

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2023

Legislative Document

No. 1415

H.P. 911

House of Representatives, March 30, 2023

An Act to Expand Access to School Construction Funding

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


ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative BRENNAN of Portland.
Cosponsored by Senator CHIPMAN of Cumberland and
Representatives: COLLINGS of Portland, CROCKETT of Portland, DODGE of Belfast,
MALON of Biddeford, SALISBURY of Westbrook, SHAGOURY of Hallowell, ZAGER of
Portland, Senator: PIERCE of Cumberland.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 20-A MRS §15905, sub-§1, ¶A**, as amended by PL 2019, c. 616, Pt. C,
3 §9, is further amended to read:

4 A. The state board may approve projects as long as no project approval will cause debt
5 service costs, as defined in section 15672, subsection 2-A, paragraph A and pursuant
6 to rules adopted in accordance with Resolve 2007, chapter 223, section 4, to exceed
7 the maximum limits specified in Table 1 and Table 2 in subsequent fiscal years.

8 Table 1
9 Major Capital Integrated, Consolidated
10 Secondary and Postsecondary
11 Project

12 Fiscal year	13 Maximum Debt Service Limit	14 Maximum Debt Service Limit
15 1990	\$ 48,000,000	
16 1991	\$ 57,000,000	
17 1992	\$ 65,000,000	
18 1993	\$ 67,000,000	
19 1994	\$ 67,000,000	
20 1995	\$ 67,000,000	
21 1996	\$ 67,000,000	
22 1997	\$ 67,000,000	
23 1998	\$ 67,000,000	
24 1999	\$ 69,000,000	
25 2000	\$ 72,000,000	
26 2001	\$ 74,000,000	
27 2002	\$ 74,000,000	
28 2003	\$ 80,000,000	
29 2004	\$ 80,000,000	
30 2005	\$ 84,000,000	
31 2006	\$ 90,000,000	
32 2007	\$ 96,000,000	
33 2008	\$100,000,000	
34 2009	\$104,000,000	
35 2010	\$108,000,000	
36 2011	\$126,000,000	
37 2012	\$116,000,000	
38 2013	\$116,000,000	
39 2014	\$126,000,000	\$10,000,000
40 2015	\$126,000,000	\$10,000,000
41 2016	\$126,000,000	\$10,000,000
42 2017	\$126,000,000	\$10,000,000
43 2018	\$126,000,000	\$10,000,000
44 2019	\$126,000,000	\$10,000,000
45 2020	\$126,000,000	\$20,000,000
46 2021	\$126,000,000	\$20,000,000
	\$126,000,000	\$20,000,000
	\$126,000,000	\$20,000,000

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Table 2

Fiscal year	Maximum Debt Service Limit
2024	\$150,000,000
2025	\$150,000,000
2026	\$150,000,000
2027	\$150,000,000

Sec. 2. School construction projects. The State Board of Education shall amend its rule Chapter 61: Rules for Major Capital School Construction Projects, Section 15 regarding administering funding for integrated, consolidated 9-16 educational facilities to allow the governing body of one high school or a regional high school together with a career and technical high school to apply for funding for a proposed school. Rules adopted to comply with this section are routine technical rules as defined in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

Sec. 3. Calendar year 2024 funding. In calendar year 2024, a school administrative unit is eligible to apply for funding for both a major capital school construction project under State Board of Education rule Chapter 61: Rules for Major Capital School Construction Projects and an integrated, consolidated 9-16 educational facility under Section 15 of that rule.

Sec. 4. Stakeholder group for implementation of Maine Public School Construction Authority. The Commissioner of Education shall convene a group of qualified stakeholders for the purpose of making recommendations on how to establish and finance the Maine Public School Construction Authority, the purpose of which would be to finance elementary and secondary public school construction projects. The commissioner shall report the recommendations of the stakeholder group, including any necessary implementing legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs no later than December 6, 2023. The joint standing committee may report out legislation related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 131st Legislature.

SUMMARY

This bill:

1. Requires the State Board of Education, in administering funding for integrated, consolidated 9-16 educational facilities, to allow the governing body of one high school or a regional high school to apply for funding for a proposed school. Current state board rules require 2 high schools or a regional high school to apply. The bill directs the board to amend its rules to be consistent with this change;
2. Allows, in calendar year 2024, a school administrative unit to be eligible to apply for funding for both a major capital school construction project and an integrated, consolidated 9-16 educational facility project; and
3. Requires the Commissioner of Education to convene a stakeholder group to develop recommendations for the establishment and financing of the Maine Public School Construction Authority. The purpose of the new authority would be to finance elementary and secondary public school construction projects. The commissioner is required to submit a report regarding the recommendations of the stakeholder group to the Joint Standing

1 Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, which may report out legislation related to
2 the report to the Second Regular Session of the 131st Legislature.