

120th Legislature LD 1747 HP 1284

Education and Cultural Affairs

An Act Regarding School Funding Based on Essential Programs and Services.
(Submitted by the Department of Education pursuant to Joint Rule 204.)

Presented by Representative RICHARD of Madison; Cosponsored by Senator MITCHELL of Penobscot and Representatives: BELANGER of Caribou, DESMOND of Mapleton, ESTES of Kittery, STEADMAN of Hartland, TESSIER of Fairfield, Senators: MILLS of Somerset, ROTUNDO of Androscoggin, SMALL of Sagadahoc. **Public Hearing** 04/12/01. OTP-AM Accepted 05/16/01. **Amended by:** CA H-457. House: Enacted 06/04/01. Senate: Appropriations Table 06/04/01. **Final Disposition:** Died on Adjournment 06/22/01.

"Died on Adjournment"



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120th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2001

Legislative Document

No. 1747

H.P. 1284

House of Representatives, March 27, 2001

An Act Regarding School Funding Based on Essential Programs and Services.

Submitted by the Department of Education pursuant to Joint Rule 204.
Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

Millicent M. MacFarland

MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND, Clerk

Presented by Representative RICHARD of Madison.
Cosponsored by Senator MITCHELL of Penobscot and
Representatives: BELANGER of Caribou, DESMOND of Mapleton, ESTES of Kittery,
STEDMAN of Hartland, TESSIER of Fairfield, Senators: MILLS of Somerset, ROTUNDO of
Androscoggin, SMALL of Sagadahoc.

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

Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA c. 606-B is enacted to read:

CHAPTER 606-B

ESSENTIAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

§15671. Essential programs and services

Essential programs and services are those educational resources that must be provided for all students to meet the standards in the 8 content areas of the system of learning results established in chapter 222. In order to achieve this system of learning results, essential programs and services must be available in all schools on an equitable basis. Essential programs and services utilize resources that are currently provided or could be adapted to implement a system of learning results, as well as additional resources that are also needed to ensure that these programs and services are available to all students. These essential programs and services will be available in all schools by 2006-07. This school funding must be adequate to fully provide for all of the staffing and other material resource needs of the essential programs and services identified by the Legislature.

1. State and local partnership. The State and each local school administrative unit are jointly responsible for contributing to the cost of the components of essential programs and services described in this section.

2. Per-pupil guarantee amounts. A per-pupil guarantee represents the amount of funds that is to be made available for each subsidizable pupil. Three per-pupil guarantee amounts must be calculated, reflecting school level cost differences: one for kindergarten to grade 5, one for grades 6 to 8 and one for grades 9 to 12. These per-pupil guarantees must be modified as appropriate for specialized student populations. The per-pupil guarantee represents the annual cost of staffing and material resources that are appropriately allocated on a per-pupil basis. Categories of staffing and resources are as follows:

A. School personnel, including regular and special subject teachers, educational technicians, guidance, library, health services, administration, support or clerical staff and substitute teachers;

B. Supplies and equipment;

2 C. Specialized services, including professional
4 development, instructional leadership support, student
assessment, technology and cocurricular and extracurricular
programs; and

6 D. District services, including system administration and
8 maintenance operations.

10 3. Specialized student populations. In recognition that
educational needs can be more costly for some student populations
12 than for others, modified per-pupil guarantee amounts must be
calculated for specialized student populations. The specialized
14 student populations to be addressed are:

16 A. Special education students;

18 B. Limited English proficiency students;

20 C. Economically disadvantaged youth; and

22 D. Students in kindergarten to grade 2.

24 4. Educational cost components outside the per-pupil
guarantee. A per-pupil guarantee is not a suitable method for
26 allocation of all educational cost components. These components
may include, but are not limited to, debt service,
28 transportation, bus purchases, vocational education, small school
adjustments, teacher educational attainment and adjustments to
30 general purpose aid. The commissioner and the state board shall
provide separate recommendations for the funding methodology of
32 these educational cost components based on available research.

34 5. Regional cost differentials. Legitimate regional cost
differentials must be recognized in the school funding formula.
36 The Maine Education Policy Research Institute shall examine what
basis there may be for recognizing legitimate regional
38 differences.

40 6. Local control of expenditures. Except for those
components that are targeted funds, funds provided in accordance
42 with the essential programs and services described in this
section must be distributed as general purpose aid for local
44 schools, and each school administrative unit shall make its own
determination regarding the configuration of resources best
46 suited for its pupils and how to allocate available funds for
these resources.

