

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Sixty-Eighth Legislature.

SENATE.

No. 36.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED
AND NINETY-SEVEN

AN ACT to create a State Board of Examiners of teachers and
to define its duties.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in
Legislature assembled. as follows:*

Section 1. The governor, with the advice and consent of
2 the council, shall appoint a State board of examiners, con-
3 sisting of one member from each congressional district; the
4 State superintendent of common schools shall be a member
5 of the board by virtue of his office and shall be chairman,
6 ex-officio. The board shall have charge of the examination
7 of all candidates for positions as teachers in the public
8 schools of the State.

The members of the board shall serve for four years, one
10 member retiring each year; provided that at the time of the

11 first appointment the members shall draw lots for terms of
12 one, two, three and four years.

Each member of the board, with the exception of the chair-
14 man, shall receive for his services \$5.00 per day, and travel-
15 ing expenses while in the discharge of his duties.

Sect. 2. They may appoint local conductors to take
2 charge of the examinations in the towns where they authorize
3 the same to be held. The powers and duties of these con-
4 ductors shall be such as are prescribed by the board. The
5 pay of each conductor shall be \$2.00 per day while in the
6 service of the board.

Sect. 3. They shall provide for holding examinations, at
2 least twice each year, shall give proper notices of the holding
3 of the same, and shall hold them in such towns as in their
4 judgment, will best accommodate the candidates who signify
5 their intention of taking the examination.

They shall make provision for the examination of all candi-
7 dates for teachers' certificates in the subjects taught in the
8 public schools, and such other subjects as they may deem
9 necessary to ascertain the fitness of candidates to teach.

Sect. 4. They may issue three grades of certificates, and if
2 issued, the first grade shall be valid for five years, the second
3 grade for three years, and the third grade for one year. The
4 first and second grades shall authorize persons holding the
5 same to teach in any public school in the State. The third
6 grade shall authorize persons holding the same to teach in
7 the common schools only.

Sect. 5. They shall not grant to the same candidate more
2 than three, third grade certificates. They may grant to

3 graduates of high schools, academies or seminaries, having a
4 course of study of not less than four years and approved by
5 the examiners, and to graduates of State normal schools,
6 third grade certificates without examination, provided such
7 candidates furnish the board with satisfactory evidence of
8 possessing such moral and professional fitness as will enable
9 them to conduct a school successfully. They may grant to
10 graduates of State normal schools, who are also graduates of
11 high schools, academies or seminaries, a second grade cer-
12 tificate without examination, provided that such candidates
13 furnish the board with satisfactory evidence of possessing
14 such moral and professional fitness as will enable them to
15 conduct a school successfully. They may grant to graduates
16 of colleges a first grade certificate without examination, pro-
17 vided that such candidates furnish the board with satisfac-
18 tory evidence of possessing such moral and professional
19 fitness as will enable them to conduct a successful school.

Sect. 6. The State board of examiners may conduct
2 examinations and issue certificates as provided for in this
3 act, at any time after passage of the same, whenever in their
4 judgment a sufficient number of candidates have presented
5 themselves to warrant them in taking such action, and the
6 certificates issued by them shall be valid and in full force
7 from the date of issuing the same.

Sect. 7. Towns employing teachers who do not hold cer-
2 tificates from the State board of examiners shall forfeit
3 twenty-five per cent. of their share in the State school fund.

Sect. 8. There shall be appropriated annually from the
2 State school fund \$1,300 to pay the expenses of the State

3 board of examiners, and the expenses of conducting the
4 examinations provided for in this act, the same to be
5 expended under direction of the governor and council. All
6 acts and parts of acts in conflict herewith are hereby
7 repealed.

Sect. 9. This act shall take effect September 1, 1899.

STATEMENT OF FACTS.

The following facts are compiled from reports made by the local superintendents. The original documents are on file in the office of the State superintendent of common schools.

Twelve per cent of the teachers in the public schools of the State are relatives of the superintending school committees. An additional five per cent. are related by marriage or are so associated in business with these officials as to give them an unsafe influence in securing their appointments. More than 800 persons having consanguineal or financial claims on the members of the superintending school committees of the several towns have been appointed during the past year as teachers in the common schools of the State. Thirty-eight per cent of the teachers were not examined by the superintendents, during the past year, either by personal inspection of their work, or by oral or written tests. Twenty-seven per cent of the teachers attended summer schools, and fifty-six per cent attended teachers' meetings during the past year. Forty-one per cent of the teachers of the State are not graduates of high schools, academies, seminaries, normal schools, colleges or universities. Twenty-eight per cent have taught only one term in the school in which they are now teaching. Sixty-seven per cent have taught one year or less in the schools in which they are teaching now. Thirty-eight per cent. have never read any books on the history, science or art of education. Forty-seven per cent. are reading books upon these subjects at the present time. Twenty-two per cent. have read educational papers or magazines during the past year.

Seventy-five per cent. of the local superintendents are in favor of having all teachers in the public schools examined by a State board of examiners. Fourteen per cent. are opposed to such an examination. Three per cent. are undecided, and eight per cent. failed to give any reply upon this question.

Forty and two-thirds per cent. of the superintendents report that they have schools which are fairly described by the account which is given of the "poor" or "very poor" schools on pages

22-49 of the report of the educational department, for the year 1895.

The local superintendents estimate that not less than \$200,000 is expended in maintaining schools which are taught by teachers who have not the scholastic training which fits them to perform properly the duties devolving upon them.

Four per cent. of the superintendents devote all their time to superintendence. The remaining ninety-six per cent. give to this work such fractions of their time as they are willing to spare from their regular professions or occupations. Sixteen per cent. of the superintendents received all their education in the common schools. Four per cent report that they have not attended any school, either public or private. Nineteen per cent. are graduates of high schools, academies, seminaries, normal schools or colleges. Thirty-four per cent. of the superintendents have had no experience in the school room as teachers. Twenty per cent. are teaching at the present time.

These facts prove that in the judgment of the local superintendents, at least, one third of the teachers in the rural schools are so deficient in education and lacking in professional training as to be unable to perform their responsible duties satisfactorily.

It is equally clear that a much larger per cent. of the local superintendents feel that they are not competent to examine and certificate teachers, or that there are other sufficient reasons why it is best to have these examinations conducted by a State board, and for these reasons they are desirous of being relieved of this responsibility.



STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, January 28, 1897.

Reported by Mr. Roberts from Committee on Education, to be printed
and re-committed to the Committee.

KENDALL M. DUNBAR, *Secretary.*