

**TESTIMONY
OF
PENDER MAKIN, COMMISSIONER
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
And the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

Hearing Date: February 22, 2021

LD 221 “An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds, and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2022 and June 30, 2023”

Senators Breen and Daughtry, Representatives Pierce and Brennan, and Members of the Joint Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Education and Cultural Affairs, my name is Pender Makin and I am the Commissioner of the Department of Education (DOE). I am here today to present testimony for those departmental items in the biennial budget bill.

As Governor Mills said, at a time when Maine people are hurting, when small businesses are struggling to keep their doors open, when the ranks of the unemployed have swelled, and when we are fighting a deadly virus all around us, we are proposing balanced budgets as required by the Constitution that continue efficiencies, good fiscal management and curtailments to cover projected revenue shortfalls for all three fiscal years. They focus on combatting the COVID-19 pandemic by continuing to rebuild the State’s public health infrastructure and protecting essential health care, education, and life-saving services. They do not change Maine tax rates and they maintain the Budget Stabilization Fund. With a future made unpredictable due to the ongoing pandemic, these budgets make good on the promise of government, which is to protect and support the wellbeing of our people and institutions.

The DOE is charged with ensuring the effective coordination of our public education system, interpretation and implementation of the laws that govern its operation, the provision of necessary resources, information, and technical support to schools and districts across the state, and the

interrelation of our public education system with Maine's other social, economic, and cultural programs and departments. Our budget consists mostly of "pass through" funds, as our Department receives, manages, and disseminates state and federal funding to the local schools.

The initiatives in this budget can be categorized into four groups. One group includes initiatives with a General Fund impact that nets to zero. These initiatives consist of housekeeping items due to reorganizations within the department and are self-funded. The General Fund headcount in this group nets to an increase of two due to one position elimination and the continuation of three positions that were established by financial order during our strategic reorganization process.

Another group includes initiatives related to Personal Services that do have a fiscal impact. The General Fund total amount for these initiatives is \$77,210 in FY22 and \$177,137 in FY23 with an increase of three positions that were established by financial order.

A third group represents reductions in General Fund to help offset other initiatives. These initiatives total \$165,639 in savings in each year of the biennium.

The last group includes only three General Fund initiatives and they represent the overall General Fund budget request. They are for Teacher Retirement in the amount of \$15,324,489 in FY22 and \$20,677,486 in FY23, Retired Teachers Group Life Insurance with a savings of \$8,383 in FY22 and an appropriation of \$125,431 in FY23 and General Purpose Aid for Local Schools in the amount of \$22,500,000 in each year of the biennium.

Some initiatives in this budget will impact more than one program, for example: a transfer of one staff member to a different team or office within the Department is reflected as both a reduction in one program initiative and an increase in another. For this reason, initiatives related to the same purpose will sometimes appear across several areas of my testimony. The explanation for these initiatives will be repeated for each program, and the repeated explanations will be underlined to identify that they were described earlier.

Appendix A, included with my testimony, reflects all of the initiatives in the budget. The initiatives are color coded by group for clarity.

I will now provide an overview of the budget, by program, describing the initiatives associated with each.

PART A

ADULT EDUCATION

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page **A-150**. The Adult Education program provides administrative and technical support and assistance for adult education programs statewide including adult and community education, adult basic education, adult high school diploma, high school equivalency diploma testing program, family literacy, job skills training and college transition programs. This program includes both the General Fund and the Federal Expenditures Fund. It has **three initiatives** that may also be found on page **A-150**.

The **first initiative** provides an appropriation of \$20,000 in each year of the biennium to cover increased costs for administering high school equivalency tests (HiSET). Pre-Covid-19, individuals could take a computer-based or paper-based test at Adult Education sites. Because of Covid-19, the Adult Education team started a new program called HiSET at Home. This allows testers to take their tests at home with a remote proctor. HiSET at home costs an additional \$17.50 per test for remote proctoring. This initiative covers the increased cost for HiSET at Home (\$17,000) plus the estimated growth of 5% (\$3,000) in the program.

