

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 117th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-1995

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Legislative Document

No. 1560

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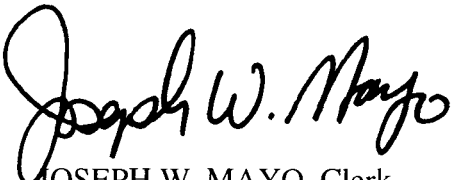
H.P. 1112

House of Representatives, June 1, 1995

**Resolve, to Reduce Reliance on the Property Tax for School Funding.**

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

  
JOSEPH W. MAYO, Clerk

Presented by Representative MITCHELL of Vassalboro.

**Sec. 1. State Board of Education and Department of Education to develop a plan for regionalization and cost sharing among Maine school administrative units.**

**Resolved:** That the State Board of Education and the Department of Education, in consultation with interested groups and individuals, shall work together to develop a plan that organizes school administrative units by region to take advantage of resource sharing among schools and communities and to provide greater taxpayer and student equity by levying property taxes for education and offering school programs on a regional basis rather than a municipal basis. The State Board of Education and the Department of Education shall develop a plan to implement the requirements of this Act. The plan must:

1. Establish educational regions statewide consisting of groups of municipalities or school administrative units that act in concert to take advantage of combined purchasing power and economies of scale gained from centralized administrative functions. Educational regions must be approximately equal to the current configuration of the counties but are not required to adhere strictly to county lines when doing so would disrupt current boundaries of school administrative units;

2. Establish a regional school board for each region to oversee administrative functions for that region and hire one superintendent to act for the regional school board. The primary responsibility of the regional school board and the superintendent is to facilitate resource sharing and administrative cost savings by:

A. Conducting standardized collective bargaining with school employees on behalf of all schools within the region;

B. Developing and maintaining standardized personnel and payroll procedures within the region;

C. Developing common purchasing and contract procedures and providing administrative support for schools within the region;

D. Coordinating transportation functions within the region;

E. Coordinating the shared use of physical resources within the region, including sharing technological resources, facilities and other property;

F. Facilitating the shared use of teachers and other educational employees within the region;

2 G. Providing curriculum and professional development  
support within the region; and

4 H. Establishing other policies and practices designed to  
assist schools in achieving the goals of the plan;

6  
8 3. Maintain local school administrative unit school boards  
and provide for local school board representation on the regional  
school board. Under this plan, local school boards may no longer  
10 employ superintendents within each school administrative unit but  
remain responsible for core local functions, including but not  
12 limited to establishment of overall education goals, policy  
development and curriculum decision making;

14  
16 4. Create school councils consisting of educators, parents,  
citizens and community and business organizations for the purpose  
of establishing local education goals and plans for achieving  
18 those goals, which would facilitate continued local control of  
education policy and promote new and innovative local  
20 partnerships in support of public schools;

22 5. Develop procedures that permit students to attend any  
public school within the region;

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26 6. Maintain the current school funding formula, but require  
that each educational region serve as the tax base from which the  
local share of dollars for public education is raised; and

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30 7. Levy an education property tax by region to generate the  
local share of education dollars required under the school  
funding formula. The tax must be calculated separately from any  
32 property tax necessary to fund municipal costs, and the tax must  
be the same for each educational region. Individual  
34 municipalities or school administrative units may raise  
additional dollars for education but not until a basic education  
36 program has been funded for the entire region.

38 The revenue from the education property tax must flow to the  
educational region and then to individual schools in accordance  
40 with a formula that recognizes essential educational program and  
service costs. The formula must recognize different costs  
42 associated with educating students with unique needs, such as  
special education and language needs; and be it further

44  
46 **Sec. 2. Report of the State Board of Education and the Department of  
Education. Resolved:** That the State Board of Education and the  
Department of Education shall submit a report to the joint  
48 standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over  
education and cultural affairs by December 15, 1996.

## STATEMENT OF FACT

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4       This resolve requires the State Board of Education and the  
6       Department of Education to work together to establish a plan to  
      promote regionalization and cost sharing among Maine schools.  
      Minimum criteria are enumerated.