TESTIMONY
OF
A. PENDER MAKIN, COMMISSIONER
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
And the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

Hearing Date: February 26, 2020

LR 3206 “An Act Making Unified Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations for the
Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds, and Changing Certain
Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal
Years Ending June 30, 2020 and June 30, 2021”

Senators Breen and Millett, Representatives Gattine and Kornfield, and Members of the Joint
Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Education and Cultural Affairs, my
name is Pender Makin and I am the Commissioner of the Department of Education (DOE). I am here
today to present testimony for those departmental items in the supplemental budget bill.

Governor Mills has presented a supplemental budget that invests in pressing, bipartisan
priorities, including: protecting the health and safety of Maine people; enhancing economic and
workforce development efforts; and bolstering the long-term well-being of our state. Our public
Education system provides the fundamental capacities for these priorities.

On any given day, the 158 staff members who make up the Department of Education provide
oversight, support, and technical assistance to 277 School Administrative Units, more than 600 public
schools, and more than 50,000 school and district employees serving 183,000 students in pre-K through
grade 12. We additionally support Maine’s Adult Education programs, Child Development Services
(CDS) programs, Education in the Unorganized Territories, private schools, and institutions of Higher
Education. The 11 programs within Part A of this supplemental budget request provide a vast array of
critical functions, including regulatory oversight, professional development, emergency preparedness
and school safety, and the management of equitable systems for disseminating resources, to name just a few.

Many of the initiatives in Part A of the Budget Document reflect the comprehensive reorganization we’ve completed to build and maximize our capacity as a department that had endured years of financial and personnel cuts prior to our current biennial budget. Some new positions were created through financial orders during this past year to fill critical roles and several positions were reorganized from one program to another (Appendix A). You’ll also be asked to consider initiatives that reflect the impact of collective bargaining, costs associated with legislation, and increasing expenses for existing and required services. Our largest single initiative seeks to increase the State share of the total cost of education by a full 1%, creating a reduction in the mill expectation that is deeply needed by local municipalities in a year when our state’s total valuation increased by 5%. There are also funds requested to allow the Department to operationalize and expand innovative and forward-thinking programs that are critically linked to several cross-departmental efforts – including the Children’s Cabinet, Maine’s Economic Development Strategic Plan, our Opioid Prevention and Response Plan, the Maine Climate Council, and Maine’s Workforce Development Plan.

Some initiatives in this budget will impact more than one program and I will identify these as they appear more than once across the different programs. The repeated initiatives are underlined in this testimony to help further clarify.

PART A

ADULT EDUCATION

This program operates a public education and career pathways system that enables adults to be prepared for post-secondary education and employment. Over 70 adult education programs throughout Maine provide a range of instructional services to help adults develop the skills for further educational opportunities, job training, and better employment, and to realize their full potential as productive workers, family members and citizens.
The program has **five initiatives** that may be found on page **A-26** of the Budget Document.

The **first initiative** provides a net appropriation of $58,896 in FY21 to establish an Education Specialist III position to support the increased workload in the areas of Adult Education professional development, monitoring and accountability. Current staffing is insufficient to provide the ongoing support needed by the field in order to meet required state and federal performance and outcome requirements. The Adult Education team has had to rely on contracted staff to meet this demand, so this initiative also reduces **All Other** which is currently used for the temporary services contract, to fund a portion of the position. This initiative was previously requested in the biennial budget. Since that time, the hours for the contracted staff have increased. The amount of **All Other** that can now be used to help offset this request is $51,056. This initiative will now require a net appropriation of $37,454.

The **second initiative** requests an appropriation of $13,661 in FY20 and $13,725 in FY21 and a reduction in **allocation** for the same amounts. The Adult Education Director position is currently paid 100% with federal **grant** dollars. However, the responsibilities of the director include some additional tasks that do not fall under the purview of the grant. Time studies for this position have shown that 10% of the work effort may not be attributed to the grant, therefore, this initiative reallocates the cost.