The **second initiative** transfers \$29,000 from School Finance and Operations to Adult Education. This funding is for the adult education management system (MaineStars) that was developed for reporting. This initiative puts the funding in the appropriate program. It also may be found on page **A-179** which transfers the funding from School Finance and Operations resulting in a net effect of zero.

The **third initiative** de-appropriates \$7,000 in each year of the biennium for travel, office supplies and general operations in order to fund new budget initiatives as a result of a shift in departmental priorities.

ALTERNATIVE BREAKFAST DELIVERY SERVICE PROGRAM

The Alternative Breakfast Delivery Program, also referred to as Breakfast after the Bell, is managed by Child Nutrition. The purpose of the program is to provide funding for schools to start-up or expand an alternative breakfast delivery method. This program has no baseline budget or initiatives. The department received a one-time appropriation of \$500,000 in Public Law 2019, chapter 480 in fiscal year 2019-20. Unspent funds carryover to the next fiscal year. The amount that carried from last year is \$454,156. Of that amount, \$11,244 has been spent to date.

CHARTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page **A-151**. The Federal Expenditures Fund request is \$500 for each year of the biennium. This base allocation was established if federal funds are received to fund a Charter School Program that would primarily make sub-grants to charter schools per federal regulations. To date no federal funds have been received. There are no new initiatives for this program.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page **A-152**. The Child Development Services (CDS) system is an Intermediate Educational Unit (IEU) that provides both early intervention (birth - two years) and Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for ages three through five years under the supervision of the Maine DOE. CDS ensures the provision of special education services and the implementation of federal and state regulations statewide, through a network of nine regional sites and a central office. It is our intent to transition CDS services for children ages 3-5 into the auspices of local public school systems, as this would improve services and continuity for the children and families

served by the program. This program includes both the General Fund and the Federal Expenditures Fund. It **has two initiatives** that may also be found on page **A-152**.

The **first initiative** transfers an Office Associate II position from CDS to the Special Services team in order to align the position with the appropriate program. This position provides administrative support to the finance team within the Office of Special Services. This initiative may also be found on page **A-181** which reflects the transfer to Special Services resulting in a net effect of zero.

The **second initiative** eliminates a vacant Public Service Coordinator II position and transfers the General Fund Personal Services savings to All Other. The position changes from a state position to a CDS position. This initiative may also be found on page **A-181** which reflects the Federal Expenditures Fund cost of the position.

COMMISSION TO END STUDENT HUNGER

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page **A-153**. The Commission to End Student Hunger is charged with the implementation of the 5-year plan to end student hunger as developed by the Task Force to End Student Hunger in Maine pursuant to Resolve 2013, chapter 107. The Department participates as a member.

The Other Special Revenue Funds request is \$500 for each year of the biennium. This base allocation was established if funds were received for this purpose. No revenue has been received to date. There are no new initiatives for this program.

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PROGRAM

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page **A-153**. The Community Schools Program was established as a pilot program beginning in the 2016-2017 school year. Community schools provide services to students, families and community members that promote student success while addressing the needs of the whole student. according to the United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention (US CDC), travel at this time remains a risk. There are no new initiatives in this program.

The Federal Expenditures Fund request is \$500 for each year of the biennium. This base allocation was established if federal funds were received for this purpose. No revenue has been received to date.

CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD CHECK FUND

The **baseline budget** for this Other Special Revenue Funds program may be found on page **A-154**. The Criminal History Record Check Fund is a non-lapsing fund within the Department of Education. This account receives transfers from the Department of Public Safety to fund a portion of a position within the Department that issues certificates upon completion of criminal history record checks of educational personnel applicants. There are no new initiatives for this program.

DIGITAL LITERACY FUND

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page **A-154**. The Digital Literacy Fund, Other Special Revenue Funds, is used to provide technical assistance to SAUs to support the use of digital curricula including digital textbooks and open educational resources. It also provides an online clearinghouse for digital curricula to aid SAUs with the selection and vetting of digital learning materials. There are no new initiatives for this program.

