

§320-V. Maine Experiential Education Program Fund

1. Fund established. The Maine Experiential Education Program Fund is established within the department. The fund is nonlapsing and may be invested in the same manner as permitted for investment of other state funds. The fund must be held separate and apart from all other money, funds and accounts. Any balance remaining in the fund at the end of the fiscal year must be carried forward to the next fiscal year.

[PL 2025, c. 183, §1 (NEW); PL 2025, c. 183, §4 (AFF).]

2. Use of fund. The department shall use money in the fund to:

A. Provide multiyear grants to public schools and school administrative units to help establish experiential education positions and outdoor educator positions within the public schools and school administrative units through a cost-sharing agreement in accordance with the following provisions.

(1) In the first grant year, the fund covers the full cost of salary and benefits, or stipend, of a position; in the 2nd grant year, the fund covers 2/3 of the cost of salary and benefits, or stipend, for the same position and the public school or school administrative unit covers 1/3 of the cost; in the 3rd grant year, the fund covers 1/3 of the cost of salary and benefits, or stipend, for the same position and the public school or school administrative unit covers 2/3 of the cost; and, in subsequent grant years, the public school or school administrative unit covers the full cost of salary and benefits, or stipend, for the same or similar position.

(2) Grants must be made to public schools and school administrative units in a manner that ensures the public schools and school administrative units create experiential education positions and outdoor educator positions that meet the outdoor, experiential or farm and sea to school education learning program needs of the public schools and school administrative units.

(3) Grants must be developed and dispersed so that public schools and school administrative units gradually assume full financial responsibility for the positions as described in subparagraphs (1) and (2) over a period not to exceed 3 years from the awarding of the grant for any individual public school or school administrative unit.

In dispersing grant money from the fund, the department shall prioritize opportunities to expand the range of positions funded by the fund, including such positions as stipend garden coaches, educational technicians and teachers; and [PL 2025, c. 183, §1 (NEW); PL 2025, c. 183, §4 (AFF).]

B. Provide for a staff position within the department to administer the program and the fund. [PL 2025, c. 183, §1 (NEW); PL 2025, c. 183, §4 (AFF).]
[PL 2025, c. 183, §1 (NEW); PL 2025, c. 183, §4 (AFF).]

3. Fund sources. The following must be paid into the fund:

A. All money appropriated or allocated by the Legislature for inclusion in the fund; [PL 2025, c. 183, §1 (NEW); PL 2025, c. 183, §4 (AFF).]

B. All interest earned from investments of the fund; and [PL 2025, c. 183, §1 (NEW); PL 2025, c. 183, §4 (AFF).]

C. All money designated for deposit into the fund from any source, public or private. [PL 2025, c. 183, §1 (NEW); PL 2025, c. 183, §4 (AFF).]

[PL 2025, c. 183, §1 (NEW); PL 2025, c. 183, §4 (AFF).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 2025, c. 183, §1 (NEW). PL 2025, c. 183, §4 (AFF).

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