An Act To Fully Fund After-school and Preschool Programs in the School Funding Formula, Increase the Economically Disadvantaged Student Factor in the School Funding Formula and Increase the School Construction Debt Service Limit

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

Presented by Representative BRENANAN of Portland.
Cosponsored by Senator CHIPMAN of Cumberland and Representatives: FARNSWORTH of Portland, FECTEAU of Biddeford, McCREA of Fort Fairfield, RECKITT of South Portland, TALBOT ROSS of Portland, Senators: CARSON of Cumberland, LIBBY of Androscoggin, SANBORN, H. of Cumberland.
Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §4254, sub-§4 is enacted to read:

4. Second and subsequent years. In each year a school administrative unit operates an approved public preschool program, other than the year in which it receives start-up funding in accordance with section 4271, the State must provide funding in accordance with sections 15675 and 15681.

Sec. 2. 20-A MRSA §8901, first ¶, as enacted by PL 2005, c. 657, §1, is amended to read:

The After-school Program Fund, referred to in this chapter as "the program fund," is established to encourage the facilitation of high-quality after-school programs in school administrative units throughout the State. The commissioner shall administer the program fund within the department. The commissioner may administer the program fund in addition to the amounts allocated pursuant to section 15681-A, subsection 6. Standards and approval for the allocation and use of program fund money are as follows.

Sec. 3. 20-A MRSA §15674, sub-§4 is enacted to read:

4. Pupil count for after-school programs. Beginning with funding for the 2019-2020 school year, the pupil count for students attending after-school programs must be based on the most recent October 1st count prior to the year of funding.

Sec. 4. 20-A MRSA §15675, sub-§2, ¶A, as enacted by PL 2017, c. 284, Pt. C, §30, is amended to read:

A. An additional weight of 1.50. The number of economically disadvantaged students for each school administrative unit is determined by multiplying the number of resident pupils in the most recent calendar year by the most recent available elementary free or reduced-price meals percentage. The elementary free or reduced-price meals percentage may be applied to determine the number of economically disadvantaged students in the unit's secondary grades; and

Sec. 5. 20-A MRSA §15675, sub-§3, as amended by PL 2013, c. 581, §8, is further amended to read:

3. Public preschool program to grade 2 students. If a school administrative unit is eligible to receive targeted funds for its public preschool to grade 2 program under section 15681, then for each public preschool program kindergarten to grade 2 student the unit receives an additional weight of .10 and for each public preschool program student the unit receives the amount specified in section 15681, subsection 4, paragraph C, if the school is eligible for funding in accordance with section 4254, subsection 4.

A. For purposes of the additional weight funds under this subsection, the count of public preschool program to grade 2 students is calculated based on the number of resident pupils in the most recent calendar year. Beginning with funding for the 2015-2016 school year, the pupil count for students 4 years of age and students 5
years of age attending public preschool programs must be based on the most recent
October 1st count prior to the allocation year.

B. Only school administrative units with public preschool to grade 2 programs
approved by the department are eligible for funds pursuant to this subsection or other
comparable index.

C. Funds provided pursuant to this subsection for kindergarten to grade 2 students
may be expended only on behalf of kindergarten to grade 2 students and funds
provided pursuant to this subsection for public preschool programs may be expended
only on behalf of public preschool program to grade 2 students.

Sec. 6. 20-A MRSA §15681, sub-§4, as amended by PL 2007, c. 141, §17, is
further amended to read:

4. Public preschool program to grade 2 funds. For targeted public preschool
program to grade 2 funds, the commissioner shall calculate the amount that may must be
made available to eligible school administrative units as follows.

A. For fiscal year 2005-06, the amount equals the product of the per-pupil guarantee
calculated pursuant to section 15676 multiplied by the additional weight calculated
pursuant to section 15675, subsection 3.

B. For kindergarten to grade 2 students, for fiscal year 2006-07 and each subsequent
year, the commissioner shall recalculate the amount by using the amount calculated
under paragraph A as a base and appropriate trends in the Consumer Price Index or
other comparable index.

C. For public preschool program students, for each fiscal year, 50% of the per-pupil
costs of the public preschool program in the base year adjusted to the year prior to the
allocation year, except that, if a school administrative unit's state share percentage is
more than 50%, the targeted funds are equal to the per-pupil costs of the public
preschool program in the base year adjusted to the year prior to the allocation year
multiplied by the school administrative unit's state share percentage.

Sec. 7. 20-A MRSA §15681-A, sub-§4-A, as enacted by PL 2017, c. 420, §7, is
amended to read:

4-A. Costs of plans for middle school career and technical education exploration
programs. Beginning in fiscal year 2018-19, and in each subsequent fiscal year, costs
approved pursuant to chapter 313 attributable to establishing and operating career and
technical education exploration programs for middle school students. The commissioner
may establish an allocation to school administrative units for plans under this subsection.
The plans must be implemented within the school administrative unit; and

Sec. 8. 20-A MRSA §15681-A, sub-§5, as enacted by PL 2005, c. 2, Pt. D, §44
and affected by §§72 and 74 and c. 12, Pt. WW, §18, is amended to read:

5. Gifted and talented education costs. Gifted and talented education costs in the
base year adjusted to the year prior to the allocation year; and
Sec. 9. 20-A MRSA §15681-A, sub-§6 is enacted to read:

6. After-school program costs. Beginning in fiscal year 2019-20, after-school program per-pupil costs for each applicable student in the base year adjusted to the year prior to the allocation year multiplied by the school administrative unit's state share percentage.

Sec. 10. 20-A MRSA §15683, sub-§1, ¶E, as amended by PL 2017, c. 284, Pt. C, §41, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

E. If the school administrative unit is eligible for targeted public preschool program to grade 2 funds pursuant to section 15681, subsection 1, the sum of:

(1) The product of the EPS per-pupil rate multiplied by the additional weight for kindergarten to grade 2 calculated pursuant to section 15675, subsection 3; and

(2) The amount specified in section 15681, subsection 4, paragraph C, if the school administrative unit is eligible for public preschool program funds under that section.

Sec. 11. 20-A MRSA §15905, sub-§1, ¶A, as amended by PL 2017, c. 284, Pt. C, §56, is further amended to read:

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

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal year</th>
<th>Major Capital</th>
<th>Integrated, Consolidated</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maximum Debt Service Limit</td>
<td>Secondary and Postsecondary Project</td>
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This bill amends the school funding formula to fund after-school programs based on the state share percentage and to fund public preschool programs at 50% of the cost of the programs, or if a school administrative unit's state share percentage is greater than 50%, to fund the unit's public preschool program at the state share percentage. The bill also increases the additional weight for economically disadvantaged students from 0.15 to 1.5. The bill also raises the maximum debt service limit for school construction projects from $126,000,000 to $150,000,000 beginning in 2020.