CHAPTER 304

MAINE EDUCATIONAL CENTER FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING AND THE GOVERNOR BAXTER SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

§7401. School established

The Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf is established as a public school pursuant to this chapter for the purpose of educating deaf and hard-of-hearing students. The school is a body politic and corporate and is an instrumentality and agency of the State. The exercise by the school of the powers conferred by this chapter is the performance of an essential public function by and on behalf of the State. [PL 2005, c. 279, §6 (AMD).]

SECTION HISTORY

§7402. Definitions

As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings. [PL 1995, c. 676, §5 (NEW); PL 1995, c. 676, §13 (AFF).]

1. School. "School" means the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf established under this chapter, including the center school located at Mackworth Island known as the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf, the center preschool and any satellite school within the State that may be operated under a contracted services agreement. [PL 2011, c. 683, §1 (AMD).]

2. School board. "School board" means the School Board of the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf. [PL 2005, c. 279, §7 (AMD).]

3. Sending school. "Sending school" means any school administrative unit that has a student in attendance at the center school or at a satellite school. [PL 2005, c. 279, §7 (AMD).]

4. Executive director. "Executive director" means the Executive Director of the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf. [PL 2011, c. 683, §1 (AMD).]

5. Center school. "Center school" means the kindergarten to grade 12 programs established and operated by the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf at the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf located at Mackworth Island or at a location determined by the school board in accordance with section 7407, subsection 17. [PL 2011, c. 683, §1 (AMD).]

6. Satellite school. "Satellite school" means the programs, including a residential program, day school programs, early childhood programs and outreach programs, that are located near the population centers of deaf and hard-of-hearing students within the State established by the School Board of the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf. [PL 2005, c. 279, §7 (AMD).]
7. Statewide educational services or outreach. "Statewide educational services" or "outreach" means consultation services provided to families of children from birth to 5 years of age who are deaf or hard-of-hearing students and consulting services to school administrative units that serve school-age deaf or hard-of-hearing children.  
[PL 2011, c. 683, §1 (AMD).]

8. Statewide resource center. "Statewide resource center" means the information and referral services provided by the library at the center school and the distance education program and the community education program offered at the center school.  
[PL 2005, c. 279, §7 (NEW).]

9. Center preschool. "Center preschool" means the preschool program established and operated by the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf at the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf.  
[PL 2011, c. 683, §1 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

§7403. Responsibility; location; geographic access

The center school programs are operated by the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf located on Mackworth Island or at a location determined by the school board in accordance with section 7407, subsection 17. Satellite school programs, including a residential program in accordance with section 7407, subsection 17, may be located near the population centers of deaf and hard-of-hearing students within the State.  
[PL 2013, c. 552, §1 (AMD).]

1. Responsibility; repeal.  
[PL 2013, c. 552, §1 (NEW); MRSA T. 20-A §7403, sub-§1 (RP).]

SECTION HISTORY

§7404. Funding; tuition

The following provisions apply to funding for and tuition to the school.  
[PL 1995, c. 676, §5 (NEW); PL 1995, c. 676, §13 (AFF).]

1. Funding. Students from this State may attend the center school free of tuition and room and board expense. Funding for these students is provided by legislative appropriation based on the services necessary, including room and board, to satisfy the individualized education programs of the students enrolled in the center school. Funding must support maintenance of the center school and that portion of the island used by the center school, security, outreach services, adult education, access to the education network of Maine and operations of the center school, including the residential program, parent-infant program, preschool program and communication garden program. Funding must also support maintenance and operations of any satellite school.  
[PL 2011, c. 683, §3 (AMD).]

2. Out-of-state tuition. Students from other states and countries may attend the school on a space-available basis by paying the cost of tuition, fees and room and board as established by the school board.  
[PL 1995, c. 676, §5 (NEW); PL 1995, c. 676, §13 (AFF).]
§7405. Enrollment; state and federal educational services requirements; technical assistance (REPEALED)

SECTION HISTORY

§7405-A. Placement; state and federal educational services requirements; technical assistance

Beginning July 1, 2015, the following provisions apply to student placement, state and federal educational services requirements and technical assistance. [PL 2013, c. 552, §3 (NEW).]

