

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE  
129<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATURE  
FIRST REGULAR SESSION



Summaries of bills, adopted amendments and laws enacted or finally passed

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS**

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**STAFF:**

HILLARY RISLER, LEGISLATIVE ANALYST  
KAREN S. NADEAU, LEGISLATIVE ANALYST  
OFFICE OF POLICY AND LEGAL ANALYSIS  
13 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, ME 04333  
(207) 287-1670  
<http://legislature.maine.gov/opla/>

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# STATE OF MAINE

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## LEGISLATIVE DIGEST OF BILL SUMMARIES AND ENACTED LAWS

This *Legislative Digest of Bill Summaries and Enacted Laws* contains summaries of all LDs and adopted amendments and all laws enacted or finally passed during the First Regular Session of the 129<sup>th</sup> Maine Legislature.

The *Digest* is arranged alphabetically by committee and within each committee by Legislative Document (LD) number. The committee report(s), prime sponsor and lead co-sponsor(s), if designated, are listed below each LD title. All adopted amendments are summarized and listed by paper number. A subject index is included with each committee. An appendix provides a summary of relevant session statistics.

Final action on each LD is noted to the right of the LD title. The following describes the various final actions.

*CARRIED OVER*..... carried over to a subsequent session of the Legislature  
*CON RES XXX*..... chapter # of constitutional resolution passed by both houses  
*CONF CMTE UNABLE TO AGREE*..... Committee of Conference unable to agree; legislation died  
*DIED BETWEEN HOUSES*..... House & Senate disagreed; legislation died  
*DIED IN CONCURRENCE*..... defeated in each house, but on different motions; legislation died  
*DIED ON ADJOURNMENT*..... action incomplete when session ended; legislation died  
*EMERGENCY*..... enacted law takes effect sooner than 90 days after session adjournment  
*FAILED, EMERGENCY ENACTMENT or FINAL PASSAGE*..... emergency failed to receive required 2/3 vote  
*FAILED, ENACTMENT or FINAL PASSAGE*..... failed to receive final majority vote  
*FAILED, MANDATE ENACTMENT*..... legislation proposing local mandate failed required 2/3 vote  
*HELD BY GOVERNOR*..... Governor has not signed; final disposition to be determined at subsequent session  
*LEAVE TO WITHDRAW*..... sponsor's request to withdraw legislation granted  
*NOT PROPERLY BEFORE THE BODY*..... ruled out of order by the presiding officer; legislation died  
*INDEF PP*..... indefinitely postponed; legislation died  
*ONTP, ACCEPTED, MAJORITY, MINORITY or REPORT X*... ought-not-to-pass report accepted; legislation died  
*P&S XXX*..... chapter # of enacted private & special law  
*PUBLIC XXX*..... chapter # of enacted public law  
*RESOLVE XXX*..... chapter # of finally passed resolve  
*VETO SUSTAINED*..... Legislature failed to override Governor's veto

The effective date for non-emergency legislation enacted in the First Regular Session of the 129<sup>th</sup> Legislature is Thursday, September 19, 2019. The effective date for legislation enacted as an emergency measure may be found in the enacted law summary for that legislation.

*Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs*

**Senate Amendment "A" To Committee Amendment "A" (S-100)**

This amendment provides funding for the so-called "breakfast after the bell" program for fiscal years 2019-20 and 2020-21, and removes the indication of ongoing funding. This amendment also specifies that the funds provided do not lapse but are carried forward.

This bill was reported out of committee and then carried over to any special or regular session, or both, of the 129th Legislature on the Special Appropriations Table by joint order, H.P. 1322.

**LD 375      An Act To Promote the Forest Products Industry in School Construction      PUBLIC 53  
and Renovation Involving Heating Systems**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
STEWART T JACKSON T	OTP-AM	H-60

This bill requires consideration of modern wood heating systems, with wood biomass fuels sourced locally and in a manner that benefits the State's economy, in the construction of new or substantially renovated schools or school buildings subject to State Board of Education approval.

