluated as effective by the department, allowable costs may be
38 added to the school units subsidized cost under chapter 605 606.

39 Sec. 8. 20-A MRS §17103, sub-§1, as enacted by PL 1983, c.
40 859, Pt. E, §§1 and 2, is amended to read:

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1 **1. Objectives.** Innovative project matching grants may be
2 awarded to a single school, group of schools or groups of school
3 administrative units for projects which promote improvement on a
4 school-wide basis. ~~These grants will be on the same matching~~
5 ~~basis as set forth in section 4254.~~ Allowable costs for
6 school-based innovative grants projects shall be the excess cost
7 of implementing approved projects. Allowable costs in the first
8 and 2nd years shall be funded through a grant made on the same
9 matching basis as the division of state and local shares in the
10 unit's state and local allocation in the year prior to the year
11 of allocation. These projects may include, but are not limited
12 to, one or more of the following objectives:

- 13 A. To develop programs to reduce the number of student
14 dropouts;
- 15 B. To initiate creative approaches to improve average daily
16 attendance in the schools;
- 17 C. To prepare curriculum guidelines and strategies to
18 improve teaching, raise student expectations and increase
19 the commitment to academic excellence;
- 20 D. To develop strategies for the effective use of school
21 volunteers;
- 22 E. To promote improved guidance and counseling services,
23 particularly within elementary schools;
- 24 F. To implement methods to increase the amount of time
25 students devote to their academic subjects;
- 26 G. To develop programs to raise academic standards and to
27 provide services for students with special learning needs;
- 28 H. To develop new and improved programs in the basic
29 academic areas;
- 30 I. To identify and provide in-service educational programs
31 to improve the basic course of study in the school or
32 schools;
- 33 J. To provide management and leadership programs for
34 principals, superintendents and other supervisory personnel;
- 35 K. To develop a teachers' academy; and
- 36 L. To develop foreign language programs in elementary
37 schools.

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1 implementation of developmentally appropriate public school
2 programs for 4 to 9-year olds. This amendment creates the Office
3 of Early Childhood Education in the Department of Educational and
4 Cultural Services to coordinate departmental early childhood
5 programs to provide technical assistance on early childhood
6 matters to schools and to highlight the importance of early
7 childhood education in human development. This amendment
8 clarifies the process by which the department will implement and
9 coordinate the model preschool grants program established in the
10 original bill. The amendment also makes technical changes in the
11 bill to correct 2 cross-references, amends current law to
12 consistently refer to the 4 to 9-year old age group, corrects the
13 appropriation and adds a fiscal note.

Reported by Senator Estes for the Committee on Education.
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