

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 129th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2019

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Legislative Document

No. 1306

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S.P. 402

In Senate, March 19, 2019

**An Act To Promote Safe Schools through the Creation of the Safe  
School Climate Council**

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT  
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator CHENETTE of York.  
Cosponsored by Representative GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach and  
Representatives: BAILEY of Saco, O'NEIL of Saco.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §12004-I, sub-§18-F** is enacted to read:

3 **18-F.**

4 Education                      Safe School Climate   Not Authorized                      20-A MRSA §6555  
5    Council

6 **Sec. 2. 20-A MRSA §6555** is enacted to read:

7 **§6555. Safe School Climate Council**

8 **1. Council established.** The Safe School Climate Council, as established in Title 5,  
9 section 12004-I, subsection 18-F and referred to in this section as "the council," shall  
10 develop model policies to address bullying, harassment and overall safety in schools.

11 **2. Membership.** The council consists of up to 20 members appointed as follows:

12 A. A representative of the department, appointed by the commissioner;

13 B. A representative of the civil rights team project in the Office of the Attorney  
14 General, appointed by the Attorney General;

15 C. A representative of the Maine Principals' Association or successor organization,  
16 appointed by the Governor;

17 D. A representative of the Maine School Management Association or successor  
18 organization, appointed by the Governor;

19 E. A representative of the Maine Education Association, appointed by the Governor;

20 F. A representative of an organization that advocates for lesbian, gay, bisexual and  
21 transgender students, appointed by the Governor;

22 G. One or more members with expertise in bullying prevention, appointed by the  
23 Governor; and

24 H. Representatives of underrepresented groups, including minority communities and  
25 immigrant communities, appointed by the Governor.

26 **3. Terms; vacancy.** The members of the council appointed pursuant to subsection 2  
27 serve for 2-year terms and serve until their successors are appointed and qualified. On  
28 the expiration of a term of a member under subsection 2, a successor must be appointed  
29 to a 2-year term. A member of the council is eligible for reappointment to the council. A  
30 vacancy in the council does not impair the right of a quorum of the members to exercise  
31 all the rights and perform all the duties of the council. In the event of a vacancy  
32 occurring in the membership, the appointing authority shall appoint a replacement  
33 member for the remainder of the unexpired term in the same manner as the original  
34 appointment was made.

35 **4. Duties.** The council is authorized to meet twice a year. At the first meeting of the  
36 council and annually thereafter, the members shall elect from the membership a chair and

1 a vice-chair and shall determine their duties. Beginning in 2020 and biennially thereafter,  
2 the council shall report recommendations, including model policies, to the joint standing  
3 committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters on topics that  
4 include, but are not limited to:

5 A. Bullying in schools in the State;

6 B. Harassment in schools in the State;

7 C. The overall safety of students, staff and faculty in schools in the State;

8 D. The department's effectiveness in addressing bullying, harassment and overall  
9 safety in schools in the State;

10 E. Access to tools and resources for school administrative units;

11 F. How incidents of bullying, including cyberbullying as defined in section 6554,  
12 subsection 2, paragraph C, are being addressed in schools in the State; and

13 G. Proposed updates to the Children's Cabinet 2006 report entitled "Maine's Best  
14 Practices in Bullying and Harassment Prevention."

## 15 **SUMMARY**

16 This bill establishes the Safe School Climate Council, which is authorized to meet  
17 twice a year and to present to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having  
18 jurisdiction over education matters every 2 years recommendations on model policies to  
19 address bullying, harassment and overall safety in schools.