

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 114th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION - 1989

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Legislative Document

No. 1112

H.P. 800

House of Representatives, April 11, 1989

Reference to the Committee on Education suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ed Pert".

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Representative HEPBURN of Skowhegan.

Cosponsored by Representative PARADIS of Frenchville, Senator GILL of Cumberland and Representative AULT of Wayne.

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STATE OF MAINE

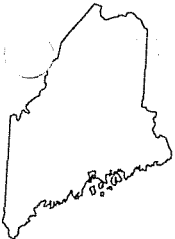
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IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD  
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-NINE

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**An Act to Ensure that All Maine Students Leave Secondary School  
with Basic Literacy Skills.**

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

3               **Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §4722, sub-§3, as enacted by PL 1983, c.**  
5               **859, Pt. C, §§5 and 7, is amended to read:**

7               **3. Satisfactory completion.** A diploma shall be awarded only  
9               to secondary school students who have satisfactorily completed  
11              all diploma requirements in accordance with the academic  
13              standards of the school administrative unit and demonstrated an  
15              ability to successfully apply basic skills to everyday life  
17              situations as measured by a functional literacy examination  
19              developed and administered by the department or by a school  
21              administrative unit whose examination has been approved by the  
23              department. Vocational students may, with the approval of the  
25              commissioner, satisfy the 2nd-year math and science and the  
27              3rd-year social studies requirements through separate or  
29              integrated study within the vocational school curriculum.

31              **Sec. 2. 20-A MRSA §5001-A, sub-§2, ¶B, as amended by PL 1985,**  
33              **c. 123, §1, is further amended to read:**

35              **B. A person who has:**

37                      (1) Reached the age of 15 years or completed the 9th  
39                      grade;

41                      (2) Permission to leave school from that person's  
43                      parent;

45                      (3) Permission to leave school from the school board  
47                      or its designee; and

49                      (4) Agreed in writing with that person's parent and  
51                      the school board or its designee to meet annually until  
53                      that person's 17th birthday to review that person's  
55                      educational needs. When the request to be excused from  
57                      school has been denied pursuant to this paragraph, the  
59                      student's parent may appeal to the commissioner; and

61                      (5) Demonstrated an ability to successfully apply  
63                      basic skills to everyday life situations as measured by  
65                      a functional literacy examination developed and  
67                      administered by the department or by a school  
69                      administrative unit whose examination has been approved  
71                      by the department;

73              **Sec. 3. Basic course of study; literacy assurance.** Under the  
75              authority provided by the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A,  
77              section 4704, and in accordance with the Maine Administrative  
79              Procedure Act, Title 5, chapter 375, the Commissioner of  
81              Educational and Cultural Services shall by rule require that each

1 school administrative unit develop a course of study designed to  
2 ensure that potential dropouts have the literacy skills needed to  
3 pass the functional literacy examination required by Title 20-A,  
4 section 5001, subsection 2, paragraph B.  
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### STATEMENT OF FACT

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11 This bill is designed to ensure that all students leave  
12 Maine's secondary schools with the basic literacy skills needed  
13 to function in our society. The bill provides that all students,  
14 both candidates for a high school diploma and students who, in  
15 accordance with procedures in current law, elect to leave school  
16 after completion of the 9th grade, must pass a functional  
17 literacy examination. The Department of Educational and Cultural  
18 Services will develop and administer the exam. However, a school  
19 administrative unit may develop and administer its own exam  
20 provided that exam is approved by the department. The bill  
21 directs the commissioner to enact rules requiring school  
22 administrative units to add to their curriculum a course of study  
23 designed to ensure that potential dropouts acquire functional  
literacy skills before leaving the public school system.