



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 437

H.P. 291

House of Representatives, February 4, 2025

An Act Directing the Department of Education to Develop Pilot Programs to Place Child Care Facilities in Selected School Administrative Units

Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

Handwritten signature of Robert B. Hunt in cursive.

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative GOLEK of Harpswell.
Cosponsored by Representatives: CLOUTIER of Lewiston, DHALAC of South Portland,
GATTINE of Westbrook, Senator: RENY of Lincoln.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §4017** is enacted to read:

3 **§4017. Pilot programs to establish child care facilities in public schools**

4 The department shall conduct a study to place child care facilities in public schools for
5 infants, toddlers and preschool-aged children. Based on the study, the department shall
6 develop and implement pilot programs in at least 8 school administrative units. Pilot
7 programs developed pursuant to this section must be operational no later than the first day
8 of the 2026-2027 school year.

9 **1. Duration.** Pilot programs established pursuant to this section must be designed to
10 last 6 years.

11 **2. Reports.** The department shall submit to the joint standing committee of the
12 Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters the following reports.

13 A. No later than November 4, 2026, the department shall submit a report detailing the
14 findings of the study, including any recommendations for legislation and information
15 about the pilot programs established, including the initial progress of those programs.
16 The committee may report out legislation based on the report to the 133rd Legislature
17 in 2027.

18 B. No later than December 5, 2029, the department shall submit an interim report
19 detailing the progress of the program and any findings related to the program, including
20 any recommendations for legislation. The committee may report out legislation based
21 on the report to the Second Regular Session of the 134th Legislature.

22 C. No later than November 3, 2032, the department shall submit a final report detailing
23 the progress of the program and any findings related to the program, including any
24 recommendations for legislation. The committee may report out legislation based on
25 the report to the 136th Legislature in 2033.

26 **Sec. 2. Pilot programs placing child care facilities in public schools;**
27 **purposes.** The Department of Education shall develop pilot programs to place child care
28 facilities in public schools pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 4017
29 to serve the following purposes:

30 1. Providing an early childhood education course in child development combined with
31 hands-on training for 11th and 12th grade public school students and child care courses
32 involving the developmental stages of infants, toddlers and preschool-aged children;

33 2. Providing nurturing quality child care and age-appropriate learning experiences in a
34 safe and secure environment for infants, toddlers and preschool-aged children;

35 3. Providing quality child care for children of all public school staff and employees
36 during employment hours;

37 4. Creating a source of early childhood educators and caregivers to help reduce the
38 shortage of child care workers in the State; and

39 5. Being organized for and focusing on the needs of the children and parents receiving
40 the services and the students, staff and employees of the public school.

1 services to the children of students and community members as space allows after the
2 children of school staff members have been served; child care facility staffing; hours of
3 operation; fees for participation; potential discounts and acceptance of vouchers; and the
4 development of an early childhood education and child development curriculum for 11th
5 and 12th grade students, including a certificate awarded at graduation after 2 years of study.

6 Beginning in 2026, the department is required over the 6-year duration of the pilot
7 programs to make 3 reports to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having
8 jurisdiction over education matters. The reports must be submitted by the dates specified
9 in the bill and must include the findings of the initial study and the progress of the pilot
10 programs, including any recommendations for legislation. The joint standing committee is
11 authorized to report out legislation with respect to each of these reports.