

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 127th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2015

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Legislative Document

No. 1282

S.P. 457

In Senate, April 9, 2015

**An Act To Support Conservation and the Health and Wellness of  
Maine Youth through Physically Active Residential Environmental  
Education Programs**

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

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Heather J.R. Priest".

HEATHER J.R. PRIEST  
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator MASON of Androscoggin.  
Cosponsored by Representative TIMBERLAKE of Turner and  
Senators: ALFOND of Cumberland, BREEN of Cumberland, DILL of Penobscot,  
GRATWICK of Penobscot, HAMPER of Oxford, JOHNSON of Lincoln, Representatives:  
BLACK of Wilton, WINSOR of Norway.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA c. 333** is enacted to read:

3 **CHAPTER 333**

4 **ENVIRONMENTAL LIVING AND LEARNING FOR MAINE STUDENTS**  
5 **PROGRAM**

6 **§9911. Definitions**

7 As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms  
8 have the following meanings.

9 **1. Fund.** "Fund" means the Environmental Living and Learning for Maine Students  
10 Scholarship Fund established in section 9913.

11 **2. Program.** "Program" means the Environmental Living and Learning for Maine  
12 Students Program established in section 9912.

13 **3. Residential environmental education program.** "Residential environmental  
14 education program" means a program offering environmental education in a residential  
15 setting that involves students in experiential, holistic, interdisciplinary outdoor learning,  
16 including hands-on engagement, observation and discovery, problem solving, teamwork,  
17 citizenship, reflection, self-awareness, responsibility and a strong academic component  
18 by encouraging intellectual curiosity, supporting overall academic achievement, linking  
19 science to other subjects and emphasizing connections between individual and  
20 community responsibility, health, environmental issues and the economy.

21 **4. Students.** "Students" means students enrolled in grades 5 to 8 in public schools in  
22 the State.

23 **§9912. Environmental Living and Learning for Maine Students Program**

24 **1. Program established.** The Environmental Living and Learning for Maine  
25 Students Program is established. The department shall administer the program. The  
26 department may collaborate with nonprofit organizations that operate residential  
27 environmental education programs.

28 **2. Purposes of the program.** The program is established to:

29 A. Support the health and wellness of students in the State by developing in the  
30 students an appreciation for recreation in the outdoors;

31 B. Support residential environmental education program experiences for students;

32 C. Support collaboration between nonprofit organizations that operate residential  
33 environmental education programs and public schools;

34 D. Support hands-on science education for students and teachers; and

1           E. Provide students with the opportunity to fulfill science and physical education  
2           proficiency standards under section 6209, subsection 2.

3           **§9913. Environmental Living and Learning for Maine Students Scholarship Fund**

4           The Environmental Living and Learning for Maine Students Scholarship Fund is  
5           established under the jurisdiction and control of the department. The department may  
6           contract with a nonprofit organization that operates a residential environmental education  
7           program to manage the fund. The fund is nonlapsing and may be invested in the same  
8           manner as permitted for investment of other state funds.

9           **1. Use of fund.** Money in the fund must be used to provide scholarships to students  
10           to attend a residential environmental education program in an amount equal to 50% of the  
11           cost of attendance at the residential environmental education program. Scholarships must  
12           be distributed to students in a manner that ensures students receiving scholarships attend  
13           residential environmental education programs across the State.

14           **2. Sources of fund.** The following must be paid into the fund:

15           A. All money appropriated or allocated by the Legislature for inclusion in the fund;

16           B. All interest earned from investments of the fund; and

17           C. Any money designated for deposit into the fund from any source, public or  
18           private.

19           **§9914. Rules**

20           The department shall adopt rules to implement the provisions of this chapter. Rules  
21           adopted pursuant to this section are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter  
22           375, subchapter 2-A.

23           **Sec. 2. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and  
24           allocations are made.

25           **EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF**

26           **Environmental Living and Learning for Maine Students Scholarship Fund N183**

27           Initiative: Provides ongoing funds for scholarships to students to attend residential  
28           environmental education programs pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A,  
29           section 9913.

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31	<b>GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>
32	All Other	\$500,000	\$500,000
33			
34	GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$500,000	\$500,000

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**SUMMARY**

This bill establishes the Environmental Living and Learning for Maine Students Program to support residential environmental education program experiences for public school students in grades 5 to 8 in the State. It also establishes the Environmental Living and Learning for Maine Students Scholarship Fund to provide scholarships to students in the State to attend a residential environmental education program. Scholarships must be in an amount equal to 50% of the cost of attendance at a residential environmental education program and must be distributed to students in a manner that ensures students receiving scholarships attend residential environmental education programs across the State.