

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 121st MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2003

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Legislative Document

No. 1229

H.P. 903

House of Representatives, March 6, 2003

### **An Act To Provide School Vouchers to Students in Overcrowded Schools**

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

*Millicent M. MacFarland*  
MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND  
Clerk

Presented by Representative CRESSEY of Baldwin.

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

4 Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA c. 310 is enacted to read:

6 CHAPTER 310

8 SCHOOL VOUCHERS FOR STUDENTS IN  
10 OVERCROWDED SCHOOLS

12 §8001. Definitions

14 As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise  
16 indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

18 1. Overcrowded school. "Overcrowded school" means an  
20 elementary or secondary school having an average  
22 student-to-teacher ratio greater than 20 to 1, as measured  
24 according to rules adopted by the state board.

26 2. Receiving school. "Receiving school" means a public,  
28 private or religious elementary or secondary school that is not  
30 an overcrowded school that is receiving a school voucher under  
32 this chapter.

34 3. Sending school. "Sending school" means a public  
36 overcrowded school that a student has chosen to leave in order to  
38 attend a public or private school that is not an overcrowded  
40 school.

42 §8002. Eligibility

44 A student in a public overcrowded school is eligible to  
46 receive a school voucher from the State if that student chooses  
48 to attend a public, private or religious school that is not an  
50 overcrowded school, provided that the income of the student's  
household was not more than \$30,000 in the most recent tax year.

§8003. Voucher; amount and limitations

The State shall provide \$3,000 to a receiving school for  
each student who is eligible for a school voucher under section  
8002 and who transfers to that school from a public overcrowded  
school. The sending school shall pay the receiving school the  
balance of the cost of educating the student at the receiving  
school, up to an amount equal to the per-pupil costs of the  
sending school.

§8004. Rules

The state board shall adopt rules to implement this

2 chapter. Those rules must include a method for calculating  
3 average student-to-teacher ratios and an administrative process  
4 for ensuring that a student's eligibility for a school voucher is  
5 not discriminated against based on that student's selection of a  
6 receiving school. Rules adopted pursuant to this section are  
7 major substantive rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375,  
8 subchapter 2-A.

## 10 SUMMARY

12 This bill creates a school voucher program for students who  
13 live in households having an annual household income of \$30,000  
14 or less and who attend public schools that have a  
15 student-to-teacher ratio greater than 20 to 1. If a student who  
16 is eligible for a school voucher chooses to leave a public  
17 overcrowded school to attend a public, private or religious  
18 school that has a student-to-teacher ratio less than 20 to 1,  
19 this bill would require the State to pay \$3,000 to that receiving  
20 school towards the education of that student. The remainder of  
21 the cost to educate that student at the receiving school is paid  
22 by the sending school, up to an amount equal to the per-pupil  
costs at the sending school.