

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

Amend the bill by striking out all of sections 1 to 3 and inserting the following:

**‘Sec. 1 State-run virtual academy. Resolved:** That the Department of Education shall establish a state-administered virtual academy providing all public schools in the State access to online courses for their students. The department shall design the virtual academy in collaboration with members of the Maine Charter School Commission, established in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, section 12004-G, subsection 10-D, providers of online learning programs, associations representing school administrators, teachers, school boards and others involved in public education, and 2 members of the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters appointed jointly by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House, including one member of the party holding the highest number of seats and one member of the party holding the 2nd highest number of seats in the Legislature. In designing the virtual academy, the department shall:

1. Ensure the virtual academy provides for a blended learning environment that offers access to virtual classes along with traditional classroom-based instruction;
2. Place particular emphasis on enhancing curriculum and addressing potential scheduling obstacles, including scheduling obstacles that may be encountered by students in career and technical education programs;
3. Use as models the Vermont Virtual Learning Cooperative and the Virtual Learning Academy Charter School in New Hampshire;
4. Propose a funding model for the state-administered virtual academy that provides that state funding is allocated as a separate line item in the General Purpose Aid for Local Schools program; and
5. Propose an amendment to the existing funding model for virtual public charter schools in order to provide that state funding is allocated as separate line items in the General Purpose Aid for Local Schools program and that the amount of funding provided for a student enrolled in a virtual public charter school may not exceed \$6,000 per student.

The department shall complete the design of the virtual academy by August 1, 2015, and the virtual academy must be operational by August 1, 2016; and be it further

**Sec. 2 Legislation. Resolved:** That, by December 1, 2015, the Department of Education shall submit any necessary legislation to implement section 1 of this resolve to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters; and be it further

**Sec. 3 Appropriations and allocations. Resolved:** That the following appropriations and allocations are made.

**EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF**

**Maine Virtual Academy N168**

Initiative: Provides funding for one Secretary Specialist position, one Education Specialist II position and one Education Specialist III position and related All Other costs associated with designing and operating a state-administered virtual academy.

<b>GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>
POSITIONS - LEGISLATIVE COUNT	0.000	3.000
Personal Services	\$0	\$262,233
All Other	\$0	\$11,000
<b>GENERAL FUND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$273,233</b>

### **SUMMARY**

This amendment, which is the minority report of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, provides that the Department of Education must include 2 members of the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters, members of the Maine Charter School Commission and providers of online learning programs in the group collaborating in the design of a state-administered virtual academy that the department must establish by August 1, 2016 to provide all public schools in the State access to online courses for their students.

The amendment provides that in designing the virtual academy the Department of Education must propose:

1. A funding model for the state-administered virtual academy that provides that state funding is allocated as a separate line item in the General Purpose Aid for Local Schools program; and
2. An amendment to the existing funding model for virtual public charter schools in order to provide that state funding is allocated as separate line items in the General Purpose Aid for Local Schools program and that the amount of funding provided for a student enrolled in a virtual public charter school does not exceed \$6,000 per student.

The amendment also strikes the moratorium proposed in the resolve that would prohibit the authorization of virtual public charter schools and public charter schools that integrate online and on-site instruction until after the virtual academy administered by the State is operational. This amendment also adds an appropriations and allocations section.

**FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED**  
(See attached)