

# Task Force to Study the Creation of a Comprehensive Career and Technical Education System

Resolve 2023, chapter 92

October 18 – 10 AM

Room 228, State House (AFA Committee Room), Augusta, ME

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## Agenda: Meeting #1

1. Welcome - Chairs, Senator Joe Rafferty and Representative Kelly Murphy;

Commission member introductions

2. Review of Resolve 2021, chapter 92 (authorizing legislation for the study) (Office of Policy and Legal Analysis staff)

OPLA staff review of study process; OPLA's role in study; reminder of FOAA

3. **Presentations:**

Amy Johnson, Maine Education Policy Research Institute (MEPRI)

- Challenges associated with CTE programs and high school graduation credits
- Work currently being done with crosswalks and intersections between CTE programs and high graduation credits, including the schools MEPRI studied in its report:
  - [Career and Technical Education \(CTE\): Models for Earning Academic Credit for High School Graduation through CTE Programs & Access to Early College, Career Choices and CTE Programs](#)

Dwight Littlefield, Career & Technical Education Team Coordinator, Maine Department of Education

- Examples of successful use of crosswalks and intersections between CTE programs and high school graduation credits
- Work that has been completed with crosswalks and intersections between CTE programs and high school graduation credits

4. Commission discussion:

- What does each member hope to get out of this task force?
- Are there any organizations/groups that the task force should hear from?

Future meetings, plan moving forward, requests for information of OPLA staff

### OPLA Staff:

Steven Langlin, Legislative Analyst, [Steven.Langlin@legislature.maine.gov](mailto:Steven.Langlin@legislature.maine.gov)

Hillary Risler, Legislative Analyst, [Hillary.Risler@legislature.maine.gov](mailto:Hillary.Risler@legislature.maine.gov)

207-287-1670

**Task Force to Study the Creation of a Comprehensive Career and Technical Education System**  
**Resolve 2023, Ch. 92**  
**Membership List**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Representation</b>
Senator Joe Rafferty - Chair	Member of the Senate
Representative Kelly Murphy – Chair	Member of the House
Rep. David Woodsome Senator Jim Libby	Member of the House Member of the Senate
Rob Callahan	Member who is a current career and technical education high school administrator
David Keaton	Member who represents a statewide association of career and technical education administrators
Anthony H. Sirois	Member who is a member of a skilled trades union or representative of a skilled trades business or industry
Tom Danylik Julie Kenny	Member who is principal of a secondary school Member who is a current career and technical education high school administrator
James Ford	Member who is on the State Board of Education
Garrett Stewart	Member who is a member of a skilled trades union or representative of a skilled trades business or industry
Dr. Terri Cooper	Member who is a superintendent of a school administrative unit
Rebecca Birrell Smith	One member who is a Maine Community College System administrator
James S. Grant	One member who is on a local board of education in a Maine community
Grace Leavitt	One member who is an officer of the Maine Education Association
Robert A. Burr	Member who is a member of a skilled trades union or representative of a skilled trades business or industry
Krista Okerholm	Member who is a member of a skilled trades union or representative of a skilled trades business or industry
Ashley B. Richards, Jr.	Member who is a member of a skilled trades union or representative of a skilled trades business or industry
Rosa A. Redonnett	Member who is an administrator of the University of Maine System
Dwight Littlefield	Commissioner of Education or the commissioner’s designee

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD  
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-THREE

S.P. 520 - L.D. 1283

**Resolve, to Reestablish the Task Force to Study the Creation of a  
Comprehensive Career and Technical Education System**

**Emergency preamble.** Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

**Whereas,** the Task Force to Study the Creation of a Comprehensive Career and Technical Education System is reestablished pursuant to this legislation to study the feasibility of establishing a comprehensive 4-year high school career and technical education program to provide a technical high school setting for students; and

**Whereas,** the study must be initiated before the 90-day period expires in order that the study may be completed and a report submitted in time for submission to the next legislative session; and

**Whereas,** in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore, be it

**Sec. 1. Task force established. Resolved:** That the Task Force to Study the Creation of a Comprehensive Career and Technical Education System, referred to in this resolve as "the task force," is established.