1. Placement. The school administrative unit in which a deaf or hard-of-hearing student resides is responsible for providing a free, appropriate public education pursuant to chapter 301 for a student placed in the center school or in one of the satellite school programs. An individualized education program team for a school administrative unit in which a deaf or hard-of-hearing student resides is responsible for the placement decision of that student and, when the center school or one of the satellite school programs is being considered as a placement for the student, shall invite a representative of the center school or the satellite school to attend the individualized education program team meeting at which this placement is being considered. The Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing is responsible for the sums necessary to ensure that the services required to meet the individualized education program for each student placed in the center school or in one of the satellite school programs are provided, including:

A. The cost of tuition; and [PL 2013, c. 552, §3 (NEW).]

B. The costs of transportation and other related services as defined by section 7001, subsection 4-B, including the following related services:

   (1) Speech-language therapy;
   (2) Audiology in conjunction with the student’s primary audiologist;
   (3) Occupational therapy;
   (4) Transportation;
   (5) Interpreting services;
   (6) Extended school year services;
   (7) Frequency modulation systems;
   (8) Evaluation for the following services:
       (a) Occupational therapy;
       (b) Speech-language therapy;
       (c) American Sign Language;
       (d) Psychoeducational assessment for placement; and
       (e) Academic achievement; and
   (9) Behavioral supports and planning.

Beginning July 1, 2015, the costs of related services not listed in this paragraph are the responsibility of the school administrative unit in which a deaf or hard-of-hearing student resides.
for those students attending the center school or in one of the satellite school programs operated by
the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Governor Baxter School
for the Deaf beginning in the 2015-2016 school year. [PL 2013, c. 552, §3 (NEW).]

The school board shall pay the room and board costs for each student placed in a residential program
in the center school or in one of the satellite school programs through funds appropriated by the State.
[PL 2013, c. 552, §3 (NEW).]

2. State and federal educational services requirements. The center school, center preschool
and any satellite school shall comply with all standards for state public schools and shall comply with
all federal and state laws and department rules for the provision of educational services to children with
disabilities. [PL 2013, c. 552, §3 (NEW).]

3. Technical assistance. A school administrative unit may request technical assistance from the
school in matters relating to the education of deaf and hard-of-hearing students. [PL 2013, c. 552, §3 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY
PL 2013, c. 552, §3 (NEW).

§7406. School board

The School Board of the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the
Governor Baxter School for the Deaf is established as the policy-making authority and the governing
body of the school. [PL 2005, c. 279, §8 (AMD).]

1. Membership. In appointing members to the school board, the Governor shall give proper
consideration to achieving statewide geographical representation, cultural equity and gender equity. In
appointing voting members to the school board, the Governor shall select nominees with experience or
special knowledge in one or more of the following areas: law, finance, organizational issues,
management, education, human resources and collective bargaining. The school board and interested
parties may submit a list of recommended candidates to the Governor to aid in making appointments
of voting and nonvoting members. The appointments of voting members made by the Governor are
subject to review by the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education
matters and subject to confirmation by the Legislature. The appointments of nonvoting members made
by the Governor are not subject to review by the joint standing committee of the Legislature having
jurisdiction over education matters or subject to confirmation by the Legislature. The Governor shall
appoint the school board consisting of 15 voting members and 2 nonvoting members as follows:

A. Four parents of students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, including a minimum of one parent
with a child enrolled in the residential program and one parent with a child receiving service from
the school's outreach program; [PL 1999, c. 775, §7 (AMD).]
B. Three deaf representatives of the State's deaf community; [PL 1995, c. 676, §5 (NEW).]
C. Eight members of the general public, at least 2 of whom must have expertise in deaf education;
and [PL 1999, c. 775, §7 (AMD).]
D. [PL 1999, c. 775, §7 (RP).]
E. [PL 1999, c. 775, §7 (RP).]
F. Two students, one who attends the school and one who receives outreach services, both of whom
are nonvoting members and who may not participate as board members in executive sessions or
receive materials as board members from executive sessions. [PL 1999, c. 775, §7 (AMD).]
[PL 2003, c. 115, §1 (AMD).]

2. Chair. The school board shall choose annually one of its members to serve as chair.
3. **Meetings.** The school board shall meet at regular intervals.

4. **Quorum.** Each voting member of the school board is entitled to one vote. A majority of voting members of the school board constitutes a quorum for the transaction of any official business.

