



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education & Cultural Affairs. I am present today to introduce LD 420 - An Act to Fund the Carleton Project to Provide Additional Access to a Nontraditional Secondary School. My name is Gregory Swallow. I proudly represent House District 7 which includes Houlton, Linneus, Ludlow, New Limerick and Oakfield.

The purpose of LD 420 is to provide funding in the amount of \$150,000 annually that would allow sufficient funds for the Carleton Project (Project) to educate an additional 10 students for 5 years beginning with the 2025-2026 school year. It's important to note that this bill does have a sunset because should they fail to meet the above goal then funding should cease. Incidentally, if you are interested in reviewing more of who, what, where the Carleton Project is, you can lookup Carletonproject.org during or after this hearing.

The requested per pupil expenditure of \$15,000 is below the per pupil cost of a traditional student in Maine public schools. The per pupil cost in Maine, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in school year 2020-2021 was \$23,164 in 2022-2023 inflation adjusted dollars.

First, the Carleton Project's mission is "To provide opportunities that help meet the needs of students who have not been successful in traditional school settings." The Project has evolved over its more than twenty years and works exclusively with secondary school students who have either dropped out of school or are referred to them by public schools that are unable to handle certain students. It does not "take" students from public schools. In many, if not most cases, the Project's students are disenfranchised with very little guidance, little hope, no plans and nowhere to go during the day. The likelihood is that without this educational assistance these students will not become contributing members to society later in life and will not go on to further their education. The Project literally turns their lives around and assists these young people in becoming future working members of our communities who contribute and live a fulfilled life. I believe the benefit given through the Project will easily outweigh the cost.

The Carleton Project believes that experience matters and captures the students' interest by involving them in the process, incorporating a wide gamut of activities and allowing the student to become part of the success of planning their future. The Project believes in engaging the students in their education which in turn gets them involved in the process and concerned about the outcome with which they have become involved. The long run goal should be to establish a blueprint for the future as to how the State, the Carleton Project and other schools with the same mission can work together to meet the educational needs of these students. Are we willing to build a system that supports and uplifts these young people?

I am going to leave it to others that follow me to go into greater details involving the Projects curriculum, approach and philosophy; however, in closing I would like to bring out some history concerning the origins of America's public education system.

It's been widely accepted that Horace Mann is the father of American public education, first bringing compulsory public education to his home state of Massachusetts in 1852. Mann established our public education based on the Prussian, model. This model's design was not to establish critical or creative thinking. In fact, it was designed with quite the opposite purpose, to produce followers who would become efficient workers/soldiers in the sense of following orders without question and come and go at the sound of the school bell/factory horn. This system established uniformity where before American education was more localized, starting at the community level. That system is becoming more antiquated as we have moved into the modern computer age and will become more so as AI and other technology evolves. Not only have recent outcomes proved this to be true; moreover, this issue has been festering for decades.

I would urge you to review the report, **A Nation at Risk**, commissioned in 1983 under then president Reagan. The report noted the severe drop in America's educational outcomes over the two decades preceding that report. The point being that the problems surrounding American public education continues back, at least, to the mid-20th century. Incidentally, the report had several recommendations, none of which, could I see in review, had been instituted. Recent news headlines have highlighted the issues of our education system; however, this trend has been going on for decades and it's time to change directions. I believe that you will hear from others today how lives have been turned around with this approach to education.

Sincerely,



Gregory L. Swallow
State Representative

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Table 236.70. Current expenditures per pupil in average daily attendance in public elementary and secondary schools, by state or jurisdiction: Selected school years, 1969-70 through 2020-21

