

## PUBLIC PRESCHOOL INITIATIVES

### LD 1850, now Resolve 2013, Chapter 114

#### Resolve, Section 5

**1. Public preschool programs for children 4 years of age.** As part of the review and analysis of public preschool programs for children 4 years of age, the commission shall:

A. Review the work products and any proposed rules developed by the Department of Education's work group to implement quality standards of practice for Maine public preschool programs, including an analysis of the standards proposed to address quality and consistency of public preschool programs and collaboration with other early childhood and preschool programs; *The Department has proposed Chapter 124, Basic School Approval: Public Preschool Program Standards. Hearing was held November 17, 2014. The comment period ends on December 5, 2014. A survey with open ended questions has been sent to the public preschool program teachers to determine the actual: class sizes, staffing ratios, type of curriculum, screening and assessment instruments, transition procedures, transportation, etc in each of the programs. This concrete data will be reviewed in the context of the rulemaking underway, and will inform the refinements to the proposed regulation.*

B. Conduct an analysis of the targeted funds for public preschool to grade 2 students that are allocated specifically for preschool students and conduct an analysis of the projected costs for providing public preschool programs for all eligible children 4 years of age in the State; *An analysis of the projected cost of providing public preschool for all eligible children 4 years of age was done by the Office of Fiscal and Program Review with an estimated cost of \$7.2 million.*

C. Review the current method for calculating the number of public preschool students enrolled in a school administrative unit's public preschool program and conduct an analysis of the projected costs for changing the current method for calculating the number of public preschool students that counts each public preschool student as a 0.5 full-time equivalent student for the first year and a 1.0 full-time equivalent student beginning in the 2nd year to a new method that counts each public preschool student as a 1.0 full-time equivalent student for the first year and subsequent years; and *The EPS Funding Formula statute was changed as a result of LD 1530, now Public Law 2013, Chapter 581 to a new method that counts each public preschool student as a 1.0 full-time equivalent student in the first year of the program and is subsidized in subsequent years.*

D. Collect and review information on the physical space and facility capacity of school administrative units and project the school facility costs necessary to implement public preschool programs for eligible children 4 years of age in the State. *Superintendents' survey done in October 2014 gathered this data and is being reviewed by the Commission on November 25, 2014.*

### LD 1530, now Public Law 2103, Chapter 581

#### Title 20-A Maine Revised Statutes:

§4271 (4) Required the development of routine technical rules that would contain the standards and best practices for the public preschool programs and must encourage a school administrative unit to demonstrate coordination with other early childhood programs in the

community. *Chapter 124 Basic School Approval: Public Preschool Program Standards were proposed in October 2014. Hearing was held November 17, 2014. The comment period ends on December 5, 2014.*

**§4271 (5) “Application for federal public preschool funds.** The department may apply for assistance from the Federal Government for the development of public preschool programs for children 4 years of age on behalf of school administrative units in the State. The department shall administer any federal funds received for the benefit of public preschool programs in the State. As the designated state agency authorized to administer federal funds, the department shall develop a state plan and application for funding public preschool programs and shall disburse federal funds as authorized and required by applicable federal law. “

*Maine submitted a federal grant application for Preschool Expansion on October 14, 2014. Maine will be notified on December 10, 2014 if we are awarded a federal grant. The federal grant had several specific requirements:*

- *Competitive to (1) implement and sustain high quality preschool programs that reach and serve additional eligible children at or below 200% of poverty in two or more high need communities, and (2) enhance preschool program infrastructure and capacity to deliver high quality programs.*
- *5% can be used on the State level, 95% is to be flowed to SAUs that have signed letters of commitment.*
- *High quality programs will be delivered through a mixed delivery system that includes schools, licensed child care centers, Head Start programs, or community based organizations.*
- *Programs **must** meet program quality standards which include 10 high quality program elements in the federal definition, such as high staff qualifications, low child:staff ratios and small class sizes, a full day program of at least 5 hours a day 5 days a week, and comprehensive services for children.*
- *Maine SAUs with signed Letters of Commitment:*
  - *SAD 58- Phillips, Strong, Kingfield*
  - *Lewiston – Longley Elementary*
  - *Sanford*
  - *RSU 3*
  - *RSU 37 – Millbridge, Harrington, Daniel Merritt School*
  - *RSU 12 – Chelsea, Somerville*
  - *RSU 39 – Limestone*
  - *RSU 13 – Rockland*
  - *Millinocket*
  - *RSU 74 – Garret Schenck Elementary School, Solon Elementary School, Carrabec*
  - *RSU 49 – Clinton, Albion*
  - *RSU 53- Pittsfield*
- *State must have Early Learning and Development Standards – Maine has refined our standards over the last two years with a stakeholder group*