5. **Terms of voting members.** The terms of the voting members of the school board are for 3 years, unless otherwise designated, and are staggered with 1/3 of the voting members appointed each year. Members may be appointed for consecutive terms.

6. **Terms of nonvoting members.** The terms of the nonvoting student members, pursuant to subsection 1, paragraph F, must be determined by the school board.

7. **Expenses.** Voting members of the school board must be compensated according to the provisions of Title 5, chapter 379.

8. **Appointments.**

The powers and duties of the school board include the following.

1. **Policies.** The school board shall develop and adopt policies and rules necessary for the operation of the school.

2. **Selection of executive director.** The school board shall hire an executive director.

3. **Administration.** The school board shall oversee the administration of the center school and any satellite school, including the hiring of academic, residential, outreach and support staff of the center school.

3-A. **Employee retirement plan.** Employees of the school are state employees for purposes of Title 5, chapters 421 and 423, unless a decision is made pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or is otherwise made consistent with applicable law other than Title 5, section 18201 to provide for retirement coverage in some way other than as state employees in the Maine Public Employees Retirement System regular retirement plan. The school board shall consult with the Executive Director of the Maine Public Employees Retirement System in proposing any change to the Maine Public Employees Retirement System retirement status of school employees. The school board shall provide certification to the Maine Public Employees Retirement System of any decision to provide retirement coverage in some way other than as state employees at least 60 days prior to any change in retirement coverage. Any decision that removes school employees from the definition of "state employee" as provided in Title 5, section 17001, subsection 40 is irrevocable unless changed by law.
4. Budget development.

[PL 1999, c. 775, §9 (RP); PL 1999, c. 775, §16 (AFF).]

4-A. Budget development. The school board shall, with the aid of the executive director and staff, prepare an annual budget for the operation of the school and exercise budgetary responsibility. The school board shall allocate for expenditure by the school and programs under its jurisdiction all the resources available for the operation of the school and its programs.

[PL 2011, c. 683, §7 (AMD).]

4-B. Budget presentation. Annually, not later than January 1st, in addition to complying with the provisions of Title 5, sections 1665 and 1666, the school board shall present the budget for the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf to the Governor and the Legislature for review by the commissioner and the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters. Beginning for fiscal year 2013-14, the budget must be presented in a cost center summary budget format pursuant to section 1485, subsection 1, paragraph A and must include specific budget information, including revenues and expenditures, for the center school, the center preschool and statewide educational services or outreach. Revenue sources must include revenue received through state appropriation pursuant to section 7404, as well as fees and other revenues collected from school administrative units. The school board shall provide a detailed accounting of the fees and other revenue collected from each school administrative unit and the services provided to each unit. A liability or obligation may not be incurred under this chapter beyond the amount approved in the administrative operating budget. The school board may make expenditures only in accordance with allocations approved by the Legislature. Any balance of an allocation or subdivision of an allocation made by the Legislature for the school at the time is not required for the purpose named in the allocation or subdivision may be transferred prior to the closing of the books for the fiscal year to any other allocation or subdivision of any allocation made by the Legislature for the use of the school for the same fiscal year. The transfer is subject to review by the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over appropriations and financial affairs. Financial statements describing the transfer must be submitted by the school board to the Office of Fiscal and Program Review 30 days before the transfer is implemented. In case of extraordinary emergency transfers, the 30-day prior submission requirement may be waived by vote of the committee. These financial statements must include information specifying the accounts that are affected, the amounts to be transferred, a description of the transfer and a detailed explanation of the reason the transfer is needed.

[PL 2011, c. 683, §8 (NEW).]

5. Financial management. The school board may accept donations, bequests or other forms of financial assistance for any educational purpose from a public or private source and shall comply with rules and regulations governing grants from the Federal Government or from any other source.

[PL 1995, c. 676, §5 (NEW); PL 1995, c. 676, §13 (AFF).]

6. Collection of fees. The school board may charge service and rental fees for use of facilities of the school. Except as provided in subsections 12-A and 12-B, any funds received for service and rental fees must be retained by the school.

[PL 2017, c. 413, §1 (AMD).]

7. Indemnification. The school board shall indemnify the employees and other agents of the school and purchase and maintain insurance to indemnify those persons to the extent provided in Title 13-B, section 714. The school board may indemnify members of the school board.

[PL 1995, c. 676, §5 (NEW); PL 1995, c. 676, §13 (AFF).]

