



PRIORITY NOTICE: Maine DOE's path forward with respect to Chapter 134 (Regulations for Awarding a High School Diploma)

After careful review of all oral and written comments received by the Maine DOE regarding proposed rule *Chapter 134, Regulations for Awarding a High School Diploma*, the Maine DOE has made the decision to withdraw the current proposed rule and restart the rulemaking process after a brief pause for conceptual conversations. The conceptual conversations will provide an opportunity to explore areas needing greater clarity in the current proposed rule Chapter 134. The Maine DOE remains committed to the proficiency-based diploma law (20-A MRS 4722-A) and remains committed to drafting a proposed rule that supports the implementation of a diploma based on evidence of proficiency.

The Department intends to start a new rulemaking process for proposed rule Chapter 134 once the following steps have been taken:

- 1.) During the month of October, Maine DOE's Proficiency-based Education (PBE) Specialist will reach out to professional organizations to invite representatives from each of their stakeholder groups (superintendents, principals, curriculum leaders, special education directors, teachers, parents, and school board members) to engage in small (approximately 15 participants), role-alike, conceptual discussions regarding equitable access to a high school diploma and student readiness for entering career and college opportunities after high school. A randomly selected high school from each superintendent region will be contacted to engage in small (approximately 15

participants) conceptual conversations with students. These conceptual discussions will be facilitated by the Maine DOE PBE Specialist and guided by the following discussion prompts. (The Commissioner and other Maine DOE members may join the conversations as their schedules allow.):

a.) To what degree do you agree or disagree with this statement and why: The knowledge, required skills, and qualifications required for entrance into post-secondary opportunities in industry, trade, business, and higher education vary.

What do you see is needed to prepare students for their post-secondary next step?

b.) To what degree do you agree or disagree with this statement and why: The transcript and diploma are inseparable companion documents that together articulate a student's readiness for the postsecondary next step she or he has chosen.

What do you see is needed to clearly articulate a student's readiness for the postsecondary next step she or he has chosen?

c.) To what degree do you agree or disagree with this statement and why: The high school transcript must clearly communicate the student's proficiency across the grade span progressions (preschool-grade 2; grades 3-5; grades 6-8; grades 9-12) thus providing a clear, accurate communication of what the student has achieved and what the diploma based on proficiency represents for each student.

What do you see is needed to clearly articulate what a student has learned?

d.) To what degree do you agree or disagree with this statement and why: Every student needs a personal learning plan and a small team whose primary goal is to understand the student's aspirations, strengths, challenges, contexts of his or her life. The team works collaboratively with the student and others to provide the student access to learning experiences that support her or him so that she or he may learn as close to full potential as humanly possible. The focus on the team is always on the student developing competencies that will support her or his aspirations and development of

efficacy towards these aspirations as well as the student's ability to reach the highest grade span proficiency level possible while eligible to attend our public schools.

What do you see is needed to increase the probability that a student will graduate ready for his or her postsecondary next step?

e.) To what degree do you agree or disagree with this statement and why: Statewide agreement regarding what proficiency means or looks like in each grade span progressions (preschool-grade 2; grades 3-5; grades 6-8; grades 9-12) is necessary to support student opportunity to learn and demonstrate proficiency.

What do you see is needed to support opportunity to learn and demonstrate proficiency across the state?

f.) Would you be willing to share a final thought as a result today's conversation

2.) Taking into consideration the insights gained from the upcoming conceptual discussions and the September public comments, the Maine DOE staff will write a new proposed rule Chapter 134 and begin again the Maine Administrative Procedures Act (A.P.A.) routine technical rule process pursuant to 5 MRS §8052 (public notice of filing, public hearing, open public comment period). The Maine DOE is working diligently to honor the integrity and vision for the high school diploma and transcript articulated in Maine education statute 20-A MRS §4722-A as well as the routine technical rulemaking pursuant to section §4722-A subsection 7. Maine DOE believes public input is a critically important.

It is clear from the oral and written comments submitted on proposed rule Chapter 134 that there is commitment in Maine to provide opportunity for all students to learn as much as they can the entire time the students are eligible to attend our public schools. It is also clear that the diploma has great social meaning and currency in our society. Clearly evident in the comments is that equity sits at the heart of the debate regarding what constitutes sufficient evidence for proficiency. We have provided links below to both the oral and written comments received by the September 8th deadline.

Recorded public hearing and the written comments received by September 8, 2017

for proposed rule Chapter 134 submitted by September 8, 2017.

For more information on proposed rule Chapter 134 and the **diploma based on proficiency**, contact Maine Department of Education Proficiency-Based Education Specialist, Diana Doiron at diana.doiron@maine.gov

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