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Date: (Filing No. S-)

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STATE OF MAINE
SENATE
129TH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

SENATE AMENDMENT “ ” to COMMITTEE AMENDMENT “A” to S.P. 38, L.D. 151, Bill, “An Act To Align State Law with Current Practice Regarding Required School Attendance”

Amend the amendment by inserting after the title the following:

'Amend the bill by striking out all of section 2 and inserting the following:

Sec. 2. 20-A MRSA §3271, sub-§1-A, as enacted by PL 2019, c. 235, §1, is amended to read:

1-A. Attendance of persons 5 years of age or older and under 6 years of age. A person 5 years of age or older and under ~~7~~ 6 years of age who is enrolled in and who has not withdrawn from a public day school is required to attend that school during the time it is in session.

Sec. 3. 20-A MRSA §3271, sub-§2, as amended by PL 2019, c. 235, §2, is further amended to read:

2. Alternative instruction. Alternative instruction may be substituted for attendance in a day school in the following cases when approved by the school principal. A person 5 years of age or older and under ~~7~~ 6 years of age is not required to meet the requirements of this subsection.

A. The person is enrolled in an approved special education program.

B. The person obtains equivalent instruction through alternative learning or in any other manner arranged or approved by the commissioner.

Sec. 4. 20-A MRSA §3272, sub-§2, ¶B, as amended by PL 2019, c. 235, §3, is further amended to read:

B. The person is required to attend school or alternative instruction and is at least ~~7~~ 6 years of age and has not completed grade 6 under this chapter and has the equivalent of 7 full days of unexcused absences or 5 consecutive school days of unexcused absences during a school year; or'

Amend the amendment by inserting after section 3 the following:

'Amend the bill by striking out all of section 4 and inserting the following:

1 **Sec. 4. 20-A MRSA §5001-A, sub-§1-A**, as enacted by PL 2019, c. 235, §4, is
2 amended to read:

3 **1-A. Attendance of persons 5 years of age or older and under 6 years of age.** A
4 person 5 years of age or older and under ~~7~~ 6 years of age who is enrolled in and who has
5 not withdrawn from a public day school is required to attend that school during the time it
6 is in session.

7 **Sec. 5. 20-A MRSA §5001-A, sub-§3**, as amended by PL 2019, c. 235, §5, is
8 further amended to read:

9 **3. Alternatives to attendance at public day school.** Alternatives to attendance at
10 public day school are as follows. A person 5 years of age or older and under ~~7~~ 6 years
11 of age is not required to meet the requirements of this subsection.

12 A. Equivalent instruction alternatives are as follows.

13 (1) A person is excused from attending a public day school if the person obtains
14 equivalent instruction in:

15 (a) A private school approved for attendance purposes pursuant to section
16 2901;

17 (b) A private school recognized by the department as providing equivalent
18 instruction;

19 (c-1) A home instruction program that complies with the requirements of
20 subparagraph (4); or

21 (d) Any other manner arranged for by the school board and approved by the
22 commissioner.

23 (2) A student is credited with attendance at a private school only if a certificate
24 showing the name, residence and attendance of the person at the school, signed
25 by the person or persons in charge of the school, has been filed with the school
26 officials of the administrative unit in which the student resides.

27 (4) The following provisions govern a home instruction program.

28 (a) The student's parent or guardian shall provide a written notice of intent to
29 provide home instruction simultaneously to the school officials of the
30 administrative unit in which the student resides and to the commissioner
31 within 10 calendar days of the beginning of home instruction. The notice
32 must contain the following information:

33 (i) The name, signature and address of the student's parent or guardian;

34 (ii) The name and age of the student;

35 (iii) The date the home instruction program will begin;

36 (iv) A statement of assurance that indicates the home instruction
37 program will provide at least 175 days annually of instruction and will
38 provide instruction in the following subject areas: English and language

1 arts, math, science, social studies, physical education, health education,
2 library skills, fine arts and, in at least one grade from grade 6 to 12,
3 Maine studies. At one grade level from grade 7 to 12, the student will
4 demonstrate proficiency in the use of computers; and

5 (v) A statement of assurance that indicates that the home instruction
6 program will include an annual assessment of the student's academic
7 progress that includes at least one of the forms of assessment described in
8 division (b).