8. Bonds. The school board shall require security for the faithful performance of duties by employees and other agents of the school who are entrusted with the custody of the school securities or authorized to disburse the funds of the school. The security must consist of a bond, either a blanket
bond or individual bond with a surety bond, or bonds having a minimum limitation of $100,000 coverage for each insured person. The expense of a bond is assumed by the school.

[PL 1995, c. 676, §5 (NEW); PL 1995, c. 676, §13 (AFF).]

9. Property management. The school board may acquire by purchase any property, lands, buildings, structures, facilities or equipment and make improvements to facilities necessary to fulfill the purposes of this chapter. The State retains ownership of Mackworth Island and the school facilities. Notwithstanding section 7403, the school board may make alternative plans regarding the location of the school.

[PL 1995, c. 676, §5 (NEW); PL 1995, c. 676, §13 (AFF).]

10. Island access. The school board shall consult annually with the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Parks and Lands on public access and management of that portion of Mackworth Island under the jurisdiction of that bureau.

[PL 1999, c. 775, §11 (AMD); PL 2011, c. 657, Pt. W, §§5, 7 (REV); PL 2013, c. 405, Pt. A, §24 (REV).]

11. Certificates and diplomas. The school board shall offer courses of study and grant diplomas and certificates on completion of courses of study. This granting of diplomas and certificates may be done in cooperation with the sending school.

[PL 1995, c. 676, §5 (NEW); PL 1995, c. 676, §13 (AFF).]

12. Contracts and agreements. The school board may enter into any contracts and agreements, to the extent that funds are available, in the execution of its powers under this chapter.

[PL 1995, c. 676, §5 (NEW); PL 1995, c. 676, §13 (AFF).]

12-A. Lease of school property. The Department of Administrative and Financial Services may enter into lease agreements consistent with the deed of gift from Governor Percival Baxter and in accordance with state law and policy on the lease of state-owned facilities, including but not limited to the provisions of Title 5, chapter 154. Any funds received pursuant to this subsection must first be applied in accordance with Title 5, section 1784. Any excess revenue above the requirements of Title 5, section 1784 may be retained by the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf to be applied to statutorily authorized programs.

[PL 2005, c. 600, §2 (NEW).]

12-B. Lease of school property to State's protection and advocacy agency. The Department of Administrative and Financial Services may enter into lease agreements in accordance with state law and policy on the lease of state-owned facilities, including but not limited to the provisions of Title 5, chapter 154, to lease school property to the protection and advocacy agency for persons with disabilities designated pursuant to Title 5, section 19502. Any funds received pursuant to this subsection must first be applied in accordance with Title 5, section 1784. Any excess revenue above the requirements of Title 5, section 1784 may be retained by the school to be applied to statutorily authorized programs.

[PL 2017, c. 413, §2 (NEW).]

13. Delegation. The school board may delegate duties and responsibilities as necessary for the efficient operation of this chapter.

[PL 1995, c. 676, §5 (NEW); PL 1995, c. 676, §13 (AFF).]

14. Criteria for enrollment. The school board shall establish and disseminate to school administrative units the criteria to be used in determining eligibility of applicants for enrollment in the center school.

[PL 2011, c. 683, §9 (AMD).]

15. Student conduct. The school board shall prepare and adopt procedures and rules to ensure the smooth operation of student conduct standards.

[PL 1995, c. 676, §5 (NEW); PL 1995, c. 676, §13 (AFF).]
16. Individualized education programs, standards and measurements. The school board shall ensure that services required to meet the individualized education program for each student are provided by the school. The school board shall establish standards and methods of measuring progress in the levels of academic achievement for students who participate in the school in accordance with the statewide system of learning results established under section 6209. The school board shall also establish standards and methods of measuring progress in the professional development of teachers who participate in school programs. The school board shall assess students and teachers according to those standards and measurements.
[PL 1999, c. 775, §11 (AMD).]

17. School programs. The school board may create, maintain and expand center school programs and programs for children and families that may be served by the school at any satellite school, through statewide educational services and through the statewide resource center. For the 2000-01 and 2001-02 school years only, the residential program at the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf located on Mackworth Island is limited to enrolling up to 20 students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. The superintendent may request that the commissioner approve a waiver of the residential enrollment limit and establish additional placements for students in the residential program at the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf located on Mackworth Island; the commissioner may approve those placements on a case-by-case basis and only if the individual education plan of the prospective student who is deaf or hard-of-hearing requires placement in a residential program. Beginning with the 2002-03 school year, the school board shall establish a satellite school program that offers an array of educational programs that provide students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing with geographically convenient access to placement options that may be required by their individualized education program.
[PL 2005, c. 279, §10 (AMD).]

