

STATE OF MAINE

—
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-THREE

—
H.P. 1191 - L.D. 1861

An Act to Reduce Chronic Student Absenteeism

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

Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA c. 211, sub-c. 6 is enacted to read:

SUBCHAPTER 6

CHRONIC ABSENCE

§5171. Chronically absent students

1. Definitions. As used in this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms having the following meanings.

A. "Absence" means an excused absence, unexcused absence or disciplinary absence, as those terms are defined by the state board by rule.

B. "Chronically absent student" means a student who is enrolled in a school under the jurisdiction of a school administrative unit and whose total number of absences at any time during a school year is equal to or greater than 10% of the total number of days that that student has been enrolled at that school during that school year.

C. "School chronic absenteeism rate" means the total number of chronically absent students for a school in the previous school year divided by the total number of students enrolled in that school for that school year.

D. "Unit chronic absenteeism rate" means the total number of chronically absent students under the jurisdiction of a school administrative unit in the previous school year divided by the total number of students under the jurisdiction of that unit for that school year.

2. School administrative unit. A school administrative unit that:

A. Has a unit chronic absenteeism rate of 10% or higher shall establish an attendance review team under subsection 3 or establish a committee to review chronic absence for the school administrative unit;

B. Has under its jurisdiction a school with a school chronic absenteeism rate of 15% or higher shall establish an attendance review team under subsection 3 at that school;

C. Has under its jurisdiction more than one school with a school chronic absenteeism rate of 15% or higher shall establish an attendance review team under subsection 3 for the school administrative unit or at each such school; or

D. Has a unit chronic absenteeism rate of 10% or higher and has one or more schools under its jurisdiction with a school chronic absenteeism rate of 15% or higher shall establish an attendance review team under subsection 3 for the school administrative unit or at each such school.

3. Attendance review teams. An attendance review team established under this subsection may consist of school administrators, guidance counselors, school counselors, school social workers and teachers. An attendance review team is responsible for reviewing the cases of students who are truant and chronically absent students, discussing school interventions and community referrals for such students who are truant and chronically absent students and making any additional recommendations for such students who are truant and chronically absent students and their parents or guardians. An attendance review team shall meet at least monthly.

The attendance review teams established pursuant to this subsection must be established to address chronic absenteeism in the school administrative unit or at the school.