The **third initiative** transfers an appropriation of $29,000 in FY21 from the School Finance and Operations (SFO) program to the Adult Education program. The Adult Education Management System has historically been paid by SFO. This initiative transfers the funding to the appropriate account. The offsetting initiative may be found on page **A-37**.

The **fourth initiative** provides an appropriation of $20,000 in FY20 and FY21 for the increased cost of high school equivalency assessments.

The **fifth initiative** provides a one-time appropriation of $2,400,000 in FY21 to expand innovative adult education projects aimed at strengthening workforce development in Maine. We requested this funding in the biennial budget, and it would be provided in the form of grants to Maine’s adult education programs for innovative projects that are responsive needs of their communities.
Examples of these projects would include rapid deployment of emergency English language instruction for new Mainers; partnering with other departments, like DHHS, for example, to include education within treatment plans; vocational re-training and micro-credentialing communities experiencing high needs due, for example, to a sudden loss of jobs when companies downsize; a mobile welding van for regions where vocational training programs are inaccessible; and targeted strategies for addressing barriers through provision of foundational skills like literacy and vocational math that complement workforce training programs.

**CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (CDS)**

This program operates nine regional CDS sites statewide, providing early intervention and free appropriate public education services to Maine’s youngest learners with disabilities.

The program has **two initiatives** that may be found on page A-27 of the Budget Document.

The **first initiative** provides an appropriation of $98,955 in FY20 and $1,651,050 in FY21. This initiative provides funding of $98,955 in FY20 and $283,695 in FY21 to cover health insurance costs, as CDS employees transitioned to the State’s insurance plan this year, bringing 58 new members into the plan. This initiative also includes $1,367,355 for staff wage increases for the second-year contract resulting from collective bargaining.

The **second initiative** transfers an Office Associate II position to the Special Services program and adjusts All Other. This position provides administrative support to the finance team within the Office of Special Services. This initiative transfers the position to the appropriate account. The offsetting initiative may be found on page A-38.

**FACILITIES, SAFETY, AND TRANSPORTATION**

This program is responsible for implementing major capital school construction programs; facilities safety; the revolving renovation fund and leased space programs; maintenance and capital planning; operating requirements for local school transportation systems; and school bus purchase programs.
The program has two initiatives that may be found on page A-27.

The first initiative transfers an allocation of $553,032 in FY21 to the recently developed Office of School and Student Supports program. The School Safety Center team has moved from the Office of Facilities and Transportation to the Office of School and Student Supports. This initiative reflects the transfer out. The offsetting initiative may be found on page A-35.

The second initiative provides an allocation of $1,253 in FY20 and $7,387 in FY21. This initiative reorganizes a Secretary Associate to a Secretary Specialist. The work of this support position has expanded and has become more complex. The current position has not been adequate to support the technical work of this office. The office requires a position that can act with authority and be able to respond independently to the public regarding the broad and complex topics encompassed within this program.

GENERAL PURPOSE AID FOR LOCAL SCHOOLS (GPA)

This program provides state funding to support local schools through the Essential Programs and Services (EPS) formula and through targeted education funds. The program relies on a variety of data systems and property valuation information provided through Maine Revenue Services to calculate the total cost of public education in Maine and the % share for which each municipality will be responsible.

The program has fourteen initiatives that may be found on pages A-28 and A-29.

The first initiative provides an appropriation of $32,654 in FY20 and $130,615 in FY21 for NEO system data support and upgrades. The NEO system was developed and is managed by Maine’s Office of Information Technology to facilitate the collection and management of crucial school data and it resides on servers that need to be updated to meet security and support requirements. The School Finance and Operations (SFO) program shares this cost. That corresponding initiative may be found on page A-37.

