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An Act To Improve Equity in School Funding

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

Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §15682, as amended by PL 2005, c. 519, Pt. AAAA, §9, is further amended to read:

§ 15682. Regional adjustment

The commissioner shall make a regional adjustment in the total operating allocation for each school administrative unit determined pursuant to section 15683. The regional adjustment must be based on the regional differences in teacher salary costs or teacher housing costs within labor market areas in the State, as computed by a statewide education policy research institute, and must be applied only to appropriate teacher salary and benefits costs as calculated under section 15678 and salary and benefit costs of other school-level staff who are not teachers as calculated under section 15679.

1. Regional adjustment beginning in fiscal year 2007-08. Beginning in fiscal year 2007-08, the commissioner shall make a regional adjustment according to the provisions of this subsection.

A. A school administrative unit whose labor market area teacher salary costs are computed to be 1.0 or greater receives a regional adjustment based on the regional differences in teacher salary costs.

B. A school administrative unit whose labor market area teacher salary costs are computed to be less than 1.0 receives a regional adjustment based on the regional differences in teacher salary costs or the regional differences in teacher housing costs, whichever is greater.

2. Appeals. The commissioner shall develop an appeals procedure for the regional adjustment under subsection 1 calculated for school administrative units beginning in fiscal year 2007-08.

SUMMARY

This bill provides that, beginning in fiscal year 2007-08, the regional adjustment provided to school administrative units under the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act must be based on the regional differences in teacher salary costs or the regional differences in teacher housing costs within labor market areas in the State, whichever provides a greater regional adjustment to the school administrative unit.