

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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DOCUMENTS

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THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE.

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1865.

FORTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE.

SENATE.

No. 17.

REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION,

UPON THE SUBJECT OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENCY.

The Committee on Education, to whom was referred so much of the Governor's message as relates to the office of Superintendent of Common Schools, and also the joint orders directing the Committee to inquire into the expediency of abolishing the office or substituting therefor a Board of Education, have had the same under consideration and ask leave to report; that,

Whereas our system of popular education is not inferior, in magnitude and importance, to any other public interest whatever, and

Whereas no extensive and important business can be conducted successfully without careful supervision, therefore the State Superintendency of Schools ought not to be abolished.

But, whereas the present system is less efficient than is desirable, from want of proper co-operating agencies in the several counties, by means of which the influence of the State Superintendency can reach the teachers and school officers of the several towns, therefore the present system should be so modified as to render it more

efficient in accomplishing the work intended; and to secure this end we submit the accompanying Bill.

O. N. BRADBURY,
CORNELIUS STONE,
D. T. RICHARDSON,
EDW. P. WESTON,
H. M. EATON,
LYNDON OAK,
OTIS HATHAWAY,
WM. W. HOBBS,
T. H. McLAIN,
C. BICKFORD.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND SIXTY-FIVE.

AN ACT to establish the Department of Public Instruction.

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

SECTION 1. There is hereby created the Department of Public Instruction, to be officered and conducted as hereinafter provided.

SECT. 2. The head of this department shall be styled the Superintendent of Public Instruction ; he shall be elected at the commencement of the political year by the two branches of the legislature in convention assembled, and shall hold his office for the term of three years, and until his successor shall be elected and qualified. If the office shall become vacant by death, resignation, or otherwise, the legislature shall fill the vacancy for a like term of three years ; but if the legislature is not then in session, the governor shall appoint a superintendent, to be approved by the coun-

12 cil, and to hold office until the next legislature shall
13 elect his successor.

SECT. 3. The superintendent of public instruction
2 shall take and subscribe the usual oaths administered
3 to other state officers, for the faithful performance of
4 the duties of his office, as follows :

5 1. He shall prepare and issue from his office all blanks
6 required by law to be issued to school officers of towns,
7 plantations, cities or counties ; shall receive and exam-
8 ine the same when returned from said towns, planta-
9 tions, cities or counties, and compile therefrom such
10 tables as he may deem necessary to exhibit the condi-
11 tion and progress of the public schools of the state.

12 2. From the reports required by law to be made by
13 school officers of towns or counties, he shall carefully
14 digest such statements, opinions, facts and suggestions
15 as may seem to him valuable for general circulation,
16 and shall embody the same, together with information
17 derived from other sources, and any suggestions or rec-
18 ommendations of his own, in an annual report to the
19 legislature, which shall be printed and ready for distri-
20 bution to members for their several towns, plantations
21 and cities, in the month of January.

22 3. He shall carefully investigate the operation of our
23 school laws, and note any defects of the system which

24 may require to be remedied by legislation ; he shall
25 examine the methods of instruction and government
26 adopted in our common, higher and normal schools,
27 and shall make suggestions for their improvement ; he
28 shall correspond with teachers and school officers in the
29 state and with prominent educators elsewhere, shall
30 gather facts and opinions upon public education from
31 all available sources ; and any valuable information
32 which he may thus acquire, he shall disseminate as
33 opportunity offers, by lectures or addresses, and com-
34 munications to the public press.

35 4. He shall annually hold in each county, in conjunc-
36 tion with the county superintendent thereof, an insti-
37 tute of instruction for teachers and school officers, to
38 be conducted in the manner and for the purposes here-
39 inafter provided.

40 5. He shall inquire into the literary and financial
41 condition of the academies, seminaries, colleges and
42 other educational institutions chartered or endowed by
43 this state, and shall investigate the character and
44 operation of any schools in other states in which chil-
45 dren from Maine, blind, deaf and dumb, or idiotic,
46 may be placed to be educated at the expense of the
47 state ; and for this purpose he shall issue blanks to
48 said institutions, containing such inquiries as he may

49 deem necessary, from which blanks when filled and
50 returned to his office, he shall compile such information
51 as will exhibit their character and condition, and shall
52 embody the same in his annual report.

53 6. By a careful examination into the construction of
54 school houses, and the best modes of warming and
55 ventilation, he shall be prepared to furnish, when
56 requested, building plans and estimates for the same.
57 He shall also examine the various styles of school fur-
58 niture and apparatus, and recommend such as he may
59 judge to be most convenient and economical.

60 7. He shall examine all questions which may arise
61 in the interpretation of school laws and usages, and
62 by carefully prepared opinions and judicious counsels,
63 shall aid school officers, teachers and parents in remov-
64 ing any difficulties which may be submitted to him for
65 adjustment.

SECT. 4. The superintendent of public instruction
2 shall give notice to the school committees in the sev-
3 eral counties, by a circular directed to each, to meet
4 at such convenient place therein and on such Tuesday
5 as he may appoint, for the purpose of organizing a
6 county board of instruction, in the manner and for the
7 purposes below named.