The second initiative provides an appropriation of $249,600 in FY20 and in FY21 for the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MECDHH). Funding of $250,000 for FY20 and
FY21 was appropriated in Public Law 2019, chapter 343 for MECDHH to fund a new satellite program in Brewer that would provide necessary regional services to deaf and hard of hearing children in the area. That funding, however, was not sufficient to cover the cost of the program. This initiative would increase funding to cover the full cost of the program. The budget (based on 3 out-of-district students), as submitted by the MECDHH, is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpreters</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>$110,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM (transmitters/receivers) System</td>
<td>$15,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition</td>
<td>$24,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$499,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received in c. 343</td>
<td>($250,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative amount</td>
<td>$249,600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The third initiative provides an appropriation of $1,238,863 in FY21 to cover the state share of the per pupil amount of $94 for the increased number of students in school administrative units that have recently joined Education Service Centers (formerly known as Regional Service Centers).

The fourth initiative transfers funding of $20,000 in FY20 and in FY21 to the Learning Systems Team Program to for costs related to two Regional Education Representatives. The two positions were transferred in Public Law 2019, chapter 343 to the Learning Systems Team program, however the associated All Other costs were not transferred. The offsetting initiative may be found on page A-32.

The fifth initiative provides an appropriation of $112,650 in FY21 to continue a Public Service Coordinator I previously established by financial order. This position monitors programs to ensure compliance with statutes and success in ongoing operations, calculates public and private tuition rates, performs quality control checks on school unit financial data used to calculate school subsidy and calculates school unit per pupil operating costs.

The sixth initiative provides an appropriation of $22,041,555 in FY21. This initiative provides funding to increase the percentage of the state’s share of the total cost of education by a full 1% over the contribution in fiscal year 2019-20. Statute requires an increase of 1% in state share per year over the
percentage of the previous year until that percentage reaches 55%. This amount is contingent upon the funding of all the other GPA initiatives (Appendix B) as all of the funds within this program contribute to the state’s share.

The **seventh initiative** transfers an appropriation of $250,000 in FY21 from the Department to the Legislature. These funds are used by the Legislature to pay MEPRI for the compilation and analysis of education data as requested by the Legislature, who contracts for this service. The offsetting initiative may be found on page A-74.

The **eighth initiative** transfers a Management Analyst I and Office Specialist I to the Learning Through Technology program in order to reflect the positions in the appropriate account. The offsetting initiative may be found on page A-34.

The **ninth initiative** provides an appropriation of $150,000 in FY21 for grants to schools implementing the Community Schools model. This model provides for counseling, mental health and other trauma informed services to be provided in certain school programs serving students from low socioeconomic and rural schools. This initiative will allow for a total of 4 Community Schools projects; current funding is available for just 1 project.

The **tenth initiative** provides an appropriation of $1,600,000 in FY21 for an increase in the total allocation for Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. FY21 is the first year in a 3-year transition from an expenditure-based reimbursement system to a funding model according to PL 2019, chapter 343, Part AAAAA. We have been unable to identify a way to initiate the incremental reduction in funding to the programs who have been overspending the model without doing harm to students by reducing CTE opportunities. We also recognize that the programs who have been underspending the model are eager to receive full funding as described by the formula, and that the present cap of 5% above their current expenditures fails to provide sufficient opportunity for much-needed growth. This initiative raises the cap on the underspending programs to 15%.
The eleventh initiative provides an appropriation of $50,000 in FY21 for music instruction and instruments for students in rural schools. This $50,000 investment will allow Maine to receive approximately $250,000 in musical instruments, music instruction, and professional development for educators in Maine’s most rural and economically disadvantaged communities.

The twelfth initiative provides an allocation of $7,859,885 in FY21 to cover the legislated increase to restore state subsidy for system administration. This initiative provides funding for the difference between the current allocation of $47 and $135.

The thirteenth initiative transfers a Public Service Manager I and its associated appropriation of $119,076 in FY21 to the Learning Systems Team program in order to reflect the position in the appropriate account. The offsetting initiative may be found on page A-33.