State or jurisdiction	Unadjusted dollars ¹															Constant 2022-23 dollars ²														
	1969-70	1979-80	1989-90	1999-2000	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 ³	2020-21 ³	1969-70	1979-80	1989-90	1999-2000	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 ³	2020-21 ³
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
United States	\$816	\$2,272	\$4,980	\$7,394	\$11,433	\$11,362	\$11,509	\$11,819	\$12,224	\$12,619	\$13,096	\$13,545	\$14,165	\$14,427	\$15,362	\$6,474	\$8,770	\$11,753	\$13,088	\$15,498	\$14,963	\$14,909	\$15,075	\$15,479	\$15,871	\$16,174	\$16,360	\$16,761	\$16,808	\$17,495
Alabama	544	1,612	3,327	5,758	9,296	8,927	9,486	9,543	9,690	9,870	10,161	10,374	10,846	10,893	11,330	4,316	6,222	7,853	10,194	12,601	11,756	12,288	12,172	12,270	12,414	12,549	12,529	12,833	12,691	12,903
Alaska	1,123	4,728	8,431	9,668	18,352	19,134	19,982	20,254	22,161	19,242	19,550	19,498	20,088	20,195	21,495	8,906	18,250	19,899	17,115	24,876	25,198	25,885	25,833	28,060	24,201	24,145	23,550	23,770	23,528	24,479
Arizona	720	1,971	4,053	5,478	8,646	8,224	8,388	8,278	8,426	8,572	8,867	9,057	9,650	9,628	10,856	5,713	7,608	9,566	9,698	11,719	10,831	10,865	10,559	10,669	10,781	10,951	10,940	11,418	11,217	12,363
Arkansas	568	1,574	3,485	5,628	10,332	10,397	9,853	10,622	10,756	10,837	10,968	11,226	11,458	11,257	12,257	4,503	6,078	8,225	9,963	14,005	13,691	12,763	13,548	13,620	13,630	13,546	13,558	13,558	13,115	13,959
California	867	2,268	4,391	6,401	9,540	9,608	9,686	10,094	10,924	11,937	12,730	13,263	14,588	14,466	15,084	6,880	8,754	10,363	11,330	12,932	12,653	12,547	12,874	13,832	15,014	15,722	16,019	17,262	16,853	17,178
Colorado	738	2,421	4,720	6,702	9,709	9,415	9,572	9,924	10,349	10,619	10,946	11,304	12,465	13,087	14,340	5,854	9,345	11,141	11,864	13,161	12,399	12,400	12,657	13,104	13,356	13,518	13,653	14,749	15,247	16,331
Connecticut	951	2,420	7,837	10,122	16,932	17,472	17,859	19,029	19,731	20,380	20,731	20,964	21,964	21,693	23,380	7,547	9,342	18,497	17,918	22,951	23,010	23,134	24,270	24,984	25,632	25,603	25,320	25,990	25,274	26,626
Delaware	900	2,861	5,799	8,809	13,228	14,253	14,129	14,203	14,556	15,150	15,824	16,292	16,595	17,563	16,322	7,141	11,045	13,686	15,593	17,931	18,770	18,302	18,115	18,431	19,055	19,543	19,678	19,636	20,462	18,588
District of Columbia	1,018	3,259	8,955	11,935	21,304	20,399	20,333	21,629	21,362	22,340	23,632	25,381	25,674	26,050	28,678	8,079	12,581	21,135	21,127	28,877	26,864	26,339	27,586	27,048	28,098	29,186	30,655	30,379	30,349	32,659
Florida	732	1,889	4,997	6,383	9,394	8,825	8,925	9,189	9,295	9,337	9,571	10,072	10,184	10,660	11,163	5,810	7,292	11,795	11,299	12,733	11,622	11,562	11,720	11,770	11,744	11,820	12,165	12,051	12,420	12,713
Georgia	588	1,625	4,275	6,903	9,577	9,492	9,437	9,529	9,809	10,185	10,722	11,259	11,635	12,026	12,874	4,664	6,274	10,089	12,220	12,982	12,500	12,224	12,154	12,420	12,810	13,242	13,598	13,767	14,011	14,661
Hawaii	841	2,322	4,448	7,090	12,603	12,735	12,585	13,219	13,849	14,728	15,325	16,237	17,269	17,736	18,148	6,668	8,963	10,499	12,551	17,083	16,772	16,302	16,860	17,535	18,523	18,926	19,611	20,434	20,664	20,668
Idaho	603	1,659	3,078	5,644	7,155	7,041	7,273	7,215	7,409	7,642	8,024	8,359	8,726	8,838	9,172	4,786	6,405	7,264	9,991	9,699	9,273	9,421	9,202	9,381	9,612	9,909	10,096	10,326	10,296	10,445
Illinois	909	2,587	5,118	8,084	13,180	13,459	13,808	14,682	15,473	15,909	17,332	17,693	18,208	19,058	20,755	7,215	9,985	12,079	14,310	17,866	17,725	17,887	18,726	19,592	20,009	21,405	21,369	21,545	22,203	23,637
Indiana	728	1,882	4,606	7,652	9,924	10,220	10,037	10,078	10,202	10,368	10,472	10,758	11,028	11,516	12,868	5,776	7,267	10,872	13,546	13,452	13,459	13,001	12,854	12,918	13,040	12,933	12,994	13,049	13,417	14,654