**Sec. 2. Task force membership. Resolved:** That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, the task force consists of 20 members as follows:

- I. Six members appointed by the President of the Senate as follows:
  - A. Two members of the Senate, including one member from each of the 2 parties holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature, one of whom is a member of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs;
  - B. One member who is a current career and technical education high school administrator;
  - C. One member who represents a statewide association of career and technical education administrators;

(see member list)

- D. One member who is a member of a skilled trades union or representative of a skilled trades business or industry; and
- E. One member who is a principal of a secondary school;
- 2. Six members appointed by the Speaker of the House as follows:
  - A. Two members of the House of Representatives, including one member from each of the 2 parties holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature, one of whom is a member of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs;
  - B. One member who is a current career and technical education high school administrator;
  - C. One member who is on the State Board of Education;
  - D. One member who is a member of a skilled trades union or representative of a skilled trades business or industry; and
  - E. One member who is a superintendent of a school administrative unit;
- 3. Seven members appointed by the Governor as follows:
  - A. One member who is a Maine Community College System administrator;
  - B. One member who is on a local board of education in a Maine community;
  - C. One member who is an officer of the Maine Education Association;
  - D. Three members who are members of a skilled trades union or representatives of a skilled trades business or industry; and
  - E. One member who is an administrator at the University of Maine System; and
- 4. The Commissioner of Education or the commissioner's designee.

**Sec. 3. Chairs. Resolved:** That the first-named Senate member is the Senate chair and the first-named House of Representatives member is the House chair of the task force.

**Sec. 4. Appointments; convening of task force. Resolved:** That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, the appointing authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the Legislative Council once all appointments have been completed. After appointment of all members, the chairs shall call and convene the first meeting of the task force.

**Sec. 5. Duties. Resolved:** That the task force shall:

1. Examine the feasibility of establishing a comprehensive 4-year high school career and technical education program to provide a technical high school setting for middle school students to attend at the completion of the 8th grade, including but not limited to the advantages and disadvantages of a comprehensive 4-year high school career and technical education model, obstacles to implementation of a comprehensive 4-year high school career and technical education model and other models for comprehensive 4-year high school career and technical education that exist around the State and on a national level; and

2. Examine increasing crosswalks and intersections between technical and occupational knowledge and curricula and academic standards in order to promote multiple pathways for awarding content area credit to students enrolled in career and technical education programs, including but not limited to building on prior and current work among



the Department of Education, superintendents of school administrative units and career and technical education administrators.

**Sec. 6. Staff assistance. Resolved:** That the Legislative Council shall provide necessary staffing services to the task force, except that Legislative Council staff support is not authorized when the Legislature is in regular or special session.

**Sec. 7. Report. Resolved:** That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, no later than January 15, 2024, the task force shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, for presentation to the Second Regular Session of the 131st Legislature.

**Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

# Office of Policy and Legal Analysis

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## Who we are

The Office of Policy and Legal Analysis (OPLA) is a nonpartisan staff office of the Maine Legislature operating under the auspices of the Legislative Council. OPLA staff are prohibited from taking or advocating political positions on policy issues or engaging in any activities that might be construed as partisan or political. OPLA staff observe strict confidentiality policies and guidelines.

## What we do

OPLA provides nonpartisan professional legislative committee staffing services to the Legislature. In particular, OPLA staffs all the joint standing committees of the Legislature (except the committees with jurisdiction over appropriations and financial affairs and taxation issues) and provides other related services to support the Legislature.

Committee staff services include:

- Providing nonpartisan policy and legal research and analysis of legislation and issues before the committee and assisting the committee with its consideration of legislation;
- Drafting committee papers, including committee amendments, committee bills, reports and other correspondence;
- Assisting committees in oversight of state agencies, including reviewing agency budgets and rulemaking and conducting State Government Evaluation Act reviews and quasi-independent state entity reviews; and
- Assisting committee chairs in facilitating the committee process and organizing committee work.

