

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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114th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION - 1989

Legislative Document

No. 175

H.P. 131

House of Representatives, February 14, 1989

Reference to the Committee on Education suggested and ordered printed.

Ed Pert

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Representative CROWLEY of Stockton Springs.

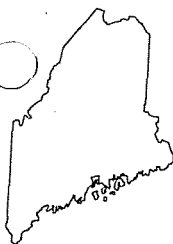
Cosponsored by Representative KILKELLY of Wiscasset, Representative O'GARA of Westbrook and Representative O'DEA of Orono.

STATE OF MAINE

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

**Resolve, Creating the Special Commission to Study Instructional Time
in Schools.**

(EMERGENCY)



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

5 **Whereas,** the effective use of school instructional time is
an important element in the quality of education received by
7 students; and

9 **Whereas,** proposals for changes in the use of the school
year and school day are to be considered by the Second Regular
11 Session of the 114th Legislature; and

13 **Whereas,** there is inadequate information currently
available to determine whether changes in school instructional
15 time are warranted and what impact such changes are likely to
have; and

17 **Whereas,** the Legislature needs this information to make
informed decisions on proposed changes in the length of the
19 school year and school day; and

21 **Whereas,** in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts
23 create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of
Maine and require the following legislation as immediately
25 necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and
safety; now, therefore, be it

27 **Special commission created and charged. Resolved:** That the
29 Special Commission to Study Instructional Time in Schools is
created. The commission shall study the use of instructional
31 time in schools and the factors which influence the quality of
instruction received by students. The commission shall consider
33 and report its findings on the following:

35 1. The present use of the school day, including length of
day, number of periods, length of periods and use of student
37 release time;

39 2. The present length of the school year, including the
extent school units avail themselves of the opportunity to
41 increase the school year under current rules, and its comparison
with national and international trends;

43 3. Research on the relationship between school time and
45 learning and the influence of other factors, such as student
motivation and capacity to learn, the quality of instruction and
47 resources expended on school success;

49 4. Student time spent in school and class, time spent on
tasks and time spent with the subject matter teacher in school
51 work preparation;

1 5. Teacher time spent in class, time spent on instruction
and the quality of instruction;

3
5 6. The role of classroom climate and school morale in
student academic success;

7 7. Alternative methods of organization of the school day or
year;

9
11 8. More effective use of current school time, including
longer periods of instruction; fewer study halls and free
13 periods; extra instructional periods; better use of teacher
school time; and smaller class sizes through innovative
15 approaches such as team teaching;

17 9. The extent to which student assessment results are used
by teachers to provide appropriate programming for students; and

19 10. Other related issues determined necessary by the
commission; and be it further

21 **Membership of the commission; appointment. Resolved:** That the
23 commission shall consist of 13 members appointed as follows:

25 1. One Senator who is a member of the Joint Standing
Committee on Education appointed by the President of the Senate;

27
29 2. Two Representatives who are members of the Joint
Standing Committee on Education appointed by the Speaker of the
House;

31
33 3. One elementary school teacher, one school principal, one
school board member, one parent, and one faculty member from a
35 Maine institution of higher education appointed by the President
of the Senate; and

37 4. One secondary school teacher, one school guidance
counselor, one school superintendent, one parent, and one
39 representative of the Maine business community appointed by the
Speaker of the House.

41
43 All appointments shall be made within 90 days of the effective
date of this resolve, and the Executive Director of the
45 Legislative Council shall be notified when the appointments are
made; and be it further

47 **Selection of chair; convening of the commission. Resolved:** That the
49 commission shall select a chair from among its members at the
first meeting. The Chair of the Legislative Council shall
51 convene the first meeting within 30 days of appointment of all
the members; and be it further

1 **Public meetings; report. Resolved:** That the commission shall
3 hold a series of 3 school visits around the State for the
5 purposes of observing the use of the school day and year and of
7 receiving comments from teachers, administrators, school board
9 members and the public regarding the impact of the length of the
11 school day and year on the quality of education provided. The
13 commission shall present its findings, together with any
15 recommended legislation, to the Second Regular Session of the
17 114th Legislature by November 30, 1989; and be it further

11 **Assistance. Resolved:** That the Department of Educational and
13 Cultural Services shall provide such information and research
15 results as it has on the use of the school day and year in Maine
17 schools and on the effective use of instructional time in
19 schools. The commission may request staff assistance from the
Legislative Council. During its deliberations, the commission
may consult with representatives of the Maine Teachers
Association and the Maine School Management Association; and be
it further

21 **Compensation. Resolved:** That the members of the commission
23 who are Legislators shall receive legislative per diem, as
25 defined in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 3, section 2, for
27 each day's attendance at commission meetings. All members of the
commission shall receive reimbursement for expenses upon
application to the Executive Director of the Legislative Council;
and be it further

29 **Appropriation. Resolved:** That the following funds are
31 appropriated from the General Fund to carry out the purposes of
this resolve.

33 **1989-90**

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**Special Commission to Study
Instructional Time in Schools**

37

39	Personal Services	\$ 990
	All Other	6,200

41

43 Provides funds for the per diem, meeting and
45 related expenses of the Special Commission
to Study Instructional Time in Schools.

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TOTAL

\$7,190

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the
preamble, this resolve shall take effect when approved.

1

STATEMENT OF FACT

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5 Nationally and in Maine, recent recommendations from several
7 sources have called for lengthening the school day and school
9 year to address the problem of poor student performance. It is
not clear from the research, however, that increased
instructional time is the only, best or even a significant factor
in increasing student learning.

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There appear to be several other elements affecting student
achievement in addition to the length of instructional time, such
as student ability and motivation, quality of the instruction
and resources allocated to schools. Furthermore, proposals to
increase the length of instructional time will be very
expensive. Before spending money on such endeavors, more
documentation of the results is needed.

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The purpose of this resolve is to establish the Special
Commission to Study Instructional Time in Schools and to report
its findings to the Second Regular Session of the 114th
Legislature by November 30, 1989.