48 7. Targeted funds. Funds for technology, assessment and
the costs of additional investments in educating children in
50 kindergarten to grade 2 must be provided as targeted grants.

1 School administrative units submit a plan for the use of these
2 funds and shall receive funding based on approval of the plan by
3 the commissioner.

4
5 **Sec. 2. Phase-in.** Following the completion of the 4-year plan
6 of targeted increases to the per-pupil guarantee and progress on
7 the subsidy reduction percentage as provided in the Maine Revised
8 Statutes, Title 20-A, chapter 606-A, the essential programs and
9 services approach to school funding must be phased in over a
10 4-year period beginning in fiscal year 2003-04 and fully
11 implemented in fiscal year 2006-07.

12
13 **Sec. 3. Subsidy cushions.** During the phase-in period described
14 in section 2 of this Act, the impact of any reduction in subsidy
15 between consecutive years for any school administrative unit must
16 be cushioned. Because such cushions are inequitable, the level
17 of the cushion must decline each year.

18
19 **Sec. 4. Best practices.** The State Board of Education shall
20 provide for ongoing research to identify those best practices in
21 schools that increase student performance or improve efficient
22 operation and use of resources. The State Board of Education, in
23 its report on essential programs and services to the joint
24 standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over
25 education and cultural affairs, shall include benchmarks for best
26 practices and methods for promoting the use of these benchmarks.

27
28 **Sec. 5. Report.** By January 15, 2002, the State Board of
29 Education and the Commissioner of Education shall report to the
30 Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs with
31 recommendations for full implementation of a system of school
32 funding and accountability for resources based on essential
33 programs and services, including comprehensive revisions to the
34 current school finance laws. In conjunction with the State Board
35 of Education, the Maine Education Policy Research Institute shall
36 examine what basis there may be for recognizing legitimate
37 regional differences. The report must include, but is not
38 limited to, recommendations on methods of determining costs for
39 each of the components described in this Act; periodic
40 adjustments to these components and to the calculated costs;
41 strategies for implementing the findings and recommendations of
42 follow-up studies on essential programs and services previously
43 directed by the Legislature; and a transition plan to full
44 implementation of this new funding system beginning in fiscal
45 year 2003-04 and completed no later than fiscal year 2006-07.

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SUMMARY

2
4 This bill establishes a timeline for a transition to a new
6 school funding approach, based on essential programs and
8 services, in order to provide all children with an equitable
10 opportunity to access the resources necessary to achieve the high
12 standards of Maine's system of learning results. The bill
14 defines the core components of essential programs and services,
16 including those elements to be funded on a per-pupil basis,
18 resources for specialized student populations, major cost
20 components to be determined on other than a per-pupil basis and
targeted grants. The bill provides that funding essential
programs and services is a state-local partnership, and that
local school administrative units retain the authority to
determine how to expend funds once they are received from the
State, with the exception of the targeted grants. The bill
provides for a report from the State Board of Education and the
Commissioner of Education on a comprehensive transition plan,
including revisions to the school finance laws, to be submitted
in January 2002.

L.D. 1747

DATE: 5-15-01

(Filing No. H-457)

EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Reproduced and distributed under the direction of the Clerk of the House.

**STATE OF MAINE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
120TH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" to H.P. 1284, L.D. 1747, Bill, "An Act Regarding School Funding Based on Essential Programs and Services"

Amend the bill by inserting at the end before the summary the following:

FISCAL NOTE

The bill requires the Maine Education Policy Research Institute to examine issues related to regional cost differentials within the school funding formula. The Legislature's proposed current services budget for the 2002-2003 biennium includes funding of \$75,000 in each fiscal year for the institute to support targeted research projects. In addition, the Governor's proposed new and expanded services budget for the 2002-2003 biennium includes funding for the State Board of Education to study regional cost adjustments, geographical isolation and completion of the "best practices" work and will involve extensive field work, consulting contracts and research services. Whether these amounts are sufficient to perform the examination of regional cost differentials as required in this bill can not be determined with certainty but appears to be the intent of the Governor's new and expanded services budget request.'

SUMMARY

This amendment adds a fiscal note to the bill.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

State of Maine
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Testimony of J. Duke Albanese, Commissioner

Supporting L.D. 1747

An Act Regarding School Funding Based on Essential Programs and Services

Before the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

Sponsored by: Representative Richard

Cosponsored by: Senator Mitchell; Representatives Belanger, Desmond, Estes, Stedman, Tessier; and Senators Mills and Rotundo

Date: April 12, 2001

Senator Mitchell, Representative Richard, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs:

My name is Duke Albanese, Commissioner of Education, and I am here today to speak in strong support of L.D. 1747.

