

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# Sixty-Eighth Legislature.

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SENATE.

No. 2.

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## STATE OF MAINE.

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AUGUSTA, January 6, 1897.

To the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House:

I have the honor to herewith transmit the Report of the Commissioners upon the Establishment of a New Normal School.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

NICHOLAS FESSENDEN,

Secretary of State.

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives in  
Legislature Assembled:

The undersigned, members of the Commission appointed by the Governor under an order of the legislature passed A. D. 1895, to inquire as to the propriety of establishing additional normal schools in Central or Eastern Maine, and to report the result of their investigations to the next legislature, have the honor to submit the following report:

The Commission has pursued two lines of investigation: First, into the capacity of the existing normal schools to accommodate more students; second, into the needs of better normal school privileges in Eastern and Central Maine.

The State has three normal schools; each equipped at an expense of about \$40,000; each maintained at an annual expense of about \$9,000. By the expenditure of \$2,000 for the enlargement of the assembly hall at Castine, and the annual expenditure of \$1,000 for an additional instructor at Farmington, and \$1,000 for an additional instructor at Gorham, these three schools could accommodate 200 additional students without crowding, and without impairment of their present efficiency.

Furthermore, many of the students now in these schools are not properly prepared to take up the work of a normal school. They belong in the high school or the academy. The standard of admission to the normal schools ought to be raised, gradually and steadily, until the equivalent of a high school or academy course shall be required for admission to the normal schools.

The normal school should be a supplement to the high schools and academies; not a substitute for them.

On the other hand, these schools are remote and not easily accessible from Central and Eastern Maine. The time and expense required to reach these schools is a burden and inconvenience to students in Central Maine; and to students in portions of Washington and Aroostook counties amounts to positive hardship and privation. Eastern and Central Maine have a just claim to more available normal school privileges than they now enjoy.

The Commission cannot ignore the claim of these Eastern and Central sections of the State. Neither, in view of the fact that the existing schools are not filled by properly qualified students, can we recommend at present the establishment of new normal schools. If it seems best to attempt to equalize the availability of normal school privileges at present, we recommend that, until the existing schools are filled, and a new school shall be established, mileage for one round trip each term be allowed to normal school students residing in the State, to be paid out of the State treasury. This would bring normal school instruction within the reach of all sections of the State, at very much less expense than would be involved in the erection and maintenance of one or more new normal schools.

Inasmuch as the Commission does not recommend the immediate establishment of new normal schools, it seems best to make no specific recommendation of suitable locations. There are, however, two general principles, which the Commission commends to the consideration of those who may hereafter be called upon to determine the location of a new normal school.

First, The location should be central to the entire section of the State not otherwise provided with normal schools. The

extremely unfortunate location of the existing schools ought to stand as a perpetual warning against the attempt to consider merely local claims in the location of State institutions.

Second, The next normal school should be established in a city of sufficient size to afford three hundred students abundant opportunity for practice work in all the grades of an efficient and progressive public school system.

In conclusion, the members of the Commission desire to express their thanks to the principals of the normal schools, the State superintendent of common schools, and the representatives of Presque Isle, Houlton, Lee, Calais, Bangor, Dexter, and Newport, for kind assistance and valuable information.

Respectfully submitted,

WM. DEW. HYDE,  
S. D. LEAVITT,  
EDMUND F. WEBB.

January 6, 1897.

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STATE OF MAINE.

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IN SENATE, January 7, 1897.

Laid on table to be printed, pending reference, on motion by Mr. WALLS of Knox.

KENDALL M. DUNBAR, *Secretary.*