

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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E I G H T Y - N I N T H L E G I S L A T U R E

Legislative Document

No. 535

H. P. 1312

House of Representatives, February 8, 1939.

Referred to Committee on Education. Sent up for concurrence and 750 copies ordered printed.

HARVEY R. PEASE, Clerk.

Presented by Mr. Marshall of Auburn by request.

S T A T E O F M A I N E

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
THIRTY-NINE

**AN ACT to Provide Moral Instruction for Children in Connection with the
Public Schools.**

Whereas, one of the first requisites of an harmonious, contented and prosperous state depends upon religious tolerance and understanding; and

Whereas, the civil and religious liberties which are inherently part of the American Constitutional system have been best secured and furthered by providing moral instruction for pupils in connection with the public schools of this state; now, therefore,

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

Sec. 1. School committee may provide for moral instruction. The school committee of each city or town is hereby authorized and empowered to provide for the moral instruction of pupils subject to the jurisdiction of such committee in the manner in this act provided.

Sec. 2. Survey of religious affiliation may be made. The school committee of each city or town may authorize and complete a survey of the religious affiliations of all pupils attending the public schools within such city or town, and ascertain those pupils who desire, and have the consent of parent or guardian for moral instruction. On a day in each week, to be fixed by the board, it may excuse such pupils for at least 1 hour, for the

purpose of attending their respective places of worship, or some other suitable place, there to receive moral instruction in accordance with the religious faith of said pupils.

Sec. 3. Rules and regulations. Each school committee is authorized to adopt rules and regulations for carrying into effect the provisions of this act and to make such arrangement with the respective persons in charge of the several denominations for the giving of the aforesaid moral instruction.

Sec. 4. Credit for time spent at places of worship. Pupils attending their several places of worship for moral instruction therein at the time specified and for the period fixed shall be credited with the time so spent as if such pupils had been in actual attendance at school.

Sec. 5. Children to remain in school or be present at place of worship. Any child which, for any reason fails to receive the aforesaid moral instruction, shall remain in school during the period when such instruction is being given and herein provided, but such child shall not receive any educational advantage over children receiving said instruction.

Sec. 6. Expense. The aforesaid moral instruction shall be given without expense to any city or town, the pupils of which receive such instruction, and no city or town, or the school committee thereof, shall incur any expense for such instruction beyond the cost of the original survey, hereinbefore mentioned.