The fourteenth initiative provides an appropriation of $4,000,000 in FY21 to support the real-time startup and operational costs for additional students entering newly established or recently expanded public preschool programs. This funding is based on the projected 294 additional students entering pre-kindergarten in the next school year, bringing the statewide total to 6,400 students. Superintendents report to DOE their projections of new students based on newly added programs or available slots as compared with community needs.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND EDUCATOR SUPPORT SERVICES

This program supports Maine’s aspirations of increasing access to lifelong learning through our institutions of higher education including the public university and community college systems, the private universities and colleges, and the licensed proprietary schools which offer vocational and workforce training. Our Higher Education team works with the State Board of Education in reviewing requests from postsecondary institutions for degree-granting authority and from proprietary and correspondence schools for licensing. This team also manages the assessment and approval of educator preparation programs in Maine and manages our Teacher Certification System to support the advancement of quality educator candidates. Additionally, this program is responsible for supporting
administration of, and funding for, early college learning programs that allow Maine students to access college courses at no cost to them while they are still in high school, enhancing the likelihood that these students will persist through to degree attainment. These early college programs also contribute to the retention and graduation rate goals of the University of Maine System and Maine Community College System while providing needed tuition revenue for these institutions. Our efforts to support early college options have resulted in an all-time record enrollment in the Aspirations Program.

The program has **three initiatives** that may be found on page A-30.

The **first initiative** transfers an Education Specialist III from the Learning Systems Team program and transfers an appropriation of $104,388 in FY21 to fund the position and related All Other costs. This initiative places the position within the appropriate account. The offsetting initiative may be found on page A-33.

The **second initiative** provides an appropriation of $14,000 in FY20 and in FY21 to cover the cost of increased merchant fees resulting from the new online automated teacher certification system.

The **third initiative** reduces an allocation of $5,480,535 in FY20 and FY21. The Teacher Incentive Fund Grant ended on September 30, 2017, therefore, allocation is no longer needed.

**LEADERSHIP TEAM**

This program encompasses the work of the commissioner's office, including organizational leadership; finance, operations, and internal Human Resources; internal and external communications – including the ongoing communication and interpretation of regulatory and statutory expectations, reporting requirements, and all pertinent matters impacting the operation of our statewide education system; special projects and programs; constituent relations; rulemaking processes; development and alignment of policy; and coordination with and among the departments throughout our government. In addition to a comprehensive reorganization of the Department, this office has spent the past year examining existing statutes and practices to identify areas for improvement, clarification, and simplification; developing a positive, trustful relationship with the field; reinvigorating the public
perception of our education system; hosting open, inclusive think tanks to provide authentic voice to all stakeholders; and improving the quality of our service to the field. Examples of our most significant achievements this year include: development of an Office of School and Student Supports to provide technical support and professional development in trauma-informed practices, social-emotional learning, mental health, and school safety and emergency response; fostering an all-time best average turnaround time for teacher certification, which has held steady at 3 weeks for 9 of the past 12 months (the industry standard is 12 weeks); the development of many reports and policy briefs on issues of prioritized concern as required by statute or requested by the Legislature, most of which required the convening of stakeholder workgroups and committees; an improved overall climate and public perception of the great work that is accomplished in our public schools, as measured by an end-of-year anonymous survey of the field; and the development of a 5-year strategic plan that will place the department and Maine’s education system at the forefront of innovative practice and educational excellence.

The program has four initiatives that may be found on page A-31.

The first initiative provides a one-time appropriation of $1,000,000 in FY21 to support Career Exploration opportunities for Maine students. The Department of Labor (page A-72) and the Department of Economic and Community Development (page A-24) are also requesting funding to provide education, training and career opportunities for students of all ages and backgrounds. As part of our collaborative work on Maine’s 10-year Economic Development Plan, this one-time funding will build capacity for the expansion of “Extended Learning Opportunities” which will immerse Maine’s students in authentic, community-based learning activities through hands-on applications of technology, internships, apprenticeships, and job shadowing. Expanding upon existing programs and infrastructure, this enhanced capacity-building project will provide schools in remote and rural areas with the resources and professional development necessary for high quality implementation. The funding will support startup and capacity-building costs associated with connecting schools with community-based partners and local businesses, problem-solving barriers like aligning policies, navigating liabilities, coordinating
access through transportation and technology, the development of mutually beneficial program objectives, and the logistical planning for these immersive experiences that will simultaneously allow students to explore potential careers while also learning and demonstrating academic skills and concepts in authentic "real world" settings.