Maine has adopted the *Learning Results*, a far-reaching set of expectations that describe what every Maine student should know and be able to do. The Department of Education has crafted a vision that characterizes what education in Maine would look like, after these *Learning Results* are fully attained. Our vision is as follows: *Maine people will be among the best educated in the world.* This vision involves three expectations. *First*, every child starts school “ready to learn”. *Second*, every public school student achieves at the highest level possible and leaves school prepared for post-secondary study. *Finally*, following graduation, Maine people are well educated for life and work in the 21st century.

This is clearly a challenging vision, and every local school unit must be a full partner in working to achieve this vision. This partnership requires that each local school unit have sufficient resources to assure that its students have the opportunity to reach these *Learning Results* standards. In order to translate equally high expectations into strong outcomes for all students, every student and school in Maine must have access to equitable and adequate resources. These resources are referred to as *Essential Programs and Services*.

The Essential Programs and Services approach to school funding represents a new concept in funding, and Maine would become the first state in America to adopt this approach. In the past, we have had school funding that was “expenditure-driven”, where the State has attempted to keep up with an arbitrary percentage of whatever happened to be spent by school units. We have had “revenue-driven” funding based on whatever the State could afford to appropriate. Essential Programs is cost-driven and is based on adequacy: how much does it cost to get the job done – the job being Maine’s Learning Results. Thus, for the first time funding will be based on an adequate amount of resources for every student, rather than simply trying to equalize around an arbitrary average or to spend just a little more than the year before.

The proposed bill describes, in broad outline, the key features of these essential programs and services. These components were defined by the task force formed by the State Board of Education at your direction, which reported back in January 1999. By enacting this statute, the Legislature will be providing

feedback and guidance that will be vital for informing the continuing work to plan and prepare for actual implementation of the essential programs and services.

This continuing work is of two types. *First*, several additional study groups are engaged in follow-up studies. The remaining work is scheduled for completion in FY 2001-02. This includes (a) finalizing methods of calculating and funding for key parts of Maine's school funding formula, including the per-pupil guarantee, other areas that are not adaptable to the per-pupil guarantee approach, targeted grants for technology, assessment, and early childhood (K-2) education, and the possibility of a regional cost adjustment; (b) developing a transition plan to phase into funding of the essential programs and services, to begin in FY 2003-04 and to be completed by FY 2006-07; (c) performing continuing studies regarding best practices that increase student performance or improve efficiencies; and (d) identifying changes in the current school funding statutes that would implement these results.

Second, Maine has already enacted legislation identifying annual funding targets which, over a four year period, will increase the amount of equalized education funds. One of the two sets of targets involves annual increases in the per-pupil guarantee — the amount of money behind each Maine student. The intended goal is that by FY 2002-03, this per-pupil guarantee will be equal to the actual statewide average per-pupil operating cost in FY 2002-03. The second set of targets involves annual decreases in the subsidy reduction percentage for program costs. The intended goal is that by FY 2002-03, the subsidy reduction percentage for program costs will be eliminated, and the school funding formula will once again recognize all subsidizable costs. You have now voted to sustain these targets for three consecutive years.

L.D. 1747 would also direct the Department of Education and the State Board of Education to report to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, by January 15, 2002, with their recommendations for full implementation of a system of school funding and accountability for resources based on essential programs and services. Upon receipt of this report, as directed by L.D. 1747, the Joint Standing Committee for Education and Cultural Services, and the full Legislature, will have a full and final set of recommendations to inform its discussions and decisions regarding the implementation of essential programs and services.

The completion of the studies described above, and the revisions to the state's school funding laws, will require extensive staff and volunteer time, and the use of a research budget for the State Board of Education and the Education Research Institute. Prior to continuing with this work, it is critical for the State Board, the Department, and our collaborators to have the benefit of substantial feedback from the Legislature about the intended components of the model. The discussion, and recommendation or refinement by the Legislature of the elements proposed in L.D. 1747 should give us the needed feedback to continue.

Assuring attainment of Maine's *Learning Results* requires funding education according to a model of essential programs and services that are sufficient for this purpose. Enactment of L.D. 1747 would represent a key step in accomplishing this. Accordingly, I strongly encourage the Joint Standing Committee for Education and Cultural Affairs to endorse this bill and to recommend its enactment by the full Legislature.