Other OPLA services include:

- Assisting individual legislators with drafting and information requests;
- Providing staffing for interim legislative study commissions, including providing nonpartisan policy and legal research and analysis of study issues, assisting commission chairs with scheduling and drafting study reports;
- Conducting staff studies (policy and legal analysis of issues) during the Legislative interim;
- Assisting the Revisor of Statutes in drafting legislative bill requests; and
- Preparing and presenting reports to legislative leadership on the status of committee work on bills.

## Publications

OPLA's primary publications include:

- Legislators' Handbook (updated biennially);
- Bill Digest and Enacted Law Summaries (prepared annually after adjournment); and
- Reports of legislative study commissions (one-time, or annually for ongoing studies).

# Maine's Freedom of Access Act and the Conduct of the Business of the Legislature

Prepared for the Right to Know Advisory Committee  
by the Office of Policy and Legal Analysis and the Office of the Attorney General  
Updated January 2023

*The Maine Freedom of Access Act requires governmental entities to conduct public business in the open and to provide access to public records. Legislative meetings and records are subject to the law and must be open to the public, with some limited exceptions set forth in the law.*

## **Intent of the Freedom of Access Law**

The Maine Freedom of Access Act provides that it is the intent of the Legislature that “actions [involving the conduct of the people’s business] be taken openly and that the records of their actions be open to public inspection and their deliberations be conducted openly.” The Freedom of Access Act, found in Title 1 of the Maine Revised Statutes, chapter 13, applies to all governmental entities, including the Legislature.

## **Public Proceedings**

Under state law, all meetings of the Legislature, its joint standing committees and legislative subcommittees are public proceedings. A legislative subcommittee is a group of 3 or more committee members appointed for the purpose of conducting legislative business on behalf of the committee.

The public must be given notice of public proceedings and must be allowed to attend. Notice must be given in ample time to allow the public to attend and in a manner reasonably calculated to notify the general public. The public is also allowed to record the proceedings as long as the activity does not interfere with the orderly conduct of the proceedings.

Party caucuses are not committees or subcommittees of the Legislature, so their meetings do not appear to be public proceedings. Similarly, informal meetings of the members of a committee who are affiliated with the same party are not public proceedings as these members are not designated by the committee as a whole to conduct business of the committee. However, committee members should be careful when they caucus not to make decisions or otherwise use the caucus to circumvent the public proceeding requirements.

## **Limited Exception to Public Proceedings (Executive Sessions)**

In very limited situations, joint standing committees may hold executive sessions to discuss certain matters. State law is quite specific as to those matters that may be deliberated in executive sessions. The executive session must not be used to defeat the purpose of the Act, which is to ensure that the people’s business is conducted in the open.

The permitted reasons for executive session are set forth in the law, Title 1, section 405 and Title 3, section 156. The reasons most relevant to legislative work are discussion of confidential records and pre-hearing conferences on confirmations.

An executive session may be called only by a public, recorded vote of 3/5 of the members, present and voting, of the committee. The motion to go into executive session must indicate the precise nature of the business to be discussed and no other matters may be discussed. A committee may not take any votes or other official action in executive sessions.

If a committee wants to hold an executive session, the committee should discuss the circumstances with an attorney from the Office of Policy and Legal Analysis or the Office of Fiscal and Program Review who can provide the committee with guidance about whether an executive session is permitted and, if so, how to proceed.

## **Public Records**

The Freedom of Access Act defines “public records” broadly, to include all material in possession of public agencies, staff and officials if the materials were received or prepared for use in, or relate to, the transaction of public or governmental business. The scope of the definition means that most, if not all, papers and electronic records relating to legislative business are public records. This includes records that may be stored on an individual legislator’s personal computer, tablet or smartphone if they relate to or were prepared for use in the transaction of public business, *e.g.*, constituent inquiries, emails, text messages or other correspondence about legislative matters. Information contained in a communication between a constituent and a legislator may be confidential if it meets certain narrow requirements.

