



129th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2019

Legislative Document

No. 1306

S.P. 402

In Senate, March 19, 2019

An Act To Promote Safe Schools through the Creation of the Safe School Climate Council

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D M Grant".

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator CHENETTE of York.
Cosponsored by Representative GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach and
Representatives: BAILEY of Saco, O'NEIL of Saco.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §12004-I, sub-§18-F** is enacted to read:

3 **18-F.**

4 Education Safe School Climate Not Authorized 20-A MRSA §6555
5 Council

6 **Sec. 2. 20-A MRSA §6555** is enacted to read:

7 **§6555. Safe School Climate Council**

8 **1. Council established.** The Safe School Climate Council, as established in Title 5,
9 section 12004-I, subsection 18-F and referred to in this section as "the council," shall
10 develop model policies to address bullying, harassment and overall safety in schools.

11 **2. Membership.** The council consists of up to 20 members appointed as follows:

12 A. A representative of the department, appointed by the commissioner;

13 B. A representative of the civil rights team project in the Office of the Attorney
14 General, appointed by the Attorney General;

15 C. A representative of the Maine Principals' Association or successor organization,
16 appointed by the Governor;

17 D. A representative of the Maine School Management Association or successor
18 organization, appointed by the Governor;

19 E. A representative of the Maine Education Association, appointed by the Governor;

20 F. A representative of an organization that advocates for lesbian, gay, bisexual and
21 transgender students, appointed by the Governor;

22 G. One or more members with expertise in bullying prevention, appointed by the
23 Governor; and

24 H. Representatives of underrepresented groups, including minority communities and
25 immigrant communities, appointed by the Governor.

26 **3. Terms; vacancy.** The members of the council appointed pursuant to subsection 2
27 serve for 2-year terms and serve until their successors are appointed and qualified. On
28 the expiration of a term of a member under subsection 2, a successor must be appointed
29 to a 2-year term. A member of the council is eligible for reappointment to the council. A
30 vacancy in the council does not impair the right of a quorum of the members to exercise
31 all the rights and perform all the duties of the council. In the event of a vacancy
32 occurring in the membership, the appointing authority shall appoint a replacement
33 member for the remainder of the unexpired term in the same manner as the original
34 appointment was made.

35 **4. Duties.** The council is authorized to meet twice a year. At the first meeting of the
36 council and annually thereafter, the members shall elect from the membership a chair and

1 a vice-chair and shall determine their duties. Beginning in 2020 and biennially thereafter,
2 the council shall report recommendations, including model policies, to the joint standing
3 committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters on topics that
4 include, but are not limited to:

5 A. Bullying in schools in the State;

6 B. Harassment in schools in the State;

7 C. The overall safety of students, staff and faculty in schools in the State;

8 D. The department's effectiveness in addressing bullying, harassment and overall
9 safety in schools in the State;

10 E. Access to tools and resources for school administrative units;

11 F. How incidents of bullying, including cyberbullying as defined in section 6554,
12 subsection 2, paragraph C, are being addressed in schools in the State; and

13 G. Proposed updates to the Children's Cabinet 2006 report entitled "Maine's Best
14 Practices in Bullying and Harassment Prevention."

15 **SUMMARY**

16 This bill establishes the Safe School Climate Council, which is authorized to meet
17 twice a year and to present to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having
18 jurisdiction over education matters every 2 years recommendations on model policies to
19 address bullying, harassment and overall safety in schools.