



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 1639

S.P. 647

In Senate, April 15, 2025

An Act to Codify Minimum Instructional Hours in the State's Schools

Received by the Secretary of the Senate on April 11, 2025. Referred to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 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 GROHOSKI of Hancock.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §4801-A** is enacted to read:

3 **§4801-A. Minimum instructional hours**

4 **1. Minimum instructional hours.** A school administrative unit shall ensure that each
5 school within the unit provides at least 900 instructional hours per school year.

6 For purposes of this section, "instructional hours" means hours during the school day during
7 which students are engaged in regularly scheduled instruction, educational activities or
8 academic programs under the supervision of school staff. Instructional hours do not include
9 extracurricular activities, lunchtime or recess. Time spent on an organized field trip related
10 to academic programs may be considered instructional hours, but the instructional hours
11 counted for a field trip may not exceed a regular school day for each day of the field trip.

12 Instructional hours include educational activities provided outside of the regular school day
13 to a student enrolled in a program described in section 4703 or any other academic program
14 outlined in a school administrative unit's comprehensive education plan under section 4502.

15 **2. Waivers.** The commissioner may grant a waiver to a school administrative unit for
16 a school to be exempted from the minimum instructional hours requirement under
17 subsection 1 for extraordinary circumstances, including but not limited to natural disasters,
18 public health emergencies and other unforeseen events that significantly disrupt school
19 operations. A school administrative unit requesting a waiver under this subsection must
20 submit a written application to the department that details the circumstances and a proposed
21 plan to address the loss of instructional hours.

22 **3. Compliance and reporting.** A school administrative unit shall submit an annual
23 report to the department certifying that the school administrative unit is in compliance with
24 the requirements of this section. The department shall monitor compliance and may take
25 corrective action, including withholding state subsidies, for noncompliance.

26 **4. Rules.** The department shall adopt rules to implement this section. Rules adopted
27 pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375,
28 subchapter 2-A.

29 **Sec. 2. Application.** This Act applies to all school administrative units in the State
30 beginning with the 2026-2027 school year.

31 **SUMMARY**

32 This bill requires each school administrative unit to ensure that each school within the
33 unit provides at least 900 instructional hours per school year. The bill allows the
34 Commissioner of Education to grant a waiver for a school to be exempt from the minimum
35 instructional hours requirement for extraordinary circumstances. The bill also establishes
36 annual reporting requirements for school administrative units to certify that they are in
37 compliance with the minimum instructional hour requirement.