The **second initiative** is another result of our extensive reorganization to build capacity at DOE, requesting an appropriation of $14,177 in FY21 to reorganize a Public Service Manager II to a Chief of Staff and Operations and to reorganize a Public Service Executive II to a Chief Innovation Officer. These roles have allowed us to support internal HR needs and coordinate resources for effective operations while also contributing to innovative statewide and interdepartmental efforts.

The **third initiative** requests an appropriation of $72,000 in FY21 to support costs related to legislatively required stakeholder group meetings and associated reports. It also reflects costs of other outreach activities that allow us to coordinate statewide efforts. Providing mileage reimbursement to participants in the statewide think tanks and workgroups that we have been convening helps us to reduce geographical and financial barriers to equitable participation. These collaborative processes provide authentic opportunities for community members and practitioners in the field to contribute their perspectives and ideas as we make decisions that impact them, and existing funding is insufficient to cover associated costs like mileage for participants.

In discussions with the State Board of Education, we discovered that they will be needing $7,000 to cover mileage for their newly appointed Professional Standards Review Board. Therefore, we plan to reduce the funding in this initiative by $7,000 and increase funding to the State Board of Education program by $7,000 in the change package in order to support this need.

The **fourth initiative** provides an appropriation of $60,000 in FY21 to support and promote educational research and development and to foster statewide education innovation initiatives. We are working on several exciting projects to promote environmental education, school safety and emergency preparedness, STEM and Computer Science programs, multidisciplinary, project-based learning, and
much more. We are also developing an open-source Social Emotional Learning Curriculum that will be accessed by pre-K-12 educators as needed. These innovative projects and many others are supported by our Office of Innovation and are integral to many of the larger, interdepartmental initiatives in which our state is engaged (including Governor’s Children’s Cabinet, Maine Climate Council, Opioid Prevention and Response, etc.). The funds requested in this initiative will be used to support professional development, communications, and other critical functions for the Office of Innovation.

**LEARNING SYSTEMS TEAM**

This program encompasses a wide range of services, including: Early Childhood Learning; specialized support for instruction within each of the Content areas; Assessment and Accountability; Federal Programs (including ESSA Title grant programs); and Career and Technical Education.

The program has **thirteen initiatives** that may be found on pages A-32 to A-34.

As noted earlier in this testimony, the department has undergone a vast reorganization and the Office of School and Student Supports (OSSS) has been developed. Several positions previously housed within the Office of Learning Systems have been reorganized to build capacity within the newly developed OSSS. **Five (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 6th and 7th)** of the 13 initiatives for this program transfer the positions and funding attributed to the new office from the Office of Learning Systems to the Office of School and Student Supports. **The remaining initiatives are as follows.**

**The fourth initiative** transfers funding of $20,000 in FY20 and FY21 from the General Purpose Aid for Local Schools program for costs related to two Regional Education Representatives. **Two positions were transferred in Public Law 2019, chapter 343 to the Learning Systems Team program.**

The associated All Other costs were not transferred. **The offsetting initiative may be found on page A-28.**

**The fifth initiative** provides a one-time appropriation of $3,000,000 in FY21 for equipment upgrades at career and technical education programs to help them toward meeting national industry
standards. This funding will be provided to local CTE programs for the most critically needed upgrades and replacement equipment.

The eighth initiative reallocates the costs of a Public Service Manager II to be split among the General Fund, Federal Expenditures Fund and Other Special Revenue Funds. The net General Fund savings is $7,692 in FY20. This position is being transferred to the OSSS program in FY21. The reallocation for FY21 may be found on page A-36. This initiative reallocates the cost of the position to the appropriate accounts.