I will be pleased to answer any questions that the Committee may have regarding this bill.

MAINE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Testimony of Weston L. Bonney, Member of the State Board of Education

Supporting LD 1747

An Act Regarding School Funding Based on Essential Programs and Services

Before the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.

Sponsored by: Representative Richard

Cosponsored by Senator Mitchell, Representatives Belanger, Desmond, Estes, Stedman, Tessier, and Senators Mills, Rotundo and Small.

Date: April 12, 2001

Senator Mitchell, Representative Richard, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs:

My name is Weston L. Bonney, Member of the State Board of Education, and I am here today representing the State Board to speak strongly in support of LD 1747.

I would like to organize my remarks under three headings:

1. Why moving toward the Essential Programs and Services (EP & S) funding model is important?
2. How the EP & S funding model differs from the existing K-12 education funding model?
3. What the EP & S funding recommendations will not accomplish.

First, why is educational funding based on the recommended EP & S model important?

1. The successful implementation of the Learning Results standards requires an adequate amount of resources for each student. Essential Programs & Services provides this.
2. Essential Programs & Services is an "adequacy" funding model. The concept of adequacy in funding is being addressed in many states across the U.S., some driven by the court systems and others because the concept makes so much common sense.

3. Research clearly shows that the resources needs for students vary depending on each individual student. Essential Programs & Programs defines those differences.
4. Essential Programs & Services focuses on where and how our educational resources can best be spent. The model can be used as a template for comparing how local school districts spend their resources. However, there is no requirement for how the funds are spent.

Second, what are some of the differences between educational funding based on EP & S and the current system?

1. Essential Programs & Services is a rational model grounded in the latest research and data. The current system is based on current spending adjusted for what the State and local taxpayers are willing to spend. Not a very rational system when school districts in adjacent areas can and do spend significantly different amounts of money per student creating real inequities.
2. Essential Programs & Services identifies what appropriate costs should be.
3. Essential Programs & Services focuses on how and where resources are spent based on the needs of each individual student. The current funding system focuses on how much money in the aggregate can we devote to education funding with very little regard: (a) to how much money is being spent by individual school districts; and (b) with virtually no measure of the “value added” that results.

Lastly, what will EP & S not do for school funding?

1. It is not a panacea for all school funding problems.
 - a) It does not address how much school funding should be provided by the State and how much by local districts. This is an important funding issue that needs to be addressed whether or not the Legislature chooses to support continued work on the implementation of EP & S.
 - b) Essential Programs & Services will not solve problems that are basically related to the shortcomings of current tax policy for education funding. That problem needs to be addressed whether or not EP & S is implemented.
2. Essential Programs & Service does not direct how money should be spent. That is a decision the local school districts appropriately should make. It defines the amount of combined state and local resources that are required in the aggregate and provides a template of how the money could be spent.

In closing and with the unanimous support of the State Board of Education, your support for the passage of LD 1747 is respectfully requested. The Board has carried out the EP & S work for the past four years at the request of the Legislature. We thank the Legislature for its vision in initiating and supporting the work on EP & S, which will be a significant improvement in supporting the implementation of the Learning Results. It is the best funding alternative that has been discussed. Essential Programs & Services will provide a more rational and a fairer educational funding system. LD1747 promises significant improvement in educational funding. The specific details will be the subject of future legislative actions. If you believe all the students in the State are entitled to an adequate and more equitable amount of resources, you will support the EP & S bill. If you believe that some students in Maine are entitled to more resources than are needed and that some students can get by with less than what is needed, you may wish not to support the bill. I have enough faith in the inherent fairness of Maine people and their legislative representatives to believe there will be significant support for moving forward with the implementation of EP & S.

Testimony of David L. Silvernail
Co-Director, Maine Educational Policy Research Institute

Date: April 12, 2001

L.D. 1747: An Act Regarding School Funding Based on Essential Programs and Services

Sponsored by: Representative Richard

Cosponsored by: Senator Mitchell, Representatives Belanger, Desmond, Estes, Stedman, Tessier, Senators Mills, Rotundo and Small

Senator Mitchell, Representative Richard, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs:

My name is David Silvernail, and I am co-director of the Maine Education Policy Research Institute, an institute jointly funded by the Maine State Legislature and the University of Maine System. I am here today to speak as an educator in support of LD 1747.

