

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

An Act To Enhance Career and Technical Education

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 2009, c. 313, §17, is further amended to read:

3. Satisfactory completion. A diploma may be awarded to secondary school students who have satisfactorily completed all diploma requirements in accordance with the academic standards of the school administrative unit and this chapter. All secondary school students must achieve the content standards of the parameters for essential instruction and graduation requirements established pursuant to section 6209. Children with disabilities, as defined in section 7001, subsection 1-B, who successfully meet the content standards of the parameters for essential instruction and graduation requirements in addition to any other diploma requirements applicable to all secondary school students, as specified by the goals and objectives of their individualized education plans, may be awarded a high school diploma. Career and technical students may, with the approval of the commissioner, satisfy the ~~2nd-year math and science,~~ requirements of subsection 2 ~~the 2nd-year social studies and the fine arts 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.

Students who experience education disruption, as defined in section 5001-A, subsection 4, paragraph F, who successfully demonstrate achievement of the content standards of the parameters for essential instruction and graduation requirements in addition to any other diploma requirements applicable to secondary school students as set forth in their school work recognition plans as defined in section 5161, subsection 6 must, with the approval of the commissioner, be awarded a Department of Education diploma as defined in section 5161, subsection 2.

Sec. 2. 20-A MRSA §4801, sub-§2-A, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 617, §1, is amended to read:

2-A. Regional school calendars; plan; rules. ~~Each~~To be eligible for state subsidy, each school administrative unit and private school approved for tuition purposes shall work with affiliated units, as defined in section 8301-A, subsection 1, in its career and technical education center or school administrative units in its career and technical education region to develop and approve a regional school calendar that aligns the school calendars of sending schools with the school calendars of career and technical education programs in the region. The plan for a regional school calendar must meet the following requirements.

A. There may not be more than ~~9 dissimilar instructional days within each regional~~5 instructional days on which one or more of the school calendars of the school administrative units affiliated with a career and technical education center or one or more of the school calendars of the school administrative units within a career and technical education region are not aligned with the regional school calendar.

B. When career and technical education centers or regions overlap, there must be common calendars for each of the schools in those overlapping areas.

C. The authority for approving the regional school calendar must be within the school boards of the local school administrative units.

~~D. Regional school calendars may have provisions for waivers of the number of dissimilar days for extenuating circumstances.~~

E. Plans for regional school calendars that comply with this subsection must be approved and implemented in time for the ~~2005-2006~~2012-2013 school year.

F. All career and technical education students must be given access to career and technical education programs for the entire instructional time required for those programs by department rules.

The commissioner shall adopt rules to establish requirements for regional school calendars. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are major substantive rules pursuant to Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

Sec. 3. 20-A MRSA §8402, as amended by PL 2007, c. 667, §12, is further amended to read:

§ 8402. Programs

A center shall provide programs of career and technical education. Programs of career and technical education are eligible to receive state subsidy pursuant to chapters 606-B and 609. All programs of career and technical education offered by a center must be approved by the commissioner pursuant to section 8306-A. The programs must offer a sequence of courses that are directly related to the preparation of individuals for employment in current or emerging occupations and may include training and education in academic and business skills preparing students to further their education at the community college or other college level or allowing students to use trade and occupational skills on other than an employee basis. Programs of career and technical education may also include alternative education programs and training and education in music, athletics, art and other activities approved by the commissioner pursuant to section 8306-A. A center may also provide courses described in section 4722, subsection 2, the successful completion of which satisfies the diploma requirements set forth in section 4722.

Sec. 4. 20-A MRSA §8451-A, as amended by PL 2007, c. 667, §13, is further amended to read:

§ 8451-A. Programs

A region shall provide programs of career and technical education. Programs of career and technical education are eligible to receive state subsidy pursuant to chapters 606-B and 609. All programs of career and technical education offered by a region must be approved by the commissioner pursuant to section 8306-A. The programs must offer a sequence of courses that are directly related to the preparation of individuals for employment in current or emerging occupations and may include training and education in academic and business skills preparing students to further their education at the community college or college level or allowing students to use trade and occupational skills on other than an employee basis. Programs of career and technical education may also include alternative education programs and training

and education in music, athletics, art and other activities approved by the commissioner pursuant to section 8306-A. A center may also provide courses described in section 4722, subsection 2, the successful completion of which satisfies the diploma requirements set forth in section 4722.

Sec. 5. 20-A MRSA §12709, sub-§11-A is enacted to read:

11-A. Memorandum of understanding with career and technical education system. To enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Education that establishes a process by which the Maine Community College System will review programs of the career and technical education centers and career and technical education regions established in chapter 313 that are using national industry or state certification standards to determine the nature and amount of college credit that must be awarded upon successful completion of an approved secondary school program. College credits must be awarded upon completion of a program directly to the student regardless of whether the student has matriculated in the college awarding the credit. The awarding of college credits to a secondary career and technical education student does not entitle the student to acceptance into the community college awarding the credits.

SUMMARY

This bill increases opportunities for students in career and technical education programs by ensuring greater coordination of school calendars, requiring that students have access to career and technical education programming for the entire required instructional time and ensuring that the students get credit in their high school programs for academic competencies gained through separate or integrated courses in the career and technical education programs.

The bill also directs the President of the Maine Community College System to establish a process for determining the nature and amount of college credit that may be awarded to a student upon completion of a career and technical education program that uses national industry or state certification standards. The process will be set forth in a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Education and will not supersede any existing agreements between secondary career and technical education programs and individual colleges within the system.