EDUCATION IN THE UNORGANIZED TERRITORY

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page **A-155**. The purpose of the Education in the Unorganized Territory (EUT) program is to provide educational programming and related support services to school-age children whose parents reside in the unorganized territory of the state. The program must meet the general standards for elementary and secondary schooling and special education established for organized municipal units.

Funding is provided to educate 795 students residing in unorganized territories, including 95 students in three EUT schools. The Department operates these three schools and tuitions 700 students to 77 SAUs/region schools.

The funds expended from the General Fund budget for EUT educational services are replaced each fiscal year by local tax revenues raised in the unorganized territory through the Municipal Cost Component Act. These local tax funds are dedicated revenues which reimburse the General Fund for EUT and other state and county services provided to residents of the unorganized territory. This program includes General Fund, Federal Expenditures Fund and Other Special Revenue Funds. There are no new initiatives for this program.

FACILITIES, SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION

The baseline budget for this program is on page **A-156**. The Office of Facilities, Safety and Transportation provides planning, leadership, technical assistance and financial support necessary to maintain and strengthen the state's PreK-12 public education infrastructure. Programs include Major Capital School Construction, School Revolving Renovation Fund, Leased Space, Federal Facility, Facilities Inventory, School Bus Purchase Transportation Operations and Transportation Safety and Training. This program is funded with Other Special Revenue Funds, which are derived from the Maine Municipal Bond Bank. It has **one initiative** that may also be found on page **A-156**.

This **initiative** transfers allocation to the Maine School Safety Center from the Facilities, Safety and Transportation program. A new program has been created for the Maine School Safety Center resulting in the need to transfer the allocation.

FUND FOR A HEALTHY MAINE (FHM) – SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page **A-157**. Pursuant to Title 20-A §6602 a public school shall provide breakfast at no cost to all students who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals. The state shall provide funding equal to the difference between the federal reimbursement for a free breakfast and the federal reimbursement for a reduced-price breakfast for each eligible student. There are no new initiatives for this program.

FUND FOR THE EFFICIENT DELIVERY OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page **A-157**. The Fund for the Efficient Delivery of Educational Services was established to provide competitive grants to SAUs to fund the cost of changes leading to significant and sustainable savings in the cost of delivering educational services and improved student achievement.

The Other Special Revenue Funds request is \$500 for each year of the biennium. This was the base allocation when the program was established. There are no new initiatives for this program.

GENERAL PURPOSE AID FOR LOCAL SCHOOLS (GPA)

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page **A-158**. GPA forms the core of state funding for Maine public schools. The School Finance and Operations Team distributes these funds and provides technical assistance regarding that distribution to Maine's 266 SAUs. Local SAUs use GPA funds, with local tax revenues, to provide pre-kindergarten through grade 12 educational programs so that each student has the opportunity to achieve Maine's Learning Results. This program includes the General Fund and Other Special Revenue Funds, which are derived from revenue received from the Oxford Casino. It has **five initiatives** that may be found on pages **A-158** and **A-159**.

The **first initiative** continues an Education Specialist III and a Public Service Manager III that were established by financial order. The Education Specialist III serves as a project manager for the Maine Learning Through Technology Initiative (MLTI). It oversees and manages the resources and related logistics of the program which includes contract and grant administration, inventory of equipment, and software and network resource management for Maine's participating schools. The Public Service Manager III serves as the Director of Innovative Teaching and Learning Through Technology providing leadership within the Office of Innovation and oversight of the Learning Through Technology program. The cost of these positions will be funded with existing Learning Through Technology All Other funds within the GPA account.

The **second initiative** continues a Management Analyst II that was established by financial order. This position was originally established as a Public Service Coordinator I. The position was reclassified to a Management Analyst II to better serve the needs of the Office of School Finance and Operations. This position is responsible for the office webpage, managing communication efforts related to training opportunities for financial reporting and compliance for schools, and producing videos and infographics to disseminate to Maine school district staff, the Legislature and the general public. The cost of the position will be funded through the existing All Other budget for the data management team within the GPA account.

