

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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121st MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2003

Legislative Document

No. 390

H.P. 310

House of Representatives, January 30, 2003

An Act To Raise the High School Dropout Age

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

Millicent M. MacFarland
MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND
Clerk

Presented by Representative THOMPSON of China.
Cosponsored by Representatives: BARSTOW of Gorham, CUMMINGS of Portland,
FISCHER of Presque Isle.

2
3 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

4 **Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §3271, sub-§1**, as enacted by PL 1985, c.
5 490, §8, is amended to read:

6 **1. Required attendance.** Persons residing in the
7 unorganized territory who are at least 7 and under 17 18 years of
8 age shall attend a public day elementary or secondary school or
9 an approved private school during the time it is in session.

10 **Sec. 2. 20-A MRSA §3271, sub-§3**, as amended by PL 1989, c.
11 415, §§3 and 4, is further amended to read:

12 **3. Exceptions.** Attendance at school or an alternative
13 program shall is not be required of ~~the-following~~:

14 A. A person who has graduated from high school before his
15 17th that person's 18th birthday;

16 B. A person who is at least 15 17 years old of age, has
17 completed the 9th 11th grade and has permission to leave
18 school to participate in a suitable program of training or
19 combined work and study from a parent and the commissioner;
20 and

21 C. A person who has been adjudged an habitual truant and
22 has been excused from attendance pursuant to procedures
23 established by the commissioner.

24 **Sec. 3. 20-A MRSA §5001-A, sub-§1**, as enacted by PL 1983, c.
25 806, §49, is amended to read:

26 **1. Requirement.** Persons 7 years of age or older and under
27 17 18 years of age shall attend a public day school during the
28 time it is in regular session.

29 **Sec. 4. 20-A MRSA §5001-A, sub-§2**, as amended by PL 1989, c.
30 415, §13, is further amended to read:

31 **2. Exceptions.** Attendance at school shall is not be
32 required of ~~the-following~~:

33 A. A person who graduates from high school before that
34 person's 17th birthday;

35 B. A person who has:

36 (1) Reached ~~the-age-of-15~~ 17 years of age or completed
37 the 9th 11th grade;

- 2 (2) Permission to leave school from that person's
parent;
- 4 (3) Been approved by the principal for a suitable
6 program of work and study or training;
- 8 (4) Permission to leave school from the school board
or its designee; and
- 10 (5) Agreed in writing with that person's parent and
12 the school board or its designee to meet annually until
14 that person's 17th 18th birthday to review that
16 person's educational needs. When the request to be
excused from school has been denied pursuant to this
paragraph, the student's parent may appeal to the
commissioner;
- 18 C. A person whose absence is excused under section 5051.
20 The parent of an habitual truant who has been denied a
22 waiver of this paragraph, may appeal to the commissioner in
accordance with section 5051, subsection 2, paragraph E; or
- 24 D. A person who has matriculated and is attending an
26 accredited, ~~post-secondary~~ postsecondary, degree-granting
28 institution as a full-time student. An exception to
attendance in public school under this paragraph must be
approved by the commissioner.

30 **SUMMARY**

32 This bill raises the age until which a student is required
to attend school from 17 to 18.