

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Minority

Date: 2/19/14

(Filing No. S-393)

EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

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STATE OF MAINE

SENATE

126TH LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "B" to S.P. 689, L.D. 1736, "Resolve, To Create a State-run Virtual Academy Providing Maine Students with Access to Online Learning through Their Existing School Districts"

Amend the bill by striking out all of sections 1 to 3 and inserting the following:

Sec. 1. State-run virtual academy. Resolved: That the Department of Education shall establish a state-administered virtual academy providing all public schools in the State access to online courses for their students. The department shall design the virtual academy in collaboration with members of the Maine Charter School Commission, established in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, section 12004-G, subsection 10-D, providers of online learning programs, associations representing school administrators, teachers, school boards and others involved in public education, and 2 members of the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters appointed jointly by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House, including one member of the party holding the highest number of seats and one member of the party holding the 2nd highest number of seats in the Legislature. In designing the virtual academy, the department shall:

- 1. Ensure the virtual academy provides for a blended learning environment that offers access to virtual classes along with traditional classroom-based instruction;
- 2. Place particular emphasis on enhancing curriculum and addressing potential scheduling obstacles, including scheduling obstacles that may be encountered by students in career and technical education programs;
- 3. Use as models the Vermont Virtual Learning Cooperative and the Virtual Learning Academy Charter School in New Hampshire;
- 4. Propose a funding model for the state-administered virtual academy that provides that state funding is allocated as a separate line item in the General Purpose Aid for Local Schools program; and
- 5. Propose an amendment to the existing funding model for virtual public charter schools in order to provide that state funding is allocated as separate line items in the

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

2015

1 General Purpose Aid for Local Schools program and that the amount of funding provided
2 for a student enrolled in a virtual public charter school may not exceed \$6,000 per
3 student.

4 The department shall complete the design of the virtual academy by August 1, 2015,
5 and the virtual academy must be operational by August 1, 2016; and be it further

6 **Sec. 2. Legislation. Resolved:** That, by December 1, 2015, the Department of
7 Education shall submit any necessary legislation to implement section 1 of this resolve to
8 the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education
9 matters; and be it further

10 **Sec. 3. Appropriations and allocations. Resolved:** That the following
11 appropriations and allocations are made.

12 **EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF**

13 **Maine Virtual Academy N168**

14 Initiative: Provides funding for one Secretary Specialist position, one Education
15 Specialist II position and one Education Specialist III position and related All Other costs
16 associated with designing and operating a state-administered virtual academy.

17	GENERAL FUND	2013-14	2014-15
18	POSITIONS - LEGISLATIVE COUNT	0.000	3.000
19	Personal Services	\$0	\$262,233
20	All Other	\$0	\$11,000
21			
22	GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$273,233</u>
23			

24 **SUMMARY**

25 This amendment, which is the minority report of the Joint Standing Committee on
26 Education and Cultural Affairs, provides that the Department of Education must include 2
27 members of the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over
28 education matters, members of the Maine Charter School Commission and providers of
29 online learning programs in the group collaborating in the design of a state-administered
30 virtual academy that the department must establish by August 1, 2016 to provide all
31 public schools in the State access to online courses for their students.

32 The amendment provides that in designing the virtual academy the Department of
33 Education must propose:

34 1. A funding model for the state-administered virtual academy that provides that
35 state funding is allocated as a separate line item in the General Purpose Aid for Local
36 Schools program; and

37 2. An amendment to the existing funding model for virtual public charter schools in
38 order to provide that state funding is allocated as separate line items in the General
39 Purpose Aid for Local Schools program and that the amount of funding provided for a
40 student enrolled in a virtual public charter school does not exceed \$6,000 per student.



126th MAINE LEGISLATURE

LD 1736

LR 2724(03)

Resolve, To Create a State-run Virtual Academy Providing Maine Students with Access to Online Learning through Their Existing School Districts

**Fiscal Note for Bill as Amended by Committee Amendment 'B' (S-393)
Committee: Education and Cultural Affairs
Fiscal Note Required: Yes**

Fiscal Note

Undetermined future biennium cost increase - General Fund

	FY 2013-14	FY 2014-15	Projections FY 2015-16	Projections FY 2016-17
Net Cost (Savings)				
General Fund	\$0	\$273,233	\$252,380	\$282,100
Appropriations/Allocations				
General Fund	\$0	\$273,233	\$252,380	\$282,100

Fiscal Detail and Notes

This bill includes a General Fund appropriation of \$273,233 in fiscal year 2014-15 to a newly created Maine Virtual School program within the Department of Education for one Secretary Specialist position, one Education Specialist II position and one Education Specialist III position to design by August 1, 2015, and implement by August 1, 2016, a state-administered virtual academy.

The total state and local costs associated with providing all public schools in the State with access to online courses for their students will depend on the model that is developed. However, this legislation requires that the total cost per student enrolled in the virtual academy not exceed \$6,000 per year.

The Legislature will incur additional costs estimated to be \$500 in fiscal year 2013-14 and \$1,000 in fiscal year 2014-15 for the per diem and expenses of 2 legislators participating in the design of the state-administered virtual academy. These costs can be absorbed by the Legislature utilizing existing budgeted resources.