The ninth initiative provides a one-time appropriation of $1,000,000 in FY21. This funding will be provided to school administrative units in the form of mini-grants to enable them to overcome the diverse barriers they face in establishing or expanding preschool programs. We have received feedback from the field that a number of barriers exist and that these are all very different, depending upon geographic, socioeconomic, and multiple other factors. This funding may be used for community organization and strategic planning, consultants or legal assistance in developing public-private partnerships, or for problem-solving other unique challenges facing Maine’s rural communities as they work to provide equitable access to high quality pre-k programs.

The tenth initiative transfers an Education Specialist III to the Higher Education and Educator Support Services program and transfers an appropriation of $104,388 in FY21 to fund the position and related All Other costs. This initiative reflects the position in the appropriate account. The offsetting initiative may be found on page A-30.

The eleventh initiative transfers a Public Service Manager I and the appropriation of $119,076 in FY21 from the General Purpose Aid for Local Schools program in order to reflect the position in the appropriate account. The offsetting initiative may be found on page A-29.

The twelfth initiative reduces allocation of $1,000,687 in FY20 and in FY21, due to the previous sunsetting of a grant. The Eisenhower Math and Science grant ended on September 30, 2017, therefore, the allocation is no longer needed.
The thirteenth initiative provides an appropriation of $11,142 in FY20 and $11,238 in FY21 and an allocation of $118,054 in FY20 and in FY21. This initiative continues a limited-period Education Specialist III position through August 31, 2022. The position provides oversight and leadership to the Head Start programs in Maine and facilitates coordination between Head Start services and public schools.

LEARNING THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

This program is better known as Maine Learning Technology Initiative or “MLTI”. In 2002, Maine became the first state to provide a personal portable computer device to each 7th and 8th grade student and teacher, along with the software, wireless networks, technical support, and professional development needed to effectively use the technology for teaching and learning. Over the years, the program has undergone some changes, but the basic goals continue focus on ensuring that Maine students have equitable access to the technology-related resources and learning opportunities that will allow them to learn, participate, design, thrive, and lead in Maine’s continually evolving future economy. Vendor contracts are wrapping up this year, and we have engaged stakeholders from the field in strategic planning processes that will design MLTI’s next iteration. For the 2020-2021 academic year, the Maine Department of Education (DOE) has designed a “bridge year” to mitigate and minimize disruptions to SAUs, providing continued support for devices, infrastructure, and professional learning while we design the next phase of the MLTI program.

The program has two initiatives that may be found on page A-34.

The first initiative continues an Education Specialist III position previously established by financial order and provides an appropriation of $91,307 in FY21. This position serves as the project manager for the Maine Learning Technology Initiative.

The second initiative transfers a Management Analyst I and an Office Specialist I and the appropriation of $144,566 from the General Purpose Aid for Local Schools program. This initiative reflects the positions in the appropriate account. The offsetting initiative may be found on page A-28.
SCHOOL AND STUDENT SUPPORTS

This program was developed during the past year in response to an overwhelming number of requests from the field for technical assistance, professional development, guidance, and resources in the areas of: trauma-informed practices; social emotional learning; student behavior; mental health; crisis intervention; culturally responsive educational practices; civil rights; school safety and comprehensive emergency management planning. We have redesigned a federal school safety grant to focus on crucial, preventative approaches and we have reorganized several positions within the department in order to meet these needs and requests. Although this office has only existed for a few months, the team has already hosted two statewide conferences providing emergency preparedness and trauma-informed practices support to hundreds of Maine schools, and the team has begun work on a pre-K-12 open source curriculum specific to Maine students that will be offered for free to all schools. The team has also established a School Safety Center to serve as consultants, providers of technical assistance, and leadership in emergency management for all Maine schools.

The program has ten initiatives that may be found on pages A-35 and A-36.

Last year the department created a new Office of School and Student Supports. Prior to that these support services were provided in the Office of Learning Systems. Five (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th and 6th) of the ten initiatives for this program transfers the positions and funding attributed from the Office of Learning Systems to the Office of School and Student Supports. The offsetting initiatives may be found on pages A-32 and A-33. The remaining initiatives are as follows.