I have been working with the State Board of Education and the Essential Programs and Services Committee over the past 4 years in the development of the essential programs and services model. In that work I have been before this committee several times describing the model along with my reasons for supporting it. Consequently I will not take up your valuable time today rehearsing my past comments. I will instead limit my comments to what I believe are some of the core premises of the essential programs and services model, and to the intent of this legislation.

The essential programs and services model represents, at its essence, a paradigm shift. For decades, Maine, like most states, has attempted to define education equity as equalized dollars behind each child. This has resulted in a

growth in funds dedicated to education, and greater learning opportunities, and higher achievement for many students. However, it has not always resulted in equitable education programs in all our schools, nor academic success for all students.

This is the case in large measure because our definition has not been based on a clear agreement on what we wanted all children to achieve, nor on the recognition that different students have different needs, and that equalized dollars does not necessarily purchase equal resources.

The essential programs and services model embraces a new definition of equity - a new paradigm. It is premised on the belief that all our schools need adequate (sufficient) levels of resources so that all children are provided equitable opportunities to achieve our agreed upon outcomes, the Learning Results. It is also premised on the belief that equity should be defined as common ends achieved through uncommon means; a belief that different levels and amounts of resources are needed in different schools to insure that all children, regardless of where they live in the state, are provided equitable opportunities.

It has taken four + years to develop the essential programs and services model. This may seem like a long time, but I believe it has been an appropriate length of time. The State Board of Education and Committee needed time to understand what it means when we say we expect all children to achieve the Learning Results, and time to identify the types and levels of resources needed in our schools so all children can, in fact, achieve the Learning Results. Once the model was developed, time was needed for Maine's educators, policymakers, and others to learn about the new model and to debate and discuss it. The result of this public review has been widespread endorsement of the model, by organizations such as the Maine Coalition for Excellence in

Education, all the major state educational organizations, individually and collectively through MaineLEAD, and by many, many other individuals.

Now it is time to take the next step in the evolution, and transition to the essential programs and services model. This I believe is passage of LD 1747.

The intent of LD 1747 is to ask for your endorsement of the concept of essential programs and services, while asking you to reserve final judgement on the model until we come back to you with more details. To paraphrase an often used saying, the angel is in the concept, and the devil is in the details.

What do we mean by endorsing the concept but reserving final judgement? Let me give you one example. U.S. Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter once said, "The greatest inequality is equal treatment of inequals." The essential programs and services model is premised in part on this belief. Section 3 of the bill recognizes four groups of specialized student populations, students for whom schools may need additional resources to insure equitable opportunities. The original model includes weighted per pupil guarantee amounts for these specialized populations. One of these specialized populations is ESL students. At the time the committee was developing the model, it did not have the benefit of good reliable information on the cost of providing services for Limited English proficiency students in Maine's schools. Consequently, the committee had to rely on national data. The recent ESL adjustment you have made in GPA not only has provided needed resources for our schools, but it has also provided more accurate and reliable data on costs, data that may now be used in refining the details for this component in the essential programs and services model. Other examples include the areas of technology, student assessment and professional development, just to mention a few.

In essence, we are asking you to endorse the concept, and to direct us to provide you more details in these areas, and many others, before you deliberate further and take final action on the concept and model.

In closing, I ask for your support and passage of LD 1747. I believe it will in the long run ensure greater equity of educational opportunities for all Maine's children, and I believe this bill is a well-reasoned next step in developing this greater equity through changes in our school funding formula.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter, and I will be happy to answer any questions members of this committee may have regarding the essential programs and services model and this bill.

To: Senator Mitchell, Representative Richard and members of the
Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
Testimony in Support of L.D. 1747

AN ACT REGARDING SCHOOL FUNDING BASED ON ESSENTIAL
PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

And in support of L.D. 1760

AN ACT TO IMPLEMENT MAINE'S SYSTEMS OF LEARNING
RESULTS.

Senator Mitchell, Representative Richard and members of the
Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, I am
here to speak in support of both L.D. 1747 and L.D. 1760. I am Jack
McKee speaking on my own behalf expressing the views of no
institution or organization.

I offer these comments concurrently on the two bills before you
because I believe the two topics, Essential Programs and Services
and Learning Results, to be inexorably related. Learning Results
defines the learning results this Legislature has set for our children.
Essential Programs and Services takes that to the next level and
defines the investment in tools and personnel required to achieve
those learning objectives.

