

Amendments to LD 1553

May 6, 2011

Senator Mason plans to present an amended LD 1553 bill at the public hearing on May 12. The changes, resulting from discussions with the Department of Education during the last month, were somehow omitted when the Revisor's Office printed the bill last week. The amended version of the bill is available on the MACS web site, www.mainecharterschools.org, and a marked version that shows all insertions and deletions is available on request.

Major changes in the Amended Bill:

1. Clarifies the terms "Local Education Agency" and "State Education Agency" used for federal purposes.
2. Adds to an authorizer's ability to declare priorities in authorizing, that an authorizer shall nevertheless consider each application submitted to it based on the merits of that particular application.
3. Includes in the application requirements, as part of the evidence of need and community support for the proposed public charter school, "including information on discussions with the SAU where the charter school will be located concerning recruitment and operations of the charter school and possible collaboration with nearby SAUs."
4. Clarifies that a charter school has responsibility for special education students, including identification, provision of services, and funding. Clarifies special education funding.
5. Requires charter schools to contribute to costs of extracurricular programs that district schools offer that a charter school student participates in.