## **Time-limited Exception from Public Disclosure for Certain Legislative Records**

The Freedom of Access Act contains exceptions to the general rule that public records must be made available for public inspection and copying. One exception that is relevant to legislative work allows certain legislative papers to be withheld from public disclosure until the end of the legislative session in which they are being used. The exceptions are as follows:

- Legislative papers and reports (e.g. bill drafts, committee amendments and the like) are not public records until signed and publicly distributed; and
- Working papers, drafts, records, and memoranda used to prepare proposed legislative papers or reports are not public records until the end of the legislative session in which the papers or reports are prepared or considered or to which they are carried over.

The Legislative Council’s Confidentiality Policy and the Joint Rules provide guidance to legislative staff about how such records are to be treated before they become public records.

## **Confidential Records in the Possession of Committees**

Committees may also need to be prepared to deal with other types of non-public records, such as individual medical or financial records that are classified as confidential under state or federal law.

If the committee comes into possession of records that are declared confidential by law, the Freedom of Access Act allows the committee to withhold those records from the public and to go into executive session to consider them (see discussion above for the proper process).

In addition, the committee should also find out whether there are laws that set specific limitations on, and penalties for, dissemination of those records. The Office of the Attorney General or an attorney from the Office of Policy and Legal Analysis or the Office of Fiscal and Program Review can help the committee with these records.

Joint Rule 313 also sets forth procedures to be followed by a committee that possesses confidential records.

## **Legislative Review of Public Record Exceptions**

All exceptions to the public records law are subject to a review process. A legislative committee that considers a legislative measure proposing a new statutory exception must refer the measure to the Judiciary Committee if a majority of the committee supports the proposed exception. The Judiciary Committee will review and evaluate the proposal according to statutory standards, then report findings and recommendations to the committee of jurisdiction. The Judiciary Committee regularly seeks input from the Right to Know Advisory Committee on public records, confidentiality and other freedom of access issues.

## **Public Access Ombudsman**

The Public Access Ombudsman, an attorney located in the Department of the Attorney General, is available to provide information about public meetings and public records, to help resolve complaints about accessing proceedings and records and to help educate the public as well as public agencies and officials. Legislators may contact the Public Access Ombudsman, Brenda Kielty, at [Brenda.Kielty@maine.gov](mailto:Brenda.Kielty@maine.gov), or (207) 626-8577 for assistance.



STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD  
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-THREE

H.P. 269 - L.D. 436

**An Act to Provide Career and Technical Education Students with Credit  
Toward High School Graduation for Work Completed in Career and  
Technical Education Centers and Regions**

**Mandate preamble.** This measure requires one or more local units of government to expand or modify activities so as to necessitate additional expenditures from local revenues but does not provide funding for at least 90% of those expenditures. Pursuant to the Constitution of Maine, Article IX, Section 21, 2/3 of all of the members elected to each House have determined it necessary to enact this measure.

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

**Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §4722, sub-§3**, as amended by PL 2021, c. 571, §10, is further amended to read:

**3. Satisfactory completion.** A secondary school student may earn a diploma if the student has satisfactorily completed all diploma requirements in accordance with the academic standards of the school administrative unit and this section. A school administrative unit shall award a high school diploma to a child with a disability, as defined in section 7001, subsection 1-B, who satisfies the local diploma requirements in the manner specified by the child's individualized education plan. Career and technical students may satisfy the requirements of subsection 2 through separate or integrated study within the career and technical school curriculum, including through courses provided pursuant to section 8402 or 8451-A, on the approval of the commissioner and the local school board or in accordance with an equivalency agreement pursuant to section 8404, subsection 3, paragraph B or section 8457, subsection 2.