9 (b) On or before September 1st of each subsequent year of home instruction,
10 the student's parent or guardian shall file a letter with the school officials of
11 the administrative unit in which the student resides and the commissioner
12 stating the intention to continue providing home instruction and enclose a
13 copy of one of the following forms of annual assessment of the student's
14 academic progress:

15 (i) A standardized achievement test administered through the
16 administrative unit in which the student resides or through other
17 arrangements approved by the commissioner. If the test is administered
18 through the administrative unit in which the student resides, that
19 administration must be agreed to by the school officials of the
20 administrative unit prior to submission of the written notice of intent to
21 provide home instruction;

22 (ii) A test developed by the school officials of the administrative unit in
23 which the student resides appropriate to the student's home instruction
24 program, which must be agreed to by the school officials of the
25 administrative unit prior to submission of the written notice of intent to
26 provide home instruction;

27 (iii) A review and acceptance of the student's progress by an identified
28 individual who holds a current Maine teacher's certificate;

29 (iv) A review and acceptance of the student's progress based on, but not
30 limited to, a presentation of an educational portfolio of the student to a
31 local area homeschooling support group whose membership for this
32 purpose includes a currently certified Maine teacher or administrator; or

33 (v) A review and acceptance of the student's progress by a local advisory
34 board selected by the superintendent of the administrative unit in which
35 the student resides that includes one administrative unit employee and 2
36 home instruction tutors. For the purpose of this subdivision, a "home
37 instruction tutor" means the parent, guardian or other person who acts or
38 will act as a primary teacher of the student in the home instruction
39 program. This provision must be agreed to by the school officials of the
40 administrative unit in which the student resides prior to submission of the
41 written notice of intent to provide home instruction.

1 (c) Dissemination of any information filed under this subparagraph is
2 governed by the provisions of section 6001; the federal Family Educational
3 Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 United States Code, Section 1232g
4 (2002); and the federal Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975,
5 20 United States Code, Sections 1401 to 1487 (2002), except that "directory
6 information," as defined by the federal Family Educational Rights and
7 Privacy Act of 1974, is confidential and is not subject to public disclosure
8 unless the parent or guardian specifically permits disclosure in writing or a
9 judge orders otherwise. Copies of the information filed under this
10 subparagraph must be maintained by the student's parent or guardian until the
11 home instruction program concludes. The records must be made available to
12 the commissioner upon request.

13 (d) If the home instruction program is discontinued, students of compulsory
14 school age must be enrolled in a public school or an equivalent instruction
15 alternative as provided for in this paragraph. The receiving school shall
16 determine the placement of the student. At the secondary level, the principal
17 of the receiving school shall determine the value of the prior educational
18 experience toward meeting the standards of the system of learning results as
19 established in section 6209.

20 B. A person may be excused from attendance at a public day school pursuant to
21 section 5104-A or section 8605.

22 **Sec. 6. 20-A MRSA §5051-A, sub-§1, ¶C**, as amended by PL 2019, c. 235, §7,
23 is amended to read:

24 C. Is at least ~~7~~ 6 years of age and has not completed grade 6 and has the equivalent
25 of 7 full days of unexcused absences or 5 consecutive school days of unexcused
26 absences during a school year; or'

27 **SUMMARY**

28 In order to avoid the enactment of conflicting statutory provisions, this amendment
29 amends recently chaptered law regarding the age at which children must begin attending
30 school to be consistent with the bill's establishment of that age as 6 years of age.

31 **SPONSORED BY:** _____

32 **(Senator BREEN)**

33 **COUNTY: Cumberland**