

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE  
129<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATURE  
FIRST SPECIAL AND SECOND REGULAR SESSIONS



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

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

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# STATE OF MAINE

129<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATURE  
FIRST REGULAR SESSION



## 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*

**LD 1894 An Act To Incentivize the Purchase of Electric Public School Buses**

**CARRIED OVER**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
VITELLI E BRENNAN M	OTP-AM OTP-AM ONTP	

This bill directs the Department of Education to endeavor to meet a goal of transitioning the public school bus fleet to 100% all-electric school buses by 2040 and directs the department to adopt rules relating to bid requirements, electric charging stations and uniform school bus specifications.

It requires the department to set aside a percentage of available resources for the purchase of electric small school buses, as replacements in or additions to the school bus fleet, in the 2020 request for proposals. It requires the department to develop an electric school bus training program to train school bus mechanics, school bus drivers and school transportation directors and it requires annual training by school bus mechanics, school bus drivers and school transportation directors. It requires the department to assess the need to expand transportation administration staff to manage the transition of the fleet of public school buses in the State to electric school buses.

**Committee Amendment "A" (S-421)**

This amendment, which is the majority report, strikes and replaces the bill, removes the emergency preamble and emergency clause and changes the title. The amendment directs the Commissioner of Education, in approving school bus purchases, contracts and leases, to the extent practicable to grant such approvals in a manner to meet the goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions of the public school bus fleet by 75% by 2035 and transitioning the public school transportation fleet to 100% zero-emissions school buses by 2045.

The amendment directs the Governor's Energy Office to convene an interagency working group to develop a plan to transition Maine's public school bus fleet to achieve these goals. The working group must, at a minimum, consist of representatives from the Department of Education, the Department of Transportation, the Public Utilities Commission, the Efficiency Maine Trust and the Maine Climate Council's transportation working group. The interagency working group is directed to submit findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters no later than January 5, 2022.

**Committee Amendment "B" (S-422)**

This amendment, which is the minority report, strikes and replaces the bill, removes the emergency preamble and emergency clause and changes the title. The amendment directs the Commissioner of Education, in approving school bus purchases, contracts and leases, to the extent practicable to grant such approvals in a manner designed to meet a goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions of the public school bus fleet by 75% by 2040.

This bill was carried over in the House to any special session of the 129th Legislature by joint order, S.P. 788.

**LD 1916 An Act To Increase High School Graduation Rates for Students Experiencing Homelessness or in Foster Care**

**CARRIED OVER**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
LIBBY N CRAVEN M		

*Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs*

This bill does the following.

1. It amends the process for applying for a Department of Education diploma by requiring that the responsible school apply on behalf of a student who has experienced one or more education disruptions on request. The student's parent or guardian or a student who is over 18 years of age may still apply directly to the Department of Education, and the school must assist the student in the application process.
2. It provides that the Commissioner of Education must award a Department of Education diploma to a student who has experienced homelessness or has been in foster care who meets certain criteria and may not require that student to provide additional information or be interviewed.
3. It provides that a secondary school must award a diploma to a student who has experienced homelessness or foster care placement if the student meets specified criteria.
4. It provides that the responsible school for a student whose education disruption is due to multiple transfers or homelessness or foster care placement must compile for the student partial and full credits received by the student to date, provide priority enrollment in classes in which the student has received partial credit and immediately enroll the student in classes or programs to close gaps between the compilation of credits by the student and the credits typically earned by the student's peers.
5. It requires the responsible school to provide an adult mentor to students who experience education disruption due to homelessness or foster care placement to facilitate transition into the school.
6. It requires that if the responsible school determines that a student who experiences education disruption will not be able to graduate by the end of the student's fourth year of secondary school, the responsible school must provide the student information regarding a Department of Education diploma and apply on behalf of the student or assist the student in making the application.

This bill, which has been voted but not yet reported out of committee, was carried over to any special session of the 129th Legislature by joint order, S.P. 788.

**LD 1918     An Act To Amend the Laws Regarding the Reserve Funds of Certain School Organizational Structures**

**PUBLIC 588**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
CLOUTIER K LIBBY N	OTP-AM	H-681

This bill allows boards of school administrative districts, regional school units, community school districts and career and technical education regions to expend reserve funds by a vote of the board for emergencies necessitating immediate expenditures when obtaining voter permission would be cost-prohibitive or when the expenditures are required by law.

It also changes what a reserve fund may be established for, from funding school construction projects, financing the acquisition or reconstruction of a specific type of capital improvement or financing the acquisition of a specific item or type of capital equipment, to providing funds for any direct instruction or instructional support purpose.

**Committee Amendment "A" (H-681)**

This amendment adds to what a reserve fund may be established for to include providing funds for expenditures such as regular instruction, special education, career and technical education, other instruction including summer