The **third initiative** reduces allocation due to lower estimated revenue from the Oxford Casino as per the December 2020 Revenue Forecasting Committee revenue projections. Prior to the pandemic, the FY21 budgeted revenue for casino revenue was \$21,508,243. The current revenue projection for FY22 is \$12,427,201 and \$20,370,559 for FY23.

The **fourth initiative** provides an appropriation of \$22,500,000 in each year of the biennium. This funding keeps the state share percentage of the total cost of funding public education from pre-kindergarten to grade 12 at 51.83%.

The **fifth initiative** transfers a Management Analyst II and an Office Specialist I from Learning Through Technology to GPA to reflect the positions in the appropriate program. This initiative may also be found on page **A-169**, which transfers the position from Learning Through Technology for a net effect of zero.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND EDUCATOR SUPPORT SERVICES (HEESS)

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page **A-160**. This program is central to the certification of teachers, educational specialists, building administrators, and other education personnel; provides assistance to districts in Performance Evaluation and Professional Growth (PEPG) processes; administers and supports educator recruitment, excellence and leadership development initiatives; provides oversight and assessment to the Maine postsecondary institutions offering educator

preparation programs; licensing proprietary postsecondary schools; manages the State Authority Reciprocity Agreements (SARA), supports public and private postsecondary institutions of Maine; and administers degree granting authority to out-of-state postsecondary institutions. This program includes the General Fund and the Federal Expenditures Fund. It has **three initiatives** that may also be found on page **A-160**.

The **first initiative** transfers an Education Specialist III from Learning Systems to HEES in order to reflect the position in the appropriate program. This position supports the Certification team within HEES. This initiative may also be found on page **A-165** which transfers the position from Learning Systems resulting in a net effect of zero.

The **second initiative** reduces allocation of \$5,480,535 in each year of the biennium. This allocation is no longer needed as the Teacher Incentive Fund Grant has ended.

The **third initiative** de-appropriates \$14,263 in each year of the biennium for travel, office supplies and general operations in order to fund new budget initiatives as a result of a shift in departmental priorities.

LEADERSHIP TEAM

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page **A-162**. The Leadership Team exists within the Commissioner's Office. The Leadership Team provides Maine schools with the dynamic and collaborative support needed to ensure quality pre-k through adult learning in the state. It provides administrative and policymaking services, which support the operations of the Department of Education in the areas of statewide educational planning and innovation, Administrative Procedure Act and Freedom of Access Act compliance, state and federal legislative activity, agency budgeting and finance, strategic planning, communications, advocacy and outreach, and personnel. Each of the activities has broad responsibilities for supporting the work of Maine's pre-k through adult programming for education, elevating all other organizational units within the department, and representing and evolving the department within these areas of responsibility to best serve Maine schools.

This program includes the General Fund and Other Special Revenue Funds, which are derived mostly from the Department's cost allocation plan. It has **three initiatives** that may also be found on page **A-162**.

The **first initiative** transfers two Regional Education Representatives from Learning Systems to Leadership to reflect the positions in the appropriate program. These positions work in the Office of Innovation which is part of the Commissioner's Office. This initiative may also be found on page **A-164** which transfers the positions from Learning Systems resulting in a net effect of zero.

The **second initiative** provides an appropriation of \$11,226 in FY22 and \$11,222 in FY23 for the proposed reorganizations of a Public Service Manager III to a Chief of Operations and a Public Service Executive II to a Chief Innovation Officer in order to provide consistency within appointed positions. The department has five appointed positions but only three of them are major policy-influencing positions in Title 5. This initiative puts all appointed positions in Title 5.

The **third initiative** de-appropriates \$15,000 in each year of the biennium for travel, office supplies and general operations expenditures in order to fund new budget initiatives as a result of a shift in departmental priorities.

