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Resolve, To Prepare Students for Success in the Twenty-first Century

Sec. 1 Bipartisan School Redistricting Panel established. Resolved: That the Bipartisan School Redistricting Panel, referred to in this section as "the panel," is established. The membership and duties of the panel consist of the following.

1. The panel consists of 11 members appointed as follows:

A. One registered member of the political party holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature, appointed by the Governor;

B. One registered member of the political party holding the 2nd largest number of seats in the Legislature, appointed by the Governor;

C. One registered member of the political party holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature, appointed by the President of the Senate;

D. One registered member of the political party holding the 2nd largest number of seats in the Legislature, appointed by the President of the Senate;

E. One registered member of the political party holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

F. One registered member of the political party holding the 2nd largest number of seats in the Legislature, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

G. One member of the State Board of Education, appointed by the Chair of the State Board of Education;

H. One member representing the Maine Municipal Association;

I. Two members of the Maine School Management Association; and

J. One Maine Teacher of the Year, appointed by the Maine Education Association.

2. The first-named registered member of the political party holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature and the first-named registered member of the political party holding the 2nd largest number of seats in the Legislature are the chairs of the panel.

3. All appointments must be made no later than 30 days following the effective date of this resolve. The appointing authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the Legislative Council once all appointments have been completed. Within 15 days after appointment of all members, the chairs of the panel shall call and convene the first meeting of the panel.

4. The panel shall redraw the boundaries of the State's school administrative units so that each unit serves between 3,000 and 4,000 students while keeping intact school administrative units that currently serve at least 3,000 students and giving priority to retaining community integrity, current school administrative unit integrity and transportation issues.

5. The Legislative Council shall provide necessary staffing services to the panel.

6. A legislative member of the panel is entitled to receive the legislative per diem, as defined in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 3, section 2, and reimbursement for travel and other necessary expenses related to the member's attendance at authorized meetings of the panel. Public members not otherwise compensated by their employers or other entities that they represent are entitled to receive reimbursement of necessary expenses and, upon a demonstration of financial hardship, a per diem equal to the legislative per diem for their attendance at authorized meetings of the panel.

7. No later than December 5, 2007, the panel shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. The panel is authorized to introduce legislation related to its report to the Second Regular Session of the 123rd Legislature at the time of submission of its report. The Legislature intends that the school redistricting plan submitted to it by the panel pursuant to this section become law in substantively the same form as it is submitted.

8. If the panel requires a limited extension of time to complete its study and make its report, it may apply to the Legislative Council, which may grant an extension.

9. The chairs of the panel, with assistance from the panel staff, shall administer the panel's budget. Within 10 days after its first meeting, the panel shall present a work plan and proposed budget to the Legislative Council for its approval. The panel may not incur expenses that would result in the panel's exceeding its approved budget. Upon request from the panel, the Executive Director of the Legislative Council shall promptly provide the panel chairs and staff with a status report on the panel budget, expenditures incurred and paid and available funds; and be it further

Sec. 2 Department of Education to create student investment account program.

Resolved: That the Department of Education shall develop a student investment account program, referred to in this section as "the program," for safe and cost-effective investment accounts for students in the State. Under the program, the department shall establish an investment account upon the birth of every child in the State and shall provide an initial investment of \$200 in each account. Proceeds of accounts created under the program are payable to residents of the State for postsecondary education undertaken at institutions of higher learning located in the State. The Department of Education shall submit the program in the form of legislation to the Second Regular Session of the 123rd Legislature no later than December 5, 2007; and be it further

Sec. 3 Department of Education to create postsecondary tuition assistance program. Resolved:

That the Department of Education shall develop a postsecondary tuition assistance program, referred to in this section as "the program," that provides a graduate of an approved secondary school in the State who is admitted to a postsecondary institution in the State that offers an associate degree or bachelor's degree with an amount equaling 50% of the tuition for 2 years of the average tuition of the Maine Community College System if the graduate demonstrates financial need. The department shall establish criteria to demonstrate financial need for purposes of this section. The program must provide that a graduate under the program who elects to pursue teacher certification and commits to teaching in the State for 3 years after graduation is eligible to receive an additional amount equaling 50% of the average tuition of the Maine Community College System for the graduate's junior

and senior year at the postsecondary institution in the State. The program may also include other forms of financial aid. The Department of Education shall submit the program in the form of legislation to the Second Regular Session of the 123rd Legislature no later than December 5, 2007; and be it further

Sec. 4 Department of Education and University of Maine System to offer leadership training institutes. Resolved: That the Department of Education and the University of Maine System shall jointly offer leadership training institutes for teachers and school administrators in the State. The institutes must focus on the skills of change agency and strategic planning and the necessary background in organizational, human resource and financial management to meet the challenges of the future. The teachers and administrators shall attend institutes in groups called cohorts. A cohort under this section must gather for a week in each of 2 succeeding summers to perform follow-up work on real leadership issues facing schools in Maine. The Department of Education shall adopt rules that require a school administrator to participate in an institute created under this section every 5 years as a condition of recertification under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, chapter 502; and be it further

Sec. 5 School administrative unit plan for targeted funds to include wireless devices for students. Resolved: That a school administrative unit plan for targeted funds pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 15671, subsection 7 must provide that each student from 9th grade to 12th grade in that school administrative unit receives an individual wireless device that the student may take home every day and have for use during a summer vacation; and be it further

Sec. 6 Rules. Resolved: That the Department of Education may adopt rules to carry out the purposes of this resolve. Rules adopted pursuant to this section are major substantive rules pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

SUMMARY

This resolve:

1. Creates the Bipartisan School Redistricting Panel to redraw school administrative units to eliminate all units that serve under 3,000 students;
2. Directs the Department of Education to create a student investment account program that creates investment accounts for each child born in the State for use by residents for postsecondary education at institutions of higher learning located in the State and endows each account with \$200;
3. Directs the Department of Education to create a tuition assistance program in which each graduating high school student who demonstrates financial need and is accepted into an associate's or bachelor's program in a postsecondary institution in the State will receive an amount equal to 50% of the average tuition for 2 years at the Maine Community College System, and those students pursuing teaching certificates and committing to teaching in the State for 3 years after graduation will receive an additional 50% of the average tuition for 2 years at the Maine Community College System for their junior and senior years;
4. Directs the Department of Education and the University of Maine System to administer leadership training institutes for teachers and school administrators and requires school administrators to attend the institute every 5 years as a requirement for recertification; and

5. Directs that school administrative units provide for individual wireless devices for 9th to 12th graders as part of their plans submitted to receive targeted funds for technology.