

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the
LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from scanned originals with text recognition applied
(searchable text may contain some errors and/or omissions)



122nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2005

Legislative Document

No. 1513

H.P. 1058

House of Representatives, March 30, 2005

An Act To Require Coordinated Early Childhood Care and Preschool Education in Maine

(EMERGENCY)

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

Millicent M. MacFarland
MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND
Clerk

Presented by Representative PINGREE of North Haven.
Cosponsored by Senator MILLS of Somerset and Representatives: CAIN of Orono,
CUMMINGS of Portland, DAVIS of Falmouth, MAKAS of Lewiston, NORTON of Bangor,
TRAHAN of Waldoboro, Senators: MITCHELL of Kennebec, TURNER of Cumberland.

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

4
6 **Whereas,** this legislation requires that the Department of
Education develop standards to ensure that providers of early
childhood care and preschool education are appropriately skilled
and educated and that the settings for that education are safe
and developmentally appropriate; and

8
10 **Whereas,** these standards must be adopted and in place well
before the beginning of the next school year; and

12
14 **Whereas,** in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts
create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of
Maine and require the following legislation as immediately
necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and
safety; now, therefore,

16
18
20 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

22 **Sec. 1. 20-A MRS §4255** is enacted to read:

24 **§4255. Coordinated early childhood care and preschool education**

26 **1. Approval process for early childhood education.** Any
28 school administrative unit that wishes to develop an early
 childhood care and preschool education program must submit a
 proposal for approval to the department. The proposal must:

30 A. Demonstrate coordination with other community-based
32 early childhood care and preschool education programs to
 ensure that new preschool services do not duplicate the
34 efforts of other programs;

36 B. Demonstrate the coordination outlined in paragraph A by
38 including a sign-off at the local level between the school
 administrative unit and the regional child care resource
40 development center in that area and at the state level by
 approval of both the commissioner and the Commissioner of
42 Health and Human Services;

44 C. Ensure that services are available to preschool children
 with disabilities through appropriate coordination with
 regional Child Development Services System sites; and

46 D. Meet the extended child care needs of working parents.

48 **2. Rulemaking.** The department and the Department of Health
50 and Human Services may jointly adopt rules to implement this

2 section. Rules adopted pursuant to this section are routine
3 technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter
4 2-A.

5 **Sec. 2. Standards.** The Department of Education, in
6 collaboration with representatives of the early childhood care
7 and preschool education community including Head Start and child
8 care programs, shall develop by August 1, 2005 standards for
9 early childhood care and preschool education programs that ensure
10 services are provided by skilled, educated preschool teachers in
11 safe and developmentally appropriate settings.

12 **Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the
13 preamble, this Act takes effect when approved.

16 SUMMARY

17 This bill requires local public schools to coordinate with
18 community-based early childhood care and preschool education
19 providers to determine the best way to deliver preschool
20 education. Prior to receiving approval from the Department of
21 Education for offering a so-called "early kindergarten" program,
22 public schools must demonstrate that they have coordinated with
23 community-based early childhood care and preschool education
24 providers to prevent duplication of preschool services. The bill
25 also requires coordinated planning with the Department of Health
26 and Human Services and Department of Education to ensure that new
27 "early kindergarten" services are provided in safe,
28 developmentally appropriate settings by skilled and educated
29 preschool teachers.
30