LEARNING SYSTEMS TEAM - Office of Learning Systems – OLS

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page **A-164**. This program provides technical assistance and comprehensive support to superintendents, administrators, teachers and other education staff in coordinating local and regional efforts to accomplish the following: implement the Maine Learning Results/Maine Early Learning & Development Standards; identify and broker professional development & learning opportunities aligned to the needs of educators & Maine school systems; work with regional groups & organizations to establish or enhance partnerships and collaborations with a variety of agencies, educational institutions, organizations, and partners; and provide expertise in curriculum content areas, instructional practice and strategies, assessment systems and other special areas of expertise statewide; and implementation of ESEA Titles I, II, III, IV and V and

Carl D. Perkins funds. This program includes the General Fund and Federal Expenditures Fund. It has **sixteen initiatives** that may be found on pages **A-164** to **A-167**.

The **first initiative** transfers two Regional Education Representatives from Learning Systems to the Leadership Team to reflect the positions in the appropriate program. These positions work in the Office of Innovation which is part of the Commissioner's Office. This initiative may also be found on page **A-162** which transfers the positions to the Leadership Team resulting in a net effect of zero.

The **second initiative** provides an allocation of \$169,122 (of federal grant funds) in each year of the biennium for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program grant in order to align the allocation with estimated revenue. The objective of this grant is to create community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities for children, particularly for those who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools.

The **third initiative** provides an allocation of \$504,747 in FY22 and \$504,604 (of federal grant funds) in FY23 for the Student Support and Academic Enrichment grant in order to align expenditures with estimated revenue. The objective of this grant is to improve students' academic achievement by increasing the capacity of local educational agencies to provide students with access to a well-rounded education, improve school conditions for student learning and improve digital literacy for all students.

The **fourth initiative** transfers an Education Specialist III to Higher Education and Educator Support Services from Learning Systems. This position supports the Certification team within HEESS. This initiative may also be found on page **A-160** which reflects the transfer to HEESS resulting in a net effect of zero.

The **fifth initiative** reduces allocation of \$4,832,124 in each year of the biennium. This initiative reduces allocation for the Eisenhower Mathematics and Science Education State grant (\$1,000,687) and the Preschool Development Grants Program (\$3,831,437). Both of these grants have ended.

The **sixth initiative** provides an appropriation of \$25,922 in FY22 and \$10,564 in FY23 for the approved reclassification of a Regional Education Representative to a Public Service Manager II. The FY22 amount includes a retroactive payment from March 30, 2020.

The **seventh initiative** continues an Education Specialist III position through August 31, 2022 that was previously continued by financial order. This position provides oversight and leadership to the Head Start programs in Maine and facilitates coordination between head start services and public schools. A portion of this position is also funded by the Department of Health and Services through February of 2022 for work related to Building Strong Foundations for Families FA project.

The **eighth through eleventh initiatives** transfer ten positions, and related All Other, from Learning Systems to the Office of School and Student Supports. As a result of a reorganization within the department, a new office was created that provides greatly needed resources, professional development, technical assistance, and organizational capacity for schools to provide effective social/emotional learning and mental health education, screening, and services; increase and improve trauma-informed practices; address issues surrounding equity and culturally responsive educational practices; and improve the cultural competence of educators and students in order to ensure safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environments. This initiative may also be found on pages **A-177** to **A-178** which reflects the transfer to the Office of School and Student Supports resulting in a net effect of zero.

The **twelfth initiative** de-appropriates \$78,986 in each year of the biennium for travel, office supplies and general operations in order to fund new budget initiatives as a result of a shift in departmental priorities.

The **thirteenth initiative** eliminates a vacant limited-period Education Specialist III and reduces All Other allocation as a result of the end of the Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education (AWARE) grant.

The **fourteenth initiative** transfers and reallocates the cost of a Public Service Coordinator II and adjusts All Other funding. As a result of a reorganization of the department, the Maine School Safety Center (MSSC) was created. The MSSC aims to develop a safe school infrastructure that will deliver high quality, up-to-date best practices, procedures, training and technical assistance and support to Maine schools. This initiative may also be found on page **A-172** which transfers the position to MSSC resulting in a General Fund savings of \$49,789 in FY22 and \$50,222 in FY23.

