

STATE OF MAINE

—  
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD  
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-SIX

—  
H.P. 966 - L.D. 1474

**An Act to Strengthen the Teaching of Wabanaki Studies in Maine Schools**

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §14 is enacted to read:

**§14. Wabanaki studies specialist**

The Wabanaki studies specialist, referred to in this section as "the specialist," is established in the department to ensure the inclusion of Wabanaki studies in the parameters for essential instruction and graduation requirements as required by section 4706, subsection 4.

**1. Duties.** The specialist, in consultation with the contracted Wabanaki advisors, shall:

A. Assist school administrative units and educators in the exploration of a wide range of educational materials and resources relating to Wabanaki studies;

B. Identify materials and resources for implementing the instruction of Wabanaki studies;

C. Involve organizations and individuals able and willing to assist with the requirements under this subsection, including, but not limited to, museums and educators; and

D. Make recommendations to the department regarding:

(1) Wabanaki studies curricula;

(2) Wabanaki studies courses that count toward the requirements of teacher certification; and

(3) Implementation of teacher education programs and summer teacher institutes.

**2. Reporting.** The specialist shall annually report to the commissioner and the Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission regarding the implementation of the instruction of Wabanaki studies as required by section 4706, subsection 4 and regarding:

A. Educational materials and resources that are appropriate to assist school administrative units and educators in the State to include Wabanaki studies as required by section 4706, subsection 4; and

B. Opportunities for professional development, training and technical assistance that must be provided to assist school administrative units and educators in the State in implementing Wabanaki studies as required by section 4706, subsection 4.

**Sec. 2. 20-A MRSA §4706, first ¶**, as amended by PL 2021, c. 247, §1 and affected by §3, is further amended to read:

Instruction in American history, African American studies, government, citizenship, Maine studies ~~and~~, the history of genocide and Wabanaki studies must be aligned with the parameters for essential instruction and graduation requirements established under section 6209.

**Sec. 3. 20-A MRSA §4706, sub-§2**, as amended by PL 2023, c. 537, §2, is further amended to read:

**2. Maine studies.** Maine history, including the Constitution of Maine, Maine geography and environment and the natural, industrial and economic resources of Maine and Maine's cultural and ethnic heritage, must be taught. ~~A required component of Maine studies is Wabanaki studies, and Wabanaki studies may be taught as a component of other content areas, as appropriate, including but not limited to the content areas of English language arts, mathematics, science and fine arts. Wabanaki studies and Maine African American studies must be included in the review of content standards and performance indicators of the learning results conducted in accordance with section 6209, subsection 4. Wabanaki studies must address the following topics:~~

- ~~A. Wabanaki governments and political systems and their relationship with local, state, national and international governments;~~
- ~~B. Wabanaki cultural systems and the experience of tribal people throughout history;~~
- ~~C. Wabanaki territories; and~~
- ~~D. Wabanaki economic systems.~~

**Sec. 4. 20-A MRSA §4706, sub-§4** is enacted to read:

**4. Wabanaki studies.** Wabanaki studies must be included in the review of content standards and performance indicators of the learning results conducted in accordance with section 6209, subsection 4. Wabanaki studies may include social studies, English language arts, mathematics, science and fine arts in accordance with this subsection. Wabanaki studies must address the following topics:

- A. Tribal governments in the State and political systems and their relationship with local, state, national and international governments;
- B. Wabanaki cultural systems and the experience of tribal people in the State throughout history;
- C. Wabanaki territories;
- D. Wabanaki economic systems; and
- E. Other curricula recommended by the Wabanaki studies specialist pursuant to section 14.

Beginning July 1, 2027, the department shall, in a representative sample of schools, no less than biannually study the Wabanaki studies curricula under this subsection to assess its

implementation. The department shall publish its findings on the department's publicly accessible website.

**Sec. 5. 20-A MRSA §13011, sub-§11** is enacted to read:

**11. Wabanaki studies requirement.** The state board may adopt rules to require the completion of a Wabanaki studies component in the qualifications for certifying teachers in accordance with sections 13012-A and 13013.

**Sec. 6. State Board of Education to evaluate rules.** The State Board of Education shall, no later than July 1, 2027, evaluate whether the adoption of rules requiring the completion of a Wabanaki studies component in the qualifications for certifying teachers is necessary.

**Sec. 7. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and allocations are made.

**EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF**

**Office of Workforce Development and Innovative Pathways Z334**

Initiative: Provides one-time funds for a contracted review team to study the Wabanaki studies curricula to assess its implementation.

<b>GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>2025-26</b>	<b>2026-27</b>
All Other	\$0	\$50,000
	\$0	\$50,000
<b>GENERAL FUND TOTAL</b>		

**Office of Workforce Development and Innovative Pathways Z334**

Initiative: Provides one-time funds to support the contracted Wabanaki advisors and for professional development, training and technical assistance.

<b>GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>2025-26</b>	<b>2026-27</b>
All Other	\$0	\$50,000
	\$0	\$50,000
<b>GENERAL FUND TOTAL</b>		

**EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF  
DEPARTMENT TOTALS**

<b>GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>