The fourth initiative provides an allocation of $553,032 in FY21. This initiative transfers funding from the Facilities, Safety and Transportation program. The School Safety and Security team has moved from the Office of Facilities, Safety and Transportation to the Office of School and Student Supports. This initiative reflects the transfer in. The offsetting initiative may be found on page A-27.
The **seventh initiative** transfers a Public Service Manager II and related All Other costs with an appropriation of $96,666 from the School Finance and Operations program. This initiative reflects the position in the appropriate program. The offsetting initiative may be found on page A-37.

The **eighth initiative** reallocates the costs of a Public Service Manager II between the General Fund, Federal Expenditures Fund and Other Special Revenue Funds. The net General Fund savings is $7,736 in FY21. This initiative reallocates the cost of the position to the appropriate accounts.

The **ninth initiative** provides an appropriation of $4,872 in FY21 and a net allocation of $4,871 for the reorganization of a Management Analyst I to a Management Analyst II. This position oversees and manages data collection and analysis across multiple programs and is responsible for recommending modifications and data system changes that improve the flow of information, streamline data processes and support integration with other state agencies.

The **tenth initiative** reallocates the cost of a Regional Education Representative between the Federal Expenditure Fund and the Federal Block Grant Fund in FY21.

**SCHOOL FINANCE AND OPERATIONS**

This program provides a variety of services related to school finance, including guidance and technical support to school administrative units in accounting practices, data reporting, and financial reporting in order to ensure that local schools receive sufficient funding. This team also manages fiscal reporting for state and federal funds and for federal grant funds. Ensuring compliance with federal, state, and local regulatory requirements through sub-recipient monitoring, this team also tracks, interprets, and communicates laws that impact the Department or the field. The program also holds responsibility for reviewing major capital school construction projects for final fiscal compliance and determines final expenditures and revenues, state/local share and local share of unused bond proceeds and net interest income; and coordinates external state and federal audit reviews, findings, and resolutions.

The program has **four initiatives** that may be found on page A-37.
The first initiative provides an appropriation of $43,762 in FY20 and $175,047 in FY21 for NEO system data support and upgrades. The NEO system resides on servers that need to be updated to meet security and support requirements. The General Purpose Aid for Local Schools program shares the cost. That initiative may be found on page A-28.

The second initiative transfers an appropriation of $29,000 in FY21 to the Adult Education program. The Adult Education Management System has historically been paid by School Finance and Operations. This initiative transfers the funding to the appropriate account. The offsetting initiative may be found on page A-26.

The third initiative transfers a Public Service Manager II and related All Other costs with an appropriation of $96,666 in FY21 to the School and Student Supports program. This initiative reflects the position in the appropriate program. The offsetting initiative may be found on page A-36.

The fourth initiative provides an allocation of $783,768 in FY21 for a State Longitudinal Data System. The department has applied for, and has received preliminary notice of award for, a federal grant that will establish and modernize multiple data exchanges across several state and quasi-independent agencies. The project will create a comprehensive reporting portal and operational dashboard and a much needed data warehouse to inform decision making, assist with policy and program evaluation and provide stakeholders with necessary information.

SPECIAL SERVICES TEAM

This program is dedicated to improving results for students with disabilities by providing leadership, support and oversight to local education agencies. The Office of Special Services is committed to ensuring the provision of a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment for children with disabilities (ages 3 to 21) as well as early intervention services to infants and toddlers (birth through age 2). Our work is accomplished through collaboration with families, school districts, public and private agencies, and other programs.

The program has two initiatives that may be found on page A-38.
The **first initiative** establishes an Office Specialist I and a Management Analyst II to meet the growing needs and requirements facing the Special Education team and provides an allocation for related All Other costs. The Office Specialist I will provide shared administrative support for the fiscal, special projects and state agency clients team and the Management Analyst II will perform fiscal compliance and subrecipient monitoring of federal funds and provide technical assistance and training.

The **second initiative** transfers an Office Associate II from CDS. This position provides administrative support to the finance team within the Office of Special Services. This initiative transfers the position to the appropriate account. The offsetting initiative may be found on page A-27.

