

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT 20

Searsport • Stockton Springs

**Office of the Superintendent
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19 January 2022

To: Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and Members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

From: Chris Downing, Superintendent of Schools RSU # 20 – Searsport and Stockton Springs

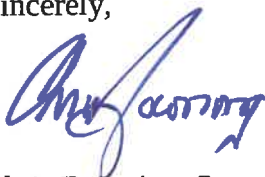
RE: LD 1389: AN ACT TO IMPROVE MARITIME EDUCATION IN MAINE

RSU 20 has worked with Maine Ocean School from the beginning of the concept and will continue. As an educator with 40 plus years of experience, we need to learn from past experiences, review our current practices and plan for the future. Maine Ocean School meets the three facets and should be provided alternatives to continue. RSU 20 and Maine Ocean School have traveled the path together while maintaining our lanes per statutes.

We are interested in continuing to work with Maine Ocean School and the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee and its representatives to investigate the option for the School's Ocean-Themed Alternative Program. An integrated model would entail future conversation around how to support the programming with existing resources, additional resources, and within the structures allowed the two entities.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be available for further discussions and look forward to our continued educational cooperation with Maine Ocean School.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Downing", written in a cursive style.

Chris Downing, Superintendent of Schools – RSU # 20