18. Fees and charges. The school board shall establish and collect necessary fees and set policies relating to other appropriate charges for students. The school board shall annually submit a schedule of fees to be charged to school administrative units for each service provided by the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf to the Governor. A detailed accounting of fees collected from each unit and the services provided, including statewide educational services or outreach, must be included in the presentation of the budget pursuant to subsection 4-B.
[PL 2011, c. 683, §9 (AMD).]

19. Report. The school board shall report annually to the Governor, the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters and the commissioner on the general status of the finances and operations of the school, including the center school programs and any satellite school programs, the status of the professional qualifications of the school board members and the results of the assessments required by subsection 16 and the general status of the school and shall provide an annual financial audit conducted by an independent auditor.
[PL 2009, c. 213, Pt. ZZ, §1 (AMD).]

SECTION HISTORY

§7408. Powers and duties of executive director

The powers and duties of the executive director include the following. [PL 2011, c. 683, §10 (AMD).]
1. **Staff and administration.** The executive director shall hire staff and administer school operations. 
[PL 2011, c. 683, §10 (AMD).]

2. **Enrollment.** The executive director shall work with school administrative units, pursuant to section 7405-A, to enroll students. 
[PL 2015, c. 494, Pt. A, §12 (AMD).]

### §7409. School year

The school must operate on a calendar year that meets or exceeds the minimum number of statewide student instructional days. 
[PL 1995, c. 676, §5 (NEW); PL 1995, c. 676, §13 (AFF).]

### §7410. Department assistance; limitation

(REPEALED)

### §7411. Emergency power

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the commissioner may assume and exercise the authority of the school board if the commissioner declares an emergency exists such that the health, safety or welfare of students in academic, extracurricular or residential programs is in jeopardy or the school is in substantial and persistent violation of federal and state law. The commissioner's declaration of an emergency is not reviewable, but the commissioner shall exercise this emergency authority for a period not to exceed 3 months unless the commissioner again declares that an emergency continues. 
[PL 1999, c. 401, Pt. JJJ, §1 (NEW).]

### §7412. Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf Student Trust Fund established

1. **Fund established.** Notwithstanding the provisions of Title 5, section 135-A, the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf Student Trust Fund, referred to in this section as the "fund," is established. 
[PL 2005, c. 279, §11 (AMD).]

2. **Investment of funds.** The money in the fund may be invested by the Treasurer of State with the assistance of one or more fiduciaries or registered investment advisors. The duties and expenses of the fiduciaries or registered investment advisors must be handled in a manner consistent with Title 5, section 17108, subsections 2 and 3. All earnings must be credited to the fund. 
[RR 1999, c. 2, §21 (COR).]

3. **Nonlapsing fund; transfer to General Fund.** Until July 1, 2007, any unexpended funds remaining in the fund may not lapse but must be carried forward for the benefit of the fund. On July 1, 2007, any unexpended funds remaining in the fund must be transferred to the General Fund.
4. Expenditures from the fund.

SECTION HISTORY
PL 2005, c. 279, §11 (AMD).

§7413. Private support organization

1. Designation of private support organization. The executive director shall designate a nonprofit organization as the private support organization for the school. The designated organization must be incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under the laws of the State, and its sole purpose, as reflected in its bylaws, must be to organize and foster support for the school and the school's programs.

2. Nonvoting member on board of directors. The executive director, or the executive director's designee, shall serve as a nonvoting ex officio member of the private support organization's board of directors.

3. Plan of work. The executive director shall negotiate an annual memorandum of understanding between the school and the private support organization that outlines a plan of work identifying priority projects of mutual benefit and cooperation.

4. Use of property. The executive director may permit the appropriate use of fixed property, equipment and facilities of the school by the private support organization. Such use must be directly in keeping with the purpose of the private support organization as set out in subsection 1 and must comply with all appropriate state policies and procedures.

SECTION HISTORY
PL 2015, c. 383, §1 (NEW).

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