

STATE OF MAINE

—
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND AND FIFTEEN

—
S.P. 543 - L.D. 1441

**An Act To Establish the Public Higher Education Systems Coordinating
Committee**

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

Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §9, as amended by PL 2013, c. 368, Pt. DDDDD, §1, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

§9. Public Higher Education Systems Coordinating Committee

1. Committee established. The Public Higher Education Systems Coordinating Committee, referred to in this section as "the committee," is established to promote efficiency, cooperative effort and strategic planning between the University of Maine System and the Maine Community College System, referred to in this section as "the systems."

2. Membership. The committee consists of the Chancellor of the University of Maine System, the Chair of the Board of Trustees of the University of Maine System, the President of the Maine Community College System and the Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Maine Community College System. The members of the committee may appoint designees to a subcommittee.

3. Duties. The committee shall seek to achieve greater collaboration and cooperation between the systems in order to address issues including, but not limited to, the following:

- A. Improving college affordability;
- B. Minimizing or eliminating barriers to student transfer between the systems;
- C. Reducing unnecessary duplication of programs between the systems;
- D. Identifying opportunities for sharing best practices and individual efficiencies, building cross-system economies of scale and sharing of resources;
- E. Recommending changes to state laws that would improve the systems' efficiency or effectiveness;

F. In consultation with the President of the Maine Maritime Academy and the Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Maine Maritime Academy, investigating and pursuing opportunities for collaboration and resource sharing with the Maine Maritime Academy. The committee shall notify the President of the Maine Maritime Academy of committee meetings and agenda items; and

G. In consultation with the commissioner and the chair of the state board, investigating and pursuing opportunities to improve college preparation, transition and completion for Maine's secondary students, including supporting early college opportunities and improving credit transfer between secondary and postsecondary school systems.

4. Meetings. The committee shall meet at least twice each year and the committee members' designees may meet more frequently. The chancellor shall convene the first meeting of the committee by October 15, 2015. The committee shall establish a meeting schedule, and the initial work must include an accounting of the members' prior and current efforts to promote efficiency, cooperative effort and strategic planning between the systems. The committee shall elect a chair from among its members to serve for a term to be determined by the committee.

5. Reporting. The committee shall report succinctly on its deliberations and any recommendations to the Governor and the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters by February 15th each year.