

Senate Education Committee

Trevor Currier 271-4151

SB 533, requiring the state to seek bids for contracts to oversee and operate the state's education freedom account program every three years.

Hearing Date: February 10, 2026

Time Opened: 9:46 a.m.

Time Closed: 9:54 a.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Sullivan, Abbas, Altschiller and Ward

Members of the Committee Absent : Senator Prentiss

Bill Analysis: This bill requires the education freedom account administrator to seek bids for contracts to oversee and operate the state's education freedom account program every three years.

Sponsors:

Sen. Altschiller

Sen. Rosenwald

Sen. Fenton

Sen. Watters

Sen. Prentiss

Sen. Perkins Kwoka

Rep. Balboni

Who supports the bill: 101 People signed in support of SB 533. To see the full list of sign-ins, please email the committee aide (trevor.currier@gc.nh.gov).

Who opposes the bill: 7 People signed in opposition of SB 533. To see the full list of sign-ins, please email the committee aide (trevor.currier@gc.nh.gov).

Who is neutral on the bill: No one.

Summary of testimony presented in support:

Senator Debra Altschiller, *Senate District 24*

- Senator Altschiller introduced and testified in support of Senate Bill 533.
- Sen. Altschiller confirmed that the legislation would mandate competitive bidding for the Education Freedom Account administrator contract every three years.
- She stated that the former commissioner of the New Hampshire Department of Education planned for the contract to manage the Education Freedom Account

Program to be awarded through a competitive bidding process. She mentioned that the former commissioner made this commitment five years ago, but it has not yet been codified into law.

- She established that at the start of the program, the Children's Scholarship Fund was meant to serve 100 students and cost less than \$500,000, but today the program serves 10,500 students and costs \$52 million. She stated that the existing contract allows the scholarship fund to keep up to 10 percent for related administrative costs.
- She explained that competitive bidding is a common practice across the New Hampshire State Government because competition ensures the best value for taxpayers, encourages innovation, promotes accountability, and enhances transparency.
- She determined that a three-year bidding cycle provides sufficient time to establish systems, demonstrate results, encourage market competition, allow flexibility for program modifications, and maintain continuity for families.
- She established that Florida and Arizona have a competitive procurement process for their respective programs.
- She said that proper procurement involves transition plans, knowledge transfer requirements, and continuity protections.
- She stated that Senate Bill 533 promotes good government and that it is not an accusation of poor performance of the Children's Scholarship Fund.

Summary of testimony presented in opposition: None.

Neutral Information Presented: None.

T.C.

Date Hearing Report completed: February 10, 2026