**Committee Amendment "A" (H-60)**

This amendment clarifies that, in approving school construction projects, the State Board of Education is required to ensure that school administrative units have considered heating systems that use renewable, locally sourced wood-based fuels and that benefit the State's economy and reduce carbon dioxide emissions in all planning and design for new or substantially renovated schools or school buildings subject to state board approval. The amendment strikes the requirement that the school administrative unit demonstrates a preference for modern wood heating systems.

**Enacted Law Summary**

Public Law 2019, chapter 53 provides that, in approving school construction projects, the State Board of Education is required to ensure that school administrative units have considered heating systems that use renewable, locally sourced wood-based fuels and that benefit the State's economy and reduce carbon dioxide emissions in all planning and design for new or substantially renovated schools or school buildings subject to state board approval.

**LD 382      An Act To Fund Services for Blind and Visually Impaired Persons at the      PUBLIC 15  
Maine State Library**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
GIDEON S CARSON B	OTP-AM	H-7

This bill establishes the Blind and Visually Impaired News Access Fund as a dedicated fund within the Maine State Library to be used to provide access to the National Federation of the Blind's news network for blind and visually impaired persons. This bill directs the Public Utilities Commission to transfer \$40,000 per year from the state universal service fund to the Blind and Visually Impaired News Access Fund to support the annual cost of providing access to the network.

**Committee Amendment "A" (H-7)**

This amendment incorporates a fiscal note.

*Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs*

**Enacted Law Summary**

Public Law 2019, chapter 15 establishes the Blind and Visually Impaired News Access Fund as a dedicated fund within the Maine State Library to be used to provide access to the National Federation of the Blind's news network for blind and visually impaired persons. The law also directs the Public Utilities Commission to transfer \$40,000 per year from the state universal service fund to the Blind and Visually Impaired News Access Fund to support the annual cost of providing access to the network.

**LD 385      An Act To Base School Funding on the Number of Students Sent by a      ONTP**  
**Town to a Regional School Unit**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
ACKLEY K	ONTP	

This bill amends the method by which the share of the total cost of education from kindergarten to grade 12 is calculated for a municipality that is within a regional school unit. Current law establishes that share as the lesser of the municipality's total cost of education as determined under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 15688, subsection 1 and an amount equal to the product of the education mill rate for the municipality multiplied by the total valuation of property in the municipality. This bill instead determines the share of the total cost of education from kindergarten to grade 12 of a municipality within a regional school unit based upon the product of the statewide per-pupil rate calculated under Title 20-A, section 15671-A, subsection 2-A and the number of pupils in the municipality who reside in the municipality and who are educated at public expense. The bill phases in this method of determining a municipality's share of the total cost of education from kindergarten to grade 12 over three years: in fiscal year 2020-21, the total cost is 2/3 of the amount determined based on property values and 1/3 of the amount determined based on number of pupils; in fiscal year 2021-22, the total cost is 1/3 of the amount determined based on property values and 2/3 of the amount determined based on number of pupils; and, in fiscal year 2022-23 and subsequent years, the total cost is determined based entirely on number of pupils.

**LD 387      An Act To Require Cursive Handwriting Instruction in Grade 3 to      ONTP**  
**Grade 5**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
SAMPSON H CHENETTE J	ONTP	

This bill requires the Department of Education to provide for continual, regular instruction of and opportunities to use cursive handwriting beginning in grade three. The instruction must be designed to enable students to demonstrate competence in cursive handwriting by the end of grade five.

**LD 388      An Act To Recognize Employee Background Checks Conducted for      PUBLIC 114**  
**Out-of-state Schools Eligible for Maine Tuition Assistance      EMERGENCY**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
ACKLEY K	OTP ONTP	H-189 ACKLEY K

This bill provides that the tuition payment to an out-of-state high school that serves a student who resides in a school administrative unit that does not maintain a high school may not be withheld solely because persons regularly employed in that school do not meet the background check requirements in Maine law. The provisions apply as long as those persons are required to meet background check standards in that state determined by the