**Sec. 2. 20-A MRSA §8404, sub-§3, ¶B**, as amended by PL 2011, c. 679, §15, is further amended to read:

B. Shall develop a cooperative agreement delineating the duties and powers of the advisory committee. A cooperative agreement or any amendment to the agreement must be ratified by the school board of each unit or affiliated unit served by the center. A cooperative agreement must be reviewed annually by the advisory committee and submitted by the center and its affiliated units to the commissioner. Beginning with the school year starting after June 30, 2025, the cooperative agreement must include an

equivalency agreement for credit gained through a career and technical education program to be accepted as a core credit toward a high school diploma for each of the school administrative units governing or affiliated with the center; and

**Sec. 3. 20-A MRSA §8457, sub-§2**, as amended by PL 1991, c. 518, §25, is further amended to read:

**2. Cooperative agreement.** The cooperative board shall adopt a cooperative agreement incorporating at a minimum each of the items listed under section 8452, subsection 1. The cooperative board, with the superintendents' advisory committee, shall annually review the cooperative agreement. The cooperative board may amend the agreement, subject to approval by a majority of the school boards of the units served by the region. A copy of the cooperative agreement and any amendments to the agreement must be filed with the commissioner. Beginning with the school year starting after June 30, 2025, the cooperative agreement must include an equivalency agreement for credit gained through a career and technical education program to be accepted as core credit toward a high school diploma for each of the school administrative units located in the region.

# **MEPRI FY23 Study Highlights: Career & Technical Education**

**October 18, 2023**

**MEPRI presentation to Comprehensive  
CTE System task force**

**Amy Johnson, Co-Director  
Jennifer Chace**

# Overview

Two reports in FY23 involving CTE with highlights culled from both shared today.

1. School Counselors: Sending school perspectives & perceptions of student perspectives.
2. CTE Directors: CTE perspectives & perceptions of student needs, inc'l graduation credit challenges.

# Study 1 Findings - Access to CTE

- Participation levels vary widely (5% to 70%, median 20%)
- Perceived “about right” by nearly half; 20% said too low for all
- Participation seen as too low for college-bound students and female students

Almost all said CTE students could access early college credit (Bridge, MCSS Pathways)

# Study 1 Findings - CTE Enrollment Factors

## Motivations:

- Hands-on, applied learning (98%)
- Interest in the career area (97%)
- Escape to something different (76%)

## Biggest barriers to CTE (top ratings):

- Limited seats in preferred programs (79%)
- CTE schedule conflicts with preferred academic courses (64%)

Questions?

# Study 2: Graduation Credit Granting Policies

What challenges do CTE students face in earning core academic (graduation) credits?

## 1. Scan of challenges and emerging strategies

- CTE director survey: *80% response rate*
- Selected interviews: 3 administrators, 4 school counselors, and 2 CTE content liaison teachers

## 2. Closer look at four selected high schools

- Cross case analysis

## Study 2 Key Survey Findings: Challenges

- Challenges prevent initial CTE enrollment.
- 5% to 33% of CTE students are challenged to earn the academic credits they need to graduate.

### Key challenges include:

- Scheduling misalignment,
- Relevance and rigor of high school English and math courses, and
- Lack of math credit recovery options.



## Study 2 Key Combined Findings: Strategies

- 60% of CTEs said their sending high schools award academic credit to at least some students for work done in CTE programs.
  - *Integrated, embedded, and newly-created options*
- 20% of CTEs said they offer discrete core academic classes on site at the CTE.
- Academic credit for course work in CTE programs is generally granted “as needed.”

# Study 2 Key findings: Selected Schools

## Sending school approaches:

- Adopt an existing crosswalk wholesale.
- Create a new crosswalk program specific to the school and CTE.

## Successful crosswalks need:

- Agreement between school and CTE,
- Dedicated, well-qualified staff with time to build and/or update the program,
- Strong support from school leadership,
- Cultural buy-in from high school teachers, and
- Student awareness campaigns.

## Study 2 – Alternate strategies

In addition to sending high schools granting core academic credits for work done in CTE programs:

- *Offer core academics at more CTEs.*
- *Leverage early college courses beyond elective credits at more CTEs.*
- *Adopt a technical high school model.*

## Questions?

**Amy Johnson**

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