Iowa	844	2,326	4,453	6,925	10,565	10,748	10,915	11,359	11,698	11,846	12,167	12,596	12,907	13,255	14,236	6,697	8,981	10,509	12,259	14,321	14,154	14,139	14,487	14,812	14,899	15,026	15,213	15,272	15,443	16,213
Kansas	771	2,173	4,752	6,962	10,700	10,712	10,789	11,180	11,106	10,815	11,159	12,003	12,295	12,844	14,281	6,117	8,388	11,215	12,325	14,504	14,107	13,976	14,260	14,062	13,603	13,782	14,497	14,548	14,964	16,263
Kentucky	545	1,701	3,745	6,784	10,469	10,700	10,269	10,248	10,659	10,912	11,193	12,574	12,784	13,284	13,369	4,325	6,567	8,839	12,010	14,191	14,092	13,302	13,071	13,496	13,724	13,824	15,187	15,127	15,476	15,225
Louisiana	648	1,792	3,903	6,256	11,500	11,352	11,118	11,415	11,697	11,775	12,050	12,354	12,512	12,384	14,182	5,141	6,918	9,213	11,074	15,588	14,949	14,402	14,559	14,811	14,810	14,882	14,922	14,806	14,428	16,151
Maine	692	1,824	5,373	8,247	14,406	14,000	14,347	14,926	15,839	16,060	16,103	16,655	17,419	17,790	20,340	5,494	7,039	12,681	14,599	19,527	18,438	18,584	19,038	20,055	20,200	19,887	20,116	20,612	20,726	23,164
Maryland	918	2,598	6,275	8,273	14,876	14,746	15,010	15,109	15,403	15,478	15,982	16,452	16,932	17,218	18,512	7,285	10,029	14,811	14,645	20,165	19,419	19,444	19,271	19,504	19,467	19,739	19,871	20,036	20,060	21,082
Massachusetts	859	2,819	6,237	9,375	15,334	15,607	16,111	16,646	17,311	18,026	18,853	19,409	20,299	20,852	22,875	6,815	10,883	14,721	16,596	20,785	20,554	20,869	21,231	21,919	22,672	23,284	23,442	24,019	24,293	26,050
Michigan	904	2,640	5,546	8,886	11,560	11,462	11,495	11,678	12,048	12,243	12,448	12,895	13,315	13,621	14,699	7,171	10,192	13,091	15,730	15,670	15,094	14,890	14,894	15,256	15,399	15,374	15,574	15,755	15,869	16,740
Minnesota	904	2,387	4,971	7,499	11,368	11,424	11,754	12,140	12,707	13,169	13,496	13,834	14,250	14,440	15,556	7,169	9,214	11,731	13,275	15,410	15,045	15,226	15,484	16,089	16,563	16,668	16,709	16,862	16,823	17,716
Mississippi	501	1,664	3,094	5,356	8,436	8,623	8,685	8,926	9,129	9,380	9,467	9,680	10,071	10,303	11,065	3,973	6,423	7,302	9,480	11,435	11,356	11,250	11,384	11,560	11,798	11,692	11,692	11,917	12,003	12,601

—Not available.

¹Unadjusted (or "current") dollars have not been adjusted to compensate for inflation.²Constant dollars based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, adjusted to a school-year basis.³Includes current expenditures from funds authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020, the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act of 2021, and the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021. Due to the lag between when the funds were appropriated and when local education agencies (LEAs) began making expenditures from those funds, only a small portion of the total amounts allocated to LEAs were expended during 2019-20. In 2020-21, expenditures from these funds contributed to a large increase in current expenditures in several states.

NOTE: Current expenditures include instruction, support services, food services, and enterprise operations. Excludes "Other current expenditures," such as community services, private school programs, adult education, and other programs not allocable to expenditures per pupil in public schools. Expenditures for state administration are excluded in all years except 1969-70 and 1979-80. Beginning in 1989-90, extensive changes were made in the data collection procedures. There are discrepancies in average daily attendance reporting practices from state to state. Some data have been revised from previously published figures.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Statistics of State School Systems, 1969-70; Revenues and Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary Education, 1979-80; and Common Core of Data (CCD), "National Public Education Financial Survey," 1989-90 through 2020-21. (This table was prepared September 2023.)