

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
126TH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION



Summaries of bills, adopted amendments and laws enacted or finally passed

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND
CULTURAL AFFAIRS**

July 2013

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LEGISLATIVE DIGEST OF BILL SUMMARIES AND ENACTED LAWS

This *Legislative Digest of Bill Summaries and Enacted Laws* contains summaries of all LDs and adopted amendments and all laws enacted or finally passed during the First Regular Session of the 126th Maine Legislature.

The *Digest* is arranged alphabetically by committee and within each committee by Legislative Document (LD) number. The committee report(s), prime sponsor and lead co-sponsor(s), if designated, are listed below each LD title. All adopted amendments are summarized and listed by paper number. A subject index is included with each committee. The appendices include a summary of relevant session statistics, an index of all bills by LD number and an index of enacted laws by law type and chapter number.

Final action on each LD is noted to the right of the LD title. The following describes the various final actions.

CARRIED OVER carried over to a subsequent session of the Legislature
CON RES XXX..... chapter # of constitutional resolution passed by both houses
CONF CMTE UNABLE TO AGREE.....Committee of Conference unable to agree; legislation died
DIED BETWEEN HOUSES.....House & Senate disagreed; legislation died
DIED IN CONCURRENCE.....defeated in each house, but on different motions; legislation died
DIED ON ADJOURNMENT..... action incomplete when session ended; legislation died
EMERGENCY..... enacted law takes effect sooner than 90 days after session adjournment
FAILED, EMERGENCY ENACTMENT or FINAL PASSAGE emergency failed to receive required 2/3 vote
FAILED, ENACTMENT or FINAL PASSAGE..... failed to receive final majority vote
FAILED, MANDATE ENACTMENT legislation proposing local mandate failed required 2/3 vote
HELD BY GOVERNOR..... Governor has not signed; final disposition to be determined at subsequent session
LEAVE TO WITHDRAW..... sponsor's request to withdraw legislation granted
NOT PROPERLY BEFORE THE BODY ruled out of order by the presiding officer; legislation died
INDEF PP..... indefinitely postponed; legislation died
ONTP, ACCEPTED, MAJORITY, MINORITY or REPORT X... ought-not-to-pass report accepted; legislation died
P&S XXX..... chapter # of enacted private & special law
PUBLIC XXX.....chapter # of enacted public Law
RESOLVE XXX..... chapter # of finally passed resolve
VETO SUSTAINED..... Legislature failed to override Governor's veto

The effective date for non-emergency legislation enacted in the First Regular Session of the 126th Legislature is October 9, 2013. The effective date for legislation enacted as an emergency measure may be found in the enacted law summary for that legislation.

Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

This bill requires implementation of universal voluntary prekindergarten education by the 2017-2018 school year. The Commissioner of Education is required to establish a stakeholder group to work with the commissioner and interested parties to establish a plan to implement the requirement. The stakeholder group is required to develop standards for prekindergarten education programs, recommend uniform statewide procedures for screening children and assessing program performance and recommend best practices to coordinate early childhood education programs with child care providers. The commissioner is required to submit a report of the work of the stakeholder group to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs by January 15, 2014, and the committee is authorized to submit a bill to the Second Regular Session of the 126th Legislature regarding the report. The bill also clarifies the role of the State Board of Education with regard to prekindergarten education, changes the compulsory age for school attendance from 7 years of age to 5 years of age beginning July 1, 2016 and provides that funding provided to a school administrative unit for prekindergarten purposes may not be used for other purposes. The bill provides that the Commissioner of Education must provide implementation grants and provides funds for those grants and for a position in the Department of Education to oversee early childhood education programs.

This bill was carried over to any special or regular session of the 126th Legislature by joint order, H.P. 1145, as amended by H-B (H-580) and H-C (H-582).

LD 1533 **An Act To Establish the Maine Online Learning Collaborative**

**VETO
SUSTAINED**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
ALFOND	OTP-AM	S-302

This bill amends the laws governing the Maine Online Learning Program by:

1. Including an online learning provider's demonstrated experience in collaborating with schools to develop innovative practices related to online learning as a basis for approval of the online learning provider by the Department of Education;
2. Requiring an online learning provider to reapply for approval annually;
3. Allowing courses offered by online learning providers to be of varying lengths and worth varying amounts of credit;
4. Requiring an online learning provider to use surveys approved by the department to gauge the satisfaction of its students with the online learning provider and the courses offered by that online learning provider and the department to provide the results of these surveys to the Legislature; and
5. Establishing the Maine Online Learning Program Reimbursement Fund to provide funds to a school administrative unit for the cost of courses provided by an online learning provider to students in that school administrative unit. The bill establishes eligibility requirements, guaranteed reimbursement allocations, dollar amount limits and procedures for carrying over unused allocations. The fund is funded by a transfer of the balance of funds remaining in the Maine Learning Technology Fund.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-302)

This amendment adds an emergency preamble and an emergency clause to the bill and amends the laws governing the Maine Online Learning Program by adding 2 provisions to the goals of the program that would enable students to meet the standards of the system of learning results and that would augment the capacity of teachers who are certified in the State to provide high-quality online and blended learning experiences for students. The amendment strikes the provisions in the bill that propose to establish the Maine Online Learning Program Reimbursement Fund

Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

and replaces the fund with provisions to authorize the Department of Education to establish the Maine Online Learning Collaborative, a partnership with a statewide consortium consisting of Maine school administrative units, public charter schools and approved private secondary schools that enroll 60% or more publicly funded students and other educational organizations to collaboratively develop a high-quality online learning program to commence in the 2014-2015 school year that provides students in grades 9 to 12 access to part-time digital learning through online and hybrid courses that are taught by Maine certified teachers. The amendment requires the Department of Education to develop approval criteria and a process for approving online learning providers to implement online learning programs with the Maine Online Learning Collaborative; and provides that the request for proposals must be reviewed and approved by the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education and cultural affairs before the request for proposals is publicized by the department. The amendment also adds an appropriations and allocations section.

**LD 1540 An Act To Fix and Improve the System Used To Evaluate or Rate
Public Schools in Maine**

**DIED IN
CONCURRENCE**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
MILLETT MACDONALD W	OTP-AM ONTP	S-306

This bill is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208. The bill proposes to provide that if the Department of Education or any other state agency uses a system to evaluate or rate public schools:

1. The department or other state agency shall give notice to the public that such a system will be used, shall give an opportunity for the public and interested parties to provide input regarding the development of the system and shall convene a task force on the development and implementation of the system that includes but is not limited to representatives of the following stakeholder groups:

- A. Teachers;
- B. School boards;
- C. Superintendents;
- D. Parents; and
- E. Students;

2. The system must include:

- A. Accurate measures of student progress over at least 5 years;
- B. Rates of postsecondary school attendance and enlistment in the United States Armed Forces over at least 5 years;
- C. A peer group comparison that takes into account, but is not limited to, utilization of special education services, the number of students eligible for free or reduced-price meals, local and county unemployment data and median household income;
- D. School attendance rates;
- E. Graduation rates; and