

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND AND THIRTEEN

H.P. 775 - L.D. 1106

An Act To Develop a Grant Program To Establish a Teacher-led School Model

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

Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §2651, sub-§2, as enacted by PL 2011, c. 446, §1, is amended to read:

2. Use of fund. The department shall award grants from the fund to school administrative units, municipalities, counties and groups of 2 or more such entities to fund the costs of implementing changes in governance, administrative structures or policies that result in the creation of consolidated school administrative units; purchasing alliances; innovative, autonomous public schools, teacher-led schools, innovative public school districts or innovative public school zones; regional delivery of educational services; or collaborations of municipal-school service delivery or support systems, with the purpose of improving educational opportunity and student achievement. Grants must be used to implement changes that will be sustained by the school administrative unit, municipality or county without the need for additional grants from the fund or other sources.

Sec. 2. 20-A MRSA §6213, sub-§§1 and 2, as enacted by PL 2011, c. 446, §2, are amended to read:

1. Definitions. As used in this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

A. "Innovative, autonomous public school" ~~or "school"~~ means an innovative, autonomous public school established pursuant to section 6212.

B. "Innovation plan" means a plan for the creation and operation of an innovative, autonomous public school, a teacher-led school or innovative zone or district as described in subsections 2, 3 and 4.

C. "Innovative public school district" or "district" means a school administrative unit in which all schools operated by the school administrative unit are innovative,

autonomous public schools or teacher-led schools included in an innovation plan approved pursuant to this section and implemented by the school board.

D. "Innovative public school zone" or "zone" means 2 or more innovative, autonomous public schools or teacher-led schools operated by a school administrative unit that share common interests, such as their geographical location or educational focus, or that sequentially serve classes of students as they progress through elementary and secondary education and in which a school board implements an innovation plan approved pursuant to this section.

E. "Public school" has the same meaning as in section 1, subsection 24.

F. "Teacher-led school" means a public school in which teachers employed at the school are responsible for the decision making and governance of the school.

2. School-initiated innovation plan. A public school or a group of 2 or more public schools in a school administrative unit may submit to its school board an innovation plan. The school board may approve an instruction design, a school calendar, a staff selection process and a method for assessing professional development to be used in an innovative, autonomous public school or teacher-led school that is not in conflict with applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.

A. A school board shall receive and review each innovation plan submitted pursuant to this subsection. The school board shall either approve or disapprove the innovation plan within 60 days after receiving the plan.

B. If the school board rejects the innovation plan, it shall provide to the public school or public schools that submitted the plan a written explanation of the basis for its decision. A public school or public schools may submit an amended innovation plan at any time.

C. If the school board approves the plan, it shall proceed to seek the commissioner's approval of the public school or public schools as an innovative, autonomous public school, a teacher-led school, an innovative public school zone or an innovative public school district pursuant to subsection 9.

Sec. 3. 20-A MRSA §6213, sub-§9, as enacted by PL 2011, c. 446, §2, is amended to read:

9. Commissioner's approval. A school board shall submit school, zone or district innovation plans approved pursuant to subsection 4, paragraph J to the commissioner.

A. Within 60 days after receiving an innovation plan for a school, zone or district, the commissioner shall approve the innovation plan unless the commissioner concludes that the plan:

(1) Is likely to result in a decrease in academic achievement in the innovative school, zone or district; or

(2) Is not fiscally feasible.

B. If the commissioner does not approve the innovation plan, the commissioner shall provide to the school board a written explanation of the basis for the decision. The

school board may submit an amended innovation plan for the commissioner's approval at any time.

Nothing in this subsection may prevent or may be construed to prevent the commissioner from approving an innovation plan to create an innovative public school district when the innovation plan is created by a school board for a school administrative unit that operates only one innovative, autonomous public school or teacher-led school.

Sec. 4. 20-A MRSA §6213, sub-§14, ¶A, as enacted by PL 2011, c. 446, §2, is amended to read:

A. Following review of a school's performance, if the school board finds that the academic performance of students enrolled in the school is not improving at a sufficient rate, the school board may revoke the designation of the school as an innovative, autonomous public school or teacher-led school.

Sec. 5. 20-A MRSA §6213, sub-§15, ¶B, as enacted by PL 2011, c. 446, §2, is amended to read:

B. The number of innovative, autonomous public schools, the number of teacher-led schools and the number of innovative public school zones and innovative public school districts, including the number of schools in each zone and district and the number of students served in the schools and zones, expressed as a total number and as a percentage of the students enrolled in the district;

Sec. 6. 26 MRSA §962, sub-§7, ¶A, as amended by PL 2011, c. 446, §3, is further amended to read:

A. Any officer, board, commission, council, committee or other persons or body acting on behalf of:

- (1) Any municipality or any subdivision of a municipality;
- (2) Any school, water, sewer, fire or other district;
- (3) The Maine Turnpike Authority;
- (5) Any county or subdivision of a county;
- (6) The Maine Public Employees Retirement System;
- (7) The Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf; or
- (8) Any innovative, autonomous public school, innovative public school district ~~or~~ innovative public school zone or teacher-led school created and operated under Title 20-A, section 6212 or 6213;