MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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118th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-1997

Legislative Document

No. 1895

H.P. 1344

House of Representatives, May 28, 1997

Resolve, to Direct the State Board of Education to Study the School Funding Formula.

Reported by Representative RICHARD for the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs pursuant to Joint Order H.P. 1332.

JOSEPH W. MAYO, Clerk

Sec. 1. Committee to study school funding formula. Resolved: That the State Board of Education shall establish a committee to study the school funding formula. The state board shall appoint 10 members to the committee, and the committee shall also coordinate its work with the state board committee studying essential programs and services. Each member appointed must be impartial 6 and have extensive knowledge of public education and school finance policies in the State. 8 In appointing members to the committee, the state board shall give proper consideration to achieving statewide geographical representation, representing the 10 diverse range of interests in public education in this State and identifying individuals with the willingness and ability to make 12 the necessary commitment to the committee; and be it further

Sec. 2. Duties. Resolved: That the committee of the State Board of Education established in section 1 shall:

- 1. Review and make recommendations regarding the report presented by the Commissioner of Education to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs related to the current methods used to calculate the income and cost-of-living adjustment factors. The State Board of Education shall submit its findings and recommendations to the Legislature no later than January 1, 1998; and
- 2. Review the essential programs and services plan presented by the State Board of Education, pursuant to Public Law 1997, chapter 24, Part X, section 1, to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs for the purpose of developing an adequate and equitable method to fund essential programs and services. The state board committee shall submit its findings and recommendations to the Legislature no later than January 15, 1999. The Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs may report out a bill based on the state board recommendations; and be it further

Sec. 3. Staffing and research assistance. Resolved: That, if necessary, the State Board of Education may request staffing assistance from the Department of Education and research assistance from the Education Research Institute Steering Committee.

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FISCAL NOTE

The additional costs associated with establishing a committee to study the school funding formula can be absorbed by the State Board of Education utilizing existing budgeted resources.

The Department of Education will incur some additional costs to provide staffing and other assistance to the board. These costs can be absorbed within the department's existing budgeted resources.

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The ability of the Education Research Institute to provide research assistance, if requested by the board, will depend on the availability of funding included as General Fund appropriations in LD 1841, "An Act to Appropriate Funds for the Education Research Institute."

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SUMMARY

This bill, which is the unanimous report of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, directs the State Board of Education to establish a committee to study the school funding formula. The state board committee shall:

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- 1. Review the report presented by the Commissioner of Education to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs regarding the current methods used to calculate the income and cost-of-living adjustment factors. In conducting its study, the state board committee may coordinate its work with the committee studying essential programs and services. The board committee shall submit its findings and any recommendations to the Legislature no later than January 1, 1998; and
- 30 2. Review the essential programs and services presented by the State Board of Education, pursuant to Public Law 24, Part X, section 1, to the Joint Standing 32 1997, chapter Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs for the purpose of 34 developing an adequate and equitable method to fund essential The state board committee shall submit programs and services. 36 its findings and recommendations to the Legislature no later than January 15, 1999. The Joint Standing Committee on Education and 38 Cultural Affairs may report out a bill based on the state board recommendations.

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If necessary, the board may request staffing assistance from the Department of Education and research assistance from the Education Research Institute Steering Committee.