

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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129th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2019

Legislative Document

No. 513

H.P. 370

House of Representatives, January 31, 2019

**An Act To Limit the Number of Students and Prevent the Addition
of Grade Levels at Virtual Public Charter Schools**

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

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative BRENNAN of Portland.
Cosponsored by Senator SANBORN, L. of Cumberland and
Representatives: BABBIDGE of Kennebunk, DODGE of Belfast, FARNSWORTH of
Portland, FECTION of Biddeford, McCREA of Fort Fairfield, McCREIGHT of Harpswell,
PIERCE of Falmouth, Senator: MILLETT of Cumberland.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §2404, sub-§4** is enacted to read:

3 **4. Maximum virtual public charter school enrollment.** The total enrollment at all
4 virtual public charter schools authorized by the commission may not exceed the total
5 enrollment at all virtual public charter schools authorized by the commission at the end of
6 the 2018-2019 school year.

7 **Sec. 2. 20-A MRSA §2408, sub-§2,** as enacted by PL 2011, c. 414, §5, is
8 amended to read:

9 **2. Virtual public charter schools.** The charter contract of a virtual public charter
10 school must require the governing board to:

11 A. Provide each student enrolled in the virtual public charter school with online
12 courses that meet or exceed state standards and all instructional materials required for
13 the student's participation in the school;

14 B. Ensure that the persons who operate the virtual public charter school on a day-to-
15 day basis comply with and carry out all applicable requirements, statutes, regulations,
16 rules and policies of the school;

17 C. Ensure that a parent of each student verifies the number of hours of educational
18 activities completed by the student each school year; and

19 D. Adopt a plan by which the governing board provides:

20 (1) Frequent, ongoing monitoring to ensure and verify that each student is
21 participating in the virtual public charter school, including synchronous contact
22 between teachers and students and between teachers and parents to ensure and
23 verify student participation and learning;

24 (2) Regular instructional opportunities in real time that are directly related to the
25 virtual public charter school's curricular objectives, including, but not limited to,
26 meetings with teachers and educational field trips and outings;

27 (3) Verification of ongoing student attendance in the virtual public charter
28 school;

29 (4) Verification of ongoing student progress and performance in each course as
30 documented by ongoing assessments and examples of student course work; and

31 (5) Administration to all students in a proctored setting of all applicable
32 assessments as required by the State.

33 Nothing in this subsection prohibits a virtual public charter school from reimbursing
34 families of enrolled students for costs associated with their Internet connection for use in
35 the program.

36 Only students enrolled in a virtual public charter school as full-time students may be
37 reported in the virtual public charter school's average pupil count to the department for
38 the purposes of receiving local, state and federal funds.

1 A virtual public charter school authorized by the commission may not expand to serve a
2 grade level not included in the school's initial charter contract or, for a school whose
3 charter was renewed prior to November 1, 2019, the renewed charter contract.

4 **SUMMARY**

5 This bill limits total enrollment at all virtual public charter schools authorized by the
6 commission to the total enrollment at the end of the 2018-2019 school year. It also
7 prohibits a virtual public charter school authorized by the commission from expanding to
8 serve a grade level not included in the school's initial charter contract or, for a school
9 whose charter was renewed prior to November 1, 2019, the renewed charter contract.