SECT. 5. Said county board of instruction shall con-

2 sist of the school committees of the several towns, duly
3 certified to be such by the clerks thereof, and they
4 shall be entitled to take part in the doings of the
5 board, after having subscribed their names upon the
6 record kept for that purpose by the secretary.

SECT. 6. At the first meeting called as aforesaid,
2 the state superintendent, if present, or some member
3 of a superintending school committee, in his absence,
4 shall call the meeting to order, and preside until the
5 organization of the board by the election of its regular
6 officers.

SECT. 7. The officers of the board shall be a presi-
2 dent, a secretary, and a treasurer, to be chosen by
3 ballot for the term of one year, and to continue in
4 office until their successors are elected.

SECT. 8. The county board shall then proceed to
2 elect a county superintendent of schools, who may or
3 may not be one of their own number, but who shall be
4 a resident of the county, and whose duties shall be as
5 follows :

6 1. He shall aid the state superintendent in conduct-
7 ing the exercises of the county institute, and in exam-
8 ining candidates for state certificates.

9 2. He shall visit the several towns in his county,
10 shall advise with teachers and school officers upon the

11 affairs of the public schools, shall hold at least one
12 meeting in every town for the purpose of discussing
13 the duties and relations of parents, teachers and com-
14 mittees, and by all practicable methods shall endeavor
15 to promote the interests of education within the county.

16 3. He shall report to the state superintendent annu-
17 ally on or before the first day of December, the gen-
18 eral condition of education in his county, and such
19 particular information as the state superintendent may
20 require.

21 4. He shall receive and transmit to the state treas-
22 ury all moneys paid by teachers within his county for
23 state certificates; and shall give a bond, in the sum
24 of five hundred dollars, for the faithful performance
25 of this duty.

SECT. 9. On the Wednesday morning following the
2 annual meeting of the county board, the state super-
3 intendent, aided by the county superintendent, shall
4 shall open an institute of instruction, and continue the
5 same during three days and evenings, for the purpose
6 of imparting instruction upon the best methods of
7 teaching and governing schools; upon the rights and
8 duties of teachers and school officers as established by
9 law and usage, and especially for the examination of
10 candidates for state certificates. In conducting the

11 exercises of the institute the superintendents may pro-
12 cure such assistance, without expense to the state, as
13 they may deem proper.

SECT. 10. For the purpose of encouraging teachers
2 to attain a higher standard of qualifications, the state
3 superintendent is hereby authorized to prepare state
4 certificates of two grades, to be styled the grammar
5 school certificate and the high school certificate.

SECT. 11. 1. Candidates for the grammar school
2 certificate, on presenting satisfactory evidence of good
3 moral character and aptitude for teaching, shall be
4 carefully examined orally and by written questions, in
5 orthography, with the analysis of elementary sounds,
6 in Colburn's mental arithmetic and Greenleaf's na-
7 tional arithmetic, or their equivalents, in Smyth's ele-
8 mentary algebra, or its equivalent, in descriptive and
9 physical geography, in English grammar, including
10 the analysis and composition of the language, in pen-
11 manship, in the keeping of books and accounts, in the
12 history of the United States, in the school laws of
13 Maine, and in the principles and art of teaching and
14 school government.

15 2. Candidates for the high school certificate shall be
16 examined in the same manner, in the branches afore-
17 said, with the addition of natural philosophy, book-

18 keeping by double entry, Smyth's larger algebra, or
19 its equivalent, geometry, astronomy, chemistry, rhet-
20 oric and English literature,—to the extent taught in
21 the ordinary academic text books,—and in the consti-
22 tution of this state and the United States.

SECT. 12. Such certificate, signed by the state and
2 county superintendents, shall entitle the holder, for the
3 term of three years from its date, to teach in the state,
4 —in any public school in which instruction is not re-
5 quired in higher branches than those named in the cer-
6 tificate,—without further examination as to his literary
7 qualifications ; but he shall present his certificate, for
8 examination, to some member of the superintending
9 school committee of the town in which he proposes to
10 teach ; and shall be under the direction and control of
11 the school committee, in all other respects, as is now
12 provided by law.

SECT. 13. Any person receiving such certificate
2 shall pay for the same the sum of three dollars ; and
3 all moneys received from this source shall be appropri-
4 ated by the treasurer toward paying the expenses of
5 the department of public instruction.

SECT. 14. The superintendent of public instruction
2 shall receive a salary of fifteen hundred dollars ; and
3 for travelling expenses a sum not exceeding three hun-

4 dred dollars, to be paid from the treasury quarterly on
5 the governor's warrant, when his account shall have
6 been approved by the council. In like manner each
7 county superintendent shall receive for his services two
8 dollars a day, and not more than one dollar a day for
9 his expenses, for a number of days not exceeding the
10 number of towns in his county, and four day's attend-
11 ance on the county board and institute.

SECT. 15. A provisional superintendent of public
2 instruction shall be appointed by the governor as soon
3 as practicable after the passage of this act, to hold
4 office until the regular election of superintendent by
5 the legislature.

SECT. 16. All acts and parts of acts inconsistent
2 with this act are hereby repealed; and this act shall
3 take effect when approved by the governor.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, February 16, 1865.

Laid on the table on motion of Mr. BRADBURY, and 350 copies of the report and bill ordered to be printed for the use of the Legislature.

THOMAS P. CLEAVES, *Secretary.*