

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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118th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-1997

Legislative Document

No. 1121

S.P. 344

In Senate, February 20, 1997

An Act to Enhance Parental Involvement in Developing Educational Programs for Students with Disabilities.

Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joy J. O'Brien".

JOY J. O'BRIEN
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator PENDLETON of Cumberland.
Cosponsored by Representative SKOGLUND of St. George and
Representative: LOVETT of Scarborough.

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

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4 Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §7209 is enacted to read:

6 §7209. Parental involvement

8 The department shall adopt rules to enhance parental
10 involvement as fully informed partners in developing educational
12 programs for a student with a disability and to increase parental
14 involvement in the initial identification of a disability,
16 including, but not limited to, the following.

18 1. Meetings. A parent of a student with a disability must
20 be included in all meetings held by local school or department
22 personnel, including staff meetings concerning the student.

24 2. Etiquette. All parties participating in meetings or
26 procedures concerning a student with a disability shall accord
28 each other appropriate respect.

30 3. Experts. A parent must be informed of the right to
32 bring outside experts, consultants, advocates and attorneys to a
34 meeting concerning a student with a disability.

36 4. Notification of experts. A school administrative unit
38 shall inform the parties listed in subsection 3 of a Pupil
40 Evaluation Team meeting concerning a student with a disability if
42 a parent requests notification to these parties and provides the
44 authority with a list of names and addresses.

46 5. Evaluation. When a school administrative unit or the
48 department holds a meeting concerning an evaluation of a student
50 with a disability, the school administrative unit shall explain
52 the significance of the evaluation to the parents of that student
at least one week before the meeting.

6. Minutes. The school administrative unit shall keep
minutes of any meeting concerning a student with a disability,
summarize each party's position at that meeting and provide the
parents of that student with a copy of the minutes within 7 days
of the meeting.

7. Issues. At every review in which the Individual
Education Plan of a student with a disability is altered, the
order of the issues at that meeting must be as follows: needs
assessment; present levels of performance; goals, objectives and
guide posts; special education or related services,
accommodations and systems technology; and placement.

The rules adopted under this section are routine technical
rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter II-A.

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SUMMARY

4 This bill requires the Department of Education to adopt
6 rules to enhance parental involvement as fully informed partners
8 in developing educational programs for a student with a
disability and to increase parental involvement in the
identification of a disability.

10 The bill requires that the parents of a student with a
12 disability be included in all meetings concerning that student,
and be informed of the right to bring outside experts,
14 consultants, attorneys and advocates to the meetings. All
participants in the meetings must accord each other appropriate
respect.

16 This bill also requires that, when a meeting is held
18 concerning an evaluation of a student with a disability, the
significance of the evaluation be explained to the student's
20 parents at least one week before the meeting. The bill requires
the school administrative unit to keep minutes of all meetings
22 concerning a student with a disability and distribute them to the
student's parents.

24 The bill mandates the order, as listed in the Maine Revised
26 Statutes, Title 20-A, section 7209, subsection 7, of the issues
at every review in which the Individual Education Plan of a
28 student with a disability is altered.