

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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L.D. 2027

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**EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS**

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**STATE OF MAINE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
119TH LEGISLATURE  
SECOND REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" to H.P. 1420, L.D. 2027, Bill, "An Act to Enable the Formation of Public Charter Schools"

Amend the bill by striking out the title and substituting the following:

**'An Act to Encourage Educational Options'**

Further amend the bill by striking out everything after the enacting clause and before the summary and inserting in its place the following:

**'Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §2501, first ¶,** as enacted by PL 1981, c. 693, §§5 and 8, is amended to read:

The school boards of 2 or more administrative units may file an application to the commissioner for the purpose of entering a shared service agreement to carry out a specified educational function. A shared service agreement may include, but is not limited to, the provision of an alternative educational program or an educational program setting in which some students may achieve at higher levels than with the prevailing modes of regular classroom instruction.

**Sec. 2. 20-A MRSA §8402,** as amended by PL 1991, c. 518, §12, is further amended to read:

**§8402. Programs**

A center shall provide programs of vocational education. Programs of vocational education are eligible to receive state subsidy pursuant to chapters 606 and 609. All programs of

2 vocational education offered by a center must be approved by the  
3 commissioner pursuant to section 8306-A. The programs must offer  
4 a sequence of courses that are directly related to the  
5 preparation of individuals for employment in current or emerging  
6 occupations and may include training and education in academic  
7 and business skills preparing students to further their education  
8 at the technical college or other college level or allowing  
9 students to use trade and occupational skills on other than an  
10 employee basis. Programs of vocational education may also  
11 include alternative educational programs and training and  
12 education in music, athletics, art and other activities approved  
13 by the commissioner pursuant to section 8306-A.

14 **Sec. 3. 20-A MRSA §8451-A**, as enacted by PL 1991, c. 518,  
15 §18, is amended to read:

16 **§8451-A. Programs**

17  
18 A region shall provide programs of vocational education.  
19 Programs of vocational education are eligible to receive state  
20 subsidy pursuant to chapters 606 and 609. All programs of  
21 vocational education offered by a region must be approved by the  
22 commissioner pursuant to section 8306-A. The programs must offer  
23 a sequence of courses that are directly related to the  
24 preparation of individuals for employment in current or emerging  
25 occupations and may include training and education in academic  
26 and business skills preparing students to further their education  
27 at the technical college or college level or allowing students to  
28 use trade and occupational skills on other than an employee  
29 basis. Programs of vocational education may also include  
30 alternative educational programs and training and education in  
31 music, athletics, art and other activities approved by the  
32 commissioner pursuant to section 8306-A.

33  
34 **Sec. 4. School-based decision making.** The Commissioner of  
35 Education shall encourage the use of school-based management and  
36 provisions for the ongoing engagement of parents and other  
37 members of the school community in school-based decision making,  
38 including the use of school councils on a pilot basis.

39  
40 **Sec. 5. Regional choice.** In establishing criteria for grants  
41 as provided in Private and Special Law 1999, c. 56, the  
42 Commissioner of Education shall require each recipient regional  
43 alliance to establish consistent standards for regional public  
44 school choice using transfers as provided in the Maine Revised  
45 Statutes, Title 20-A, section 5205. The standards must include a  
46 common, comprehensible and concise application form for use by  
47 parents and students, a common set of transfer criteria to be  
48 mutually agreed upon by the sending and receiving school units,

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2 and the allowance of transfers in such numbers as to provide for  
meaningful public school choice.

4 **Sec. 6. Charter schools stakeholders group.** Not later than  
6 August 31, 2000, the Commissioner of Education or a designee  
shall convene a representative group of interested parties to  
8 determine the requirements and options for the State in applying  
for federal charter school grant funds. The group shall issue a  
10 report containing its findings and recommendations to the joint  
standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over  
12 educational matters on or before December 15, 2000. The  
committee may introduce a bill related to charter schools to the  
14 First Regular Session of the 120th Legislature.'

16 Further amend the bill by inserting at the end before the  
summary the following:

18 **FISCAL NOTE**

20 The Department of Education will incur some minor additional  
22 costs to establish criteria for certain grants, convene a  
stakeholders group and submit the required report. These costs  
24 can be absorbed within the department's existing budgeted  
resources.'

26 **SUMMARY**

28 This amendment replaces the bill and proposes several steps  
30 to encourage public school alternative education programs. The  
32 Commissioner of Education must require public school alliances to  
set consistent standards for regional public school choice  
34 programs. The amendment provides that shared service agreements  
between schools may include alternative education programs and  
36 establishes alternative education as a component of secondary  
technical education programs. The amendment also directs the  
38 commissioner to take steps to encourage school-based management  
decision making. Finally, the amendment establishes a  
40 stakeholders group chosen by the commissioner to study the  
possibility of the State applying for grant funds under the  
42 federal charter schools legislation. The amendment also adds a  
fiscal note to the bill.

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