The **fifteenth initiative** reallocates the cost of a Regional Education Representative from 100% General Fund to 50% General Fund and 50% Federal Expenditures Fund in order to align work effort with the appropriate funding source.

The **last initiative** provides an appropriation of \$6,647 in FY22 and \$6,949 in FY23 for the approved reorganization of an Education Specialist III to a Regional Education Representative.

LEARNING THROUGH TECHNOLOGY (LTT)

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page **A-169**. This team provides the tools and resources to assist Maine's teachers in integrating technology into their classrooms and curriculum. Programs include the Maine Learning Technology Initiative (MLTI), #ConnectKidsNow! which provides cellular hotspots to students so they can participate in remote learning, the MOOSE project, which created asynchronous, interdisciplinary, project-based learning modules for use by students and teachers, distance learning classrooms, federal e-rate support, and support to the Department of Education and school administrative units.

This program does not receive an All Other General Fund appropriation. The All Other funding for LTT is included in the GPA budget. The budget for LTT in targeted education funds within GPA is \$14m. It has **one initiative** that may also be found on page **A-169**.

This initiative transfers a Management Analyst I and an Office Specialist I from Learning Systems to GPA to reflect the positions in the appropriate program. This initiative may also be found on page **A-159**, which reflects the position transfer to GPA resulting in a net effect of zero.

MAINE COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page **A-170**. The Maine Commission for Community Service builds capacity and sustainability in Maine's volunteer and service communities through training for individuals and organizations responsible for engaging volunteers in service, grants to implement volunteer programs or strengthen their impact, and technical assistance on how to use service as a strategy to tackle community problems. The goal is to address needs effectively and efficiently by extending the impact of local resources through volunteer involvement. As the lead state agency for national and community service programming, the Commission awards funds allocated to Maine under the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. This program includes the General Fund, Federal Expenditures Fund and Other Special Revenue Funds. It has **one initiative** that may also be found on the page **A-170**.

This **initiative** de-appropriates \$9,490 in each year of the biennium for travel, office supplies and general operations in order to fund new budget initiatives as a result of a shift in departmental priorities.

MAINE HIV PREVENTION EDUCATION PROGRAM

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page **A-171**. This General Fund program uses funds for HIV prevention training of health educators, student peer educators, special education teachers, and other teachers and youth workers. There is **one initiative** for this program. It de-appropriates \$15,600 in each year of the biennium for training services related to HIV prevention education for educators in health, special education and alternative education.

MAINE SCHOOL SAFETY CENTER (MSSC)

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page **A-172**. The MSSC provides guidance, training and technical support to Maine's Schools to assist them in meeting their safety and security requirements. The Center is developing a safe school infrastructure that will deliver high quality, up-to-date best practices, procedures, training and technical assistance and support to Maine schools. This program has **two initiatives** that may also be found on page **A-172**.

The **first initiative** continues a Public Service Manager II and a Public Service Coordinator II previously continued by financial. It provides an appropriation of \$198,635 in FY22 and \$311,549 in FY23 to cover the cost of the positions beginning October 31, 2021 and related All Other costs. These two positions are currently being paid with a five-year Maine Grant for School Emergency Management. Due to the response and challenges resulting from COVID-19, additional staff were needed reducing the amount of grant funds for all positions. Also, because grant funding ends in 2023 the Safety Center would not be able to function after that date. This initiative also continues two limited-period Regional Education Representatives through September 29, 2023 and provides an allocation to cover the positions and related All Other costs.

The **second initiative** transfers a Public Service Coordinator II from Learning Systems in order to reflect the position in the appropriate program. This initiative also reallocates the cost of the position. This initiative may also be found on page A-167 which reflects the transfer from Learning Systems.

NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFICATION SALARY SUPPLEMENT FUND

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page A-173. The National Board Certification Supplement Fund provides a salary supplement for teachers who have attained certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. This Other Special Revenue Funds program is funded by fees collected from the initial and renewal of teacher, education specialist and administrator certificates. There are no new initiatives for this program.

NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFICATION SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page A-173. The National Board Certification Scholarship Fund provides scholarships to teachers as an incentive to encourage teachers to apply for national board certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. This Other Special Revenue Funds program is funded by fees collected from the initial and renewal of teacher, education specialist and administrator certificates. There are no new initiatives for this program.

OBESITY AND CHRONIC DISEASE FUND

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page **A-174**. The Obesity and Chronic Disease Fund is used to receive funding to support physical education programs in elementary schools to reduce obesity and chronic disease. Balances in the fund may be used to pay for new equipment, new staff training, new personnel, new administrative costs and other expenses not related to an existing physical education program and for the implementation of a new physical education program for elementary schools.

The Other Special Revenue Funds request is \$500 in each year of the biennium. This amount provides a base allocation if funds were received for this purpose. No revenue has been received to date. There are no new initiatives for this program.

RETIRED TEACHERS GROUP LIFE INSURANCE

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page **A-174**. The Retired Teachers Group Life Insurance General Fund program provides funding for group life insurance benefits for Maine's retired teachers.

This program has **one initiative** that may also be found on page **A-174**. This initiative de-appropriates \$8,383 in FY22 and provides an appropriation of \$125,431 in FY23. This funding request is based on actuarial estimates calculated by the MainePERS.

RETIRED TEACHERS HEALTH INSURANCE

The **baseline budget** request may be found on page **A-175**. The Retired Teachers' Health Insurance General Fund program provides funding for health insurance benefits for Maine's retired teachers. There are no new initiatives for this program.

SCHOOL AND STUDENT SUPPORTS (O3S)

The **baseline** budget for this program may be found on page **A-176**. This program strives to ensure that Maine schools are inclusive, healthy, safe and supportive communities where every student thrives. O3S endeavors to coordinate resources and programs that promote equitable, psycho-socially,

physically and environmentally healthy school communities for all. Each O3S team provides information and guidance to parents, administrators, educators, legislators and other stakeholders within their focus areas. This program includes General Fund and Other Special Revenue Funds, that are derived from the Dropout & Truancy Education Trust. It has **six initiatives** that may be found on pages **A-176 to A-178**.

The **first initiative** reallocates the cost of a Management Analyst II, an Education Specialist III a Public Service Manager II and a Public Service Executive II between accounts within the same program in order to align work effort with the appropriate funding source. It also continues one Secretary Specialist Supervisor position previously continued by financial order and provides funding for All Other costs related to it. The General Fund net effect for this initiative is an appropriation of \$47,587 in FY22 and \$51,194 in FY23.

The **second initiative** reallocates the cost of a Regional Education Representative from 80% Federal Block Grant Fund and 20% Federal Expenditures Fund to 88%/12% in order to align work effort with the appropriate funding source.

The **third through sixth initiatives** transfers ten positions, and related All Other, from Learning Systems to the O3S and one position and related All Other from School Finance and Operations to O3S. As a result of a reorganization within the department, a new office was created that provides greatly needed resources, professional development, technical assistance, and organizational capacity for schools to provide effective social/emotional learning and mental health education, screening, and services; increase and improve trauma-informed practices; address issues surrounding equity and culturally responsive educational practices; and improve the cultural competence of educators and students in order to ensure safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environments. This initiative may also be found on pages **A-165, A-166 and A-179** which reflects the transfers from other programs.

SCHOOL FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page **A-179**. The School Finance and Operations Team is responsible for the child nutrition program, data collection and reporting, and the administration of school finance statutes, to include the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act. This program includes the General Fund and Federal Expenditures Fund. It has **four initiatives** that may be found on pages **A-179** and **A-180**.

The **first initiative**, our federal child nutrition grant, provides an allocation of \$6,745,641 in FY22 and \$6,740,141 in FY23 in order to align the allocation with estimated revenue. The Child Nutrition grant makes the school lunch program available to school children and encourages the domestic consumption of nutritious agricultural commodities. School districts are reimbursed for expenses on a monthly basis.

