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Resolve, Requiring the Department of Education To Review the Personnel Preparation and Professional Development Opportunities for Special Purpose School Teachers

Preamble. Whereas, the 123rd Legislature recognizes that teachers in special education or regional alternative education programs need to meet certification requirements; and

Whereas, the 122nd Legislature enacted Public Law 2005, chapter 153, amending the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A provisions governing the establishment of tuition rates; and

Whereas, the Department of Education rate setting process review panel recommendations have been implemented and are scheduled to be reviewed this year; and

Whereas, the Truancy, Dropout, Alternative Education Advisory Committee Report of January 2006 provides for strategic planning for federal and state mandates; and

Whereas, personnel preparation opportunities are limited for educators serving special education students in programs that include alternative strategies; and

Whereas, this legislation requires a review of the impact of rate setting on special education programs and staffing; now, therefore, be it

Sec. 1 Review of programs and standards; special purpose programs. Resolved: That the Department of Education, collaborating with the State Board of Education; the Children's Cabinet; the Maine Advisory Council on the Education of Children with Disabilities; the Truancy, Dropout, Alternative Education Advisory Committee; representatives of private, special education facilities; representatives of private, general-purpose agencies; and representatives of students, shall review evidence-based programs and standards designed to promote opportunities for students with special needs. The review must include analyses of:

1. The impact of rate setting on programs and staffing, quality assurance activities, including but not limited to special education facilities, and alternative programs that include a self-assessment process and visits for review and assistance; and

2. The personnel development opportunities that are coordinated with the University of Maine System, the Maine Community College System and private institutions of higher education to determine the adequacy, availability and appropriateness of programs preparing personnel to work in special purpose special education facilities and alternative education programs; and be it further

Sec. 2 Report. Resolved: That, by October 1, 2007, the Department of Education shall submit a report, including the findings of the review conducted under section 1 and recommended legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs for consideration during the Second Regular Session of the 123rd Legislature.