

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND AND ELEVEN

S.P. 156 - L.D. 564

An Act Regarding Retention and Graduation Rates for Maine's Colleges and Universities

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

Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §10011 is enacted to read:

§10011. Retention and graduation rates

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

A. "Graduation rate" means the percentage of the students who enrolled at the start of a postsecondary educational degree program who completed the program and graduated.

B. "Peer institutions" means those postsecondary institutions selected to provide a basis for comparison of retention rates and graduation rates against similar postsecondary institutions in this State. The categories of peer institutions selected for comparison include, but are not limited to:

(1) Public sector institutions that offer a bachelor's degree or other 4-year degree;

(2) Public sector institutions that offer an associate degree or other 2-year degree;

(3) Private sector institutions that offer a bachelor's degree or other 4-year degree; and

(4) Private sector institutions that offer an associate degree or other 2-year degree.

C. "Postsecondary institution" means an educational institution that offers an accredited postsecondary educational degree program. "Postsecondary institution" includes an institution that offers an accredited postsecondary educational degree program on the Internet.

D. "Retention rate" means the percentage of the students who enrolled at the start of a postsecondary educational degree program who, not having completed the program

at the end of a school year, continue enrollment in that program at the start of the next school year.

2. Retention and graduation rates. Using information received annually from a postsecondary institution pursuant to federal law, the department shall annually compile the data so as to demonstrate:

A. The retention rates for the previous year for the institution, including the first-to-2nd-year retention rate and the retention rate for first-time students;

B. For a postsecondary institution that offers an associate degree program or other 2-year program, the graduation rates for students who began their studies within the past 4 years; and

C. For a postsecondary institution that offers a bachelor's degree or other 4-year degree program, the graduation rates for students who began their studies within the past 6 years.

3. Report. The department shall report the information compiled under subsection 2, including national comparisons of retention rates and graduation rates for peer institutions, annually to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education and cultural affairs and publish the report on the department's publicly accessible website.

4. Rules. The department may adopt rules to carry out the purposes of this section. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules under Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

In House of Representatives, 2011

Read twice and passed to be enacted.

..... Speaker

In Senate, 2011

Read twice and passed to be enacted.

..... President

Approved 2011

..... Governor