

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 Amend the Laws Governing Education Standards in Maine

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

Sec. 1. 20-A MRS §6209, first ¶, as amended by PL 2015, c. 40, §5, is further amended to read:

The department in consultation with the state board shall establish and implement a comprehensive, statewide system of learning results, ~~which may include a core of standards in English language arts and mathematics for kindergarten to grade 12 established in common with the other states, as set forth in this section and in department rules implementing this section and other curricular requirements.~~ The department must establish accountability standards at all grade levels in the areas of mathematics; reading; social studies; and science and technology. The department shall establish parameters for essential instruction and graduation requirements in English language arts; mathematics; science and technology; social studies; career and education development; visual and performing arts; health, physical education and wellness; and world languages. Only students in a public school, a public charter school as defined in section 2401, subsection 9 or a private school approved for tuition that enrolls at least 60% publicly funded students, as determined by the previous school year's October and April average enrollment, are required to participate in the system of learning results set forth in this section and in department rules implementing this section and other curricular requirements. The commissioner shall develop accommodation provisions for instances where course content conflicts with sincerely held religious beliefs and practices of a student's parent or guardian. The system must be adapted to accommodate children with disabilities as defined in section 7001, subsection 1-B.

Sec. 2. Revocation of the Common Core State Standards Initiative standards. The content standards of the system of learning results for English language arts and mathematics that were formulated to align with the Common Core State Standards Initiative standards pursuant to Public Law 2009, chapter 647 are void at the end of the 2016-2017 school year.

Sec. 3. Local option during transition from Common Core State Standards Initiative standards. Notwithstanding the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 6209, for the 2016-2017 school year, as an alternative to the core of standards in English language arts and mathematics for kindergarten to grade 12 established in common with the other states pursuant to Title 20-A, section 6209, a school administrative unit may elect to administer the statewide system of learning results standards that were in effect prior to April 12, 2010.

Sec. 4. New content standards; development; rulemaking. By November 1, 2016, the Department of Education, with input from a stakeholder group established in accordance with this section, shall develop new statewide content standards for kindergarten to grade 12 in English language arts and mathematics for use beginning with the 2017-2018 school year that are distinct and independent from the standards previously adopted by the department pursuant to Public Law 2009, chapter 647.

1. Stakeholder group. The Commissioner of Education shall establish a stakeholder group pursuant to this section consisting of the following members:

- A. The Commissioner of Education or the commissioner's designee;
- B. Five members who are teachers, including one elementary school teacher, one secondary school teacher, one special education teacher, one English language arts teacher and one mathematics teacher, chosen by the Commissioner of Education from a list submitted by the Maine Education Association;
- C. Two members who are school board members chosen by the Commissioner of Education from a list submitted by the Maine School Boards Association;
- D. Two members who are school administrative unit superintendents chosen by the Commissioner of Education from a list submitted by the Maine School Superintendents Association;
- E. Two members who are school principals, including one who is an elementary school principal and one who is a secondary school principal, chosen by the Commissioner of Education from a list submitted by the Maine Principals' Association;
- F. Two members of the State Board of Education chosen by the Commissioner of Education from a list submitted by the State Board of Education;
- G. One member who is a faculty member of the University of Maine System chosen by the Commissioner of Education from a list submitted by the Chancellor of the University of Maine System;
- H. One member who is a faculty member of the Maine Community College System chosen by the Commissioner of Education from a list submitted by the President of the Maine Community College System; and
- I. Two parents of children in kindergarten to grade 12 chosen by the Commissioner of Education through a public process.

At least 25% of the members of the stakeholder group must come from counties with a population less than 100,000 people.

Sec. 5. New content standards rulemaking. By January 2, 2017, the Commissioner of Education shall provisionally adopt and submit to the Legislature for review major substantive rules as defined in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A establishing new statewide content standards for kindergarten to grade 12 in English language arts and mathematics for use beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, that are distinct and independent from the standards previously adopted by the department pursuant to Public Law 2009, chapter 647.

Sec. 6. Assessments. By July 31, 2017, the Commissioner of Education shall develop and adopt by rule assessments for elementary and secondary schools in English language arts and mathematics that are aligned with the new statewide content standards for use beginning with the 2017-2018 school year. Notwithstanding the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 6211, rules adopted pursuant to this section are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

Sec. 7. Effective date. That section of this Act that amends the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 6209, first paragraph takes effect June 30, 2017.

SUMMARY

This bill removes the Common Core State Standards Initiative standards from the system of learning results at the end of the 2016-2017 school year. For the 2016-2017 school year, as an alternative to the core of standards in English language arts and mathematics for kindergarten to grade 12 established in common with the other states, the bill allows a school administrative unit to administer the statewide system of learning results standards that were in effect prior to April 12, 2010. It requires the Department of Education, with input from a stakeholder group, to develop new statewide content standards for use beginning with the 2017-2018 school year and to submit provisionally adopted major substantive rules to the Legislature by January 2, 2017. It requires the Department of Education to develop and adopt assessments for elementary and secondary schools in English language arts and mathematics that are aligned with the new content standards for use beginning with the 2017-2018 school year. The bill also requires the Department of Education to establish accountability standards at all grade levels in the area of social studies.