I should add, there is a critical third component in this package,
funding. That will become significantly clear, if it has not already
done so, as you move forward. You have another bill before you, L.D.
1580, calling for full funding of education. Full funding, as you know,
means the state lives up to its 55 percent target.

My involvement in the Essential Programs and Services
program goes back to 1995. At the conclusion of the work of the
Governor's Task Force on Education Funding it was determined that a
subcommittee of that body should design an Essential Programs and
Services proposal. I sat on the Task force and subsequently on that
subcommittee. We cranked out a recommendation, even had it
turned into legislative language. We lacked both time and money for
research. The proposal went before the Education and Cultural Affairs
Committee and died. In retrospect, death was appropriate.

I also served on the Essential Programs and Services Committee sponsored by the State Board of Education, that filed its report, I believe in 1998.

L.D. 1747 establishes the relationship between Essential Programs and Services and Learning Results with the following statement, "In order to achieve this system of learning results, essential programs and services must be available in all schools on an equitable basis."

That statement draws a clear relationship with Learning Results. More than that it defines with clarity the rationale behind Essential Programs and Services as being those resources required to help every Maine student achieve the goals set forth in the Learning Results.

The subject of resources is critical, as always. L.D. 1747, states that the state and "each local school administrative unit" must share the cost of the components of essential programs and services. My experience tells me that the cost of those components will demand an investment in education well beyond what we are currently making. Equity across this state will be a challenge. That does not mean it is not an objective worthy of pursuit. It simply means it will be a difficult task and will test the will of the Legislature and Governor.

Learning Results, the legislative target of L.D. 1760, "requires the implementation of the system of learning results." As we move toward achieving that goal, and many local districts are already on their way, it cannot avoid a linkage with Essential Programs and Services. The assumption that all school districts can satisfy the Learning Results within current resources is a false assumption.

Resources is more than money, it is also bodies. You have heard numerous reports of teacher shortages, particularly in specific areas, such as foreign language, science, speech, etc. I trust that issue will be addressed positively in this session.

To mandate local school districts develop and implement programs for "training and development for all school personnel" within present resource limitations is inappropriate. Add to that the development of "a comprehensive system of local assessments" plus a schedule for its implementation is also beyond the realm of reality for many - perhaps most - local school units.

There is an appropriate heavy emphasis on School Assistance which implies a greater commitment by the Department of Education on professional and technical assistance to local school districts than has been made in the past. This project in and of itself will demand substantial resources for department staff and materials.

These issues and a number of others give pause for serious concern relative to L.D. 1760. It is unfortunate but true, the objectives of neither of these bills will be obtained unless and until the Legislature and Governor are willing to appropriate the funds to see them through. For this reason, if for no other, it is my recommendation that this Committee proceed with these two bills but delay action on L.D. 1580 until the second session in hopes that a price tag can and will be defined.

Citizens of this state have made an enormous investment of time and effort in the development of Learning Results and Essential Programs and Services. Learning Results were subjected to two critical reviews by the Legislature before they were given a stamp of approval. This Committee has had numerous reports on Essential Programs and Services progress. There is no question in my mind, at least, that these two pieces of the public education program of the new millennium must be considered in tandem. They are parts of a new educational concept that has great promise.

I urge your support for both L.D. 1760 and 1747 and at the same time repeat my recommendation that L.D. 1580 be put on hold until the next session of this Legislature.

I would be pleased to answer any questions. Thank you.

**Testimony to the Joijnt Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
LD 1747, an Act regarding School Funding based on Essential
Programs and Services**

April 12th, 2001

Senator Mitchell, Representative Richard, members of the Committee,

My name is Ronald Bancroft and I am Chair of the Maine Coalition for Excellence in Education. Our Coalition of business, education, and community leaders is here to support LD 1747. We have an approach in this legislation that directly links educational funding to the resources needed to implement Learning Results. All of you have heard at length of the difficulties with the current funding formula. While LD 1747's approach is not a panacea, it does put the debate squarely on the adequacy of funding for achieving Learning Results. This is a significant improvement over our current approach.

We are impressed with the excellent research done by David Silvernail and his colleagues at USM that underpins the Essential Programs and Services approach.

We believe that the additional funding likely needed in the future (we note that this bill does not have funding requirements at this time) to implement this approach should not be a deterrent to its adoption. With appropriate phase-in, the amounts involved are likely to prove reasonable.

The approach recommended in LD1747 is fairer and more easily understood than the current formula. We ask the Committee to pass LD1747.



Ronald M. Bancroft, Chairman, Maine Coalition for Excellence in Education