**LANGUAGE**

The Bureau of the Budget has been working with the Revisor’s Office to identify technical changes that will be made in the printed legislative document (LD). These changes will be noted throughout the remainder of my testimony.

**PART C**

**Part C** may be found on pages 1 – 12 in the Budget Document. This Part establishes the Total Cost of Education from Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12 for fiscal year 2020-2021, the state contribution and the annual target state share percentage.

It provides statutory changes to Chapter 606-B in the categories of adjustments to subsidy, targeted education funds and enhancing student performance and opportunity for implementation in the 2020-2021 school year.

It removes the targeted education fund for the annual education research contract. The funding for this purpose is being transferred to the legislature as they provide the contract for those services.

The bottom of page 6 and section C-13 on page 11 will have a technical change. The word “musical” will be inserted in front of the word instruments.
C-14 has a technical change to clarify the intent of the language. “Integrated, Consolidated Secondary and Postsecondary Project” will be included in “Major Capital”. The LD will reflect the removal of that column.

**PARTS M, Q, R**

**Part M** may be found on pages 19 and 20, **Part Q** on page 22 and **Part R** on pages 22 and 23. These 3 parts do the following:

- Change the name of the Director, Policy and Programs/Director of Legislative Affairs to Director of Policy and Government Affairs
- Change the name of the Director, Communications to Director of Marketing and Communications
- Change the name of Director of Special Projects to Chief Innovation Officer
- Add the Chief of Staff and Operations and the Chief Innovation Officer to major policy-influencing positions

The combined parts are as follows:

**5 MRSA §937, sub-§1**, as amended by PL 2019, c. 343, Pt. SS, §1, is further amended to read:

1. **Major policy-influencing positions**. The following positions are major policy-influencing positions within the Department of Education. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, these positions and their successor positions are subject to this chapter:

   A. Deputy Commissioner;
   B.
   C.
   D.
   E.
   F. Director, Policy and Programs; **Director of Policy and Government Affairs**
   G.
   H.
   I.
   J.
   K.
   L.
   M. Director, Communications **Director of Marketing and Communications**
   N. Chief Innovation Officer
   O. **Chief of Staff and Operations**

**20-A MRSA §203, sub-§1**, as amended by PL 2019, c. 343, Pt. TT, §1-3, is further amended to read:

1. **Commissioner’s appointments**. The following officials are appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the commissioner:
   A. Deputy Commissioner;
   B.
   C.
   D.
   E.
Technical changes related to Part M and Q will be made in the printed LD.

**PART N**

**Part N** may be found on pages 20 and 21. This Part increases the flexibility with respect to when a student might take an early college course. Currently a student is allowed six credits per semester for a total of 12 credits per year. Our proposed change would allow a student to take the maximum of 12 credits, without a restriction on the number of credits per semester, providing optimal flexibility for students to participate.

This part also repeals the requirement to limit the amount of funding available for summer courses to 10% of the total funding available.

**PART O**

**Part O** renames School Nutrition to Child Nutrition. Since there is only one reference to School Nutrition in statute, the LD will amend it rather than using unallocated language for a broader revision clause.

**PART P**

**Part P** may be found on pages 21 and 22. This Part requires the Maine Education Policy Research Institute (MEPRI) to provide, and report annually on, education data requested by the Legislature.
PART T

Part T may be found on pages 26 and 27. This Part renames the Facilities, Safety and Transportation program to Facilities and Transportation. The Safety and Security team was moved to the School and Student Supports program.

PART HH

Part HH-4 through HH-6 may be found on pages 44 and 45. This Part authorizes that the one-time funds appropriated in Part A associated with career exploration ($1m), workforce development ($2.4m) and preschool programs ($1m) carry forward into the next fiscal year for the purposes for which they were intended.

There will be a technical change to Part HH-4. The Learning Systems program will be replaced with the Leadership program. The Part A appropriation is correct.

Part A also includes a one-time appropriation of $3m in FY21 for equipment upgrades at career and technical education schools. This funding will also carry forward into the next fiscal year.

This is the end of my testimony for the Department of Education. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.