The **second initiative** transfers \$29,000 to Adult Education. This funding is for the adult education management system (MaineStars) that was developed for reporting. This initiative puts the funding in the appropriate program. It may also be found on page **A-150** which transfers the funding to Adult Education resulting in a net effect of zero.

The **third initiative** transfers a Public Service Manager II and related All Other costs to the Office of School and Student Supports from School Finance and Operations in order to reflect the position in the appropriate program. This initiative may also be found on page **A-177** which transfers the position to O3S resulting in a net effect of zero.

The **fourth initiative** de-appropriates \$25,300 in each year of the biennium for travel, office supplies and general operations in order to fund new budget initiatives as a result of a shift in departmental priorities.

SPECIAL SERVICES TEAM

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page **A-181**. The Special Services Team provides leadership, management, coordination and supervision of programs and services provided in

accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to children with disabilities birth to 21 years old. This program includes the General Fund and Federal Expenditures Fund. It has **three initiatives** that may also be found on page **A-181**.

The **first initiative** transfers an Office Associate II position from Child Development Services to the Special Services Team in order to reflect the position in the appropriate program. This position provides administrative support to the finance team within the Office of Special Services. This initiative may also be found on page **A-152** which transfers the position from CDS resulting in a net effect of zero.

The **second initiative** reallocates the cost of a Public Service Manager II from 30% Federal Expenditures Fund and 70% General Fund to 100% Federal Expenditures Fund in order to align work effort with the appropriate funding source. It also provides an allocation for related All Other costs.

The **third initiative** transfers a portion of the cost of an eliminated vacant Public Service Coordinator II from Personal Services to All Other in order to expend the allocation on other grant related expenditures. This initiative may also be found on page **A-152** which reflects the General Fund portion of the cost in CDS.

TEACHER RETIREMENT

The **baseline budget** for this program may be found on page **A-182**. The Maine Public Employees Retirement System (MainePERS) provides retirement benefits for Maine's educators.

This General Fund program has **one initiative** that may be found on the same page. This initiative provides an appropriation of \$15,324,489 in FY22 and \$20,677,486 in FY23. The expenditure forecast for the 2022-2023 biennium for teacher retirement primarily consists of the required unfunded actuarial liability (UAL) payment established by the actuarial valuation performed by MainePERS and assumes projected teacher salary and wage growth of 2.75 % for state-funded positions at Career and Technical Education Regions. The sum of these two employer retirement cost components forms the basis for the forecast for teacher retirement expenditures.

LANGUAGE

PART C

Part C may be found on pages **1 – 9**. This Part establishes the total cost of education from pre-kindergarten through grade 12 for fiscal year 2021-22, the state contribution, the annual target state share percentage and the mill expectation for the local contribution for fiscal year 2021-2022. It also provides a one-year change to the Essential Program and Services model in order to recognize the decline in student enrollment for the year prior to funding, and due to the unusual nature of the decline, the inability of school units to reduce their costs accordingly.

PART EE

Part EE may be found on pages **28** and **29**. This Part changes the name of the Director, Legislative Affairs to the Director of Policy and Government Affairs.

PART FF

Part FF may be found on page **29**. This Part changes the title of Director, Communications to the Director of Marketing and Communications and changes the title of Director of Special Projects to the Chief Innovation Officer. It also adds the Chief Innovation Officer as a major policy-influencing position in the department.

PART GG

Part GG may be found on page **30**. This Part adds the Chief of Operations position as a major policy-influencing position in the department.

PART HH

Part HH may be found on page **30** and **31**. This Part removes the Education in the Unorganized Territory account from the list of accounts authorized to carry unexpended General Fund Personal Services balances and transfers the accumulated Personal Services unencumbered balance forward of \$5,002,639 to the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund.

PART II

Part II may be found on page 31. This Part removes the appointment of the Director of Early Childhood Special Education. This position was formerly a Child Development Services position. It is now a State position and does not need to be appointed.

PART JJ

Part JJ may be found on page 31. This Part adds language that allows the prorating of salary supplement payments for national board-certified teachers based on the amount of revenue received for this purpose.

This is the end of my testimony for the Department of Education. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.