

STATE OF MAINE

 IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD

TWO THOUSAND NINETEEN

 H.P. 740 - L.D. 985

**An Act To Maintain High School Diploma Standards by Repealing
Proficiency-based Diploma Standards and Adding the Equivalent in
Standards Achievement**

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

Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §4722, as amended by PL 2017, c. 466, §§8 and 9, is further amended to read:

§4722. High school diploma standards

~~A secondary school shall provide a comprehensive program of instruction leading to a high school diploma as set out in section 4721. The commissioner shall develop rules for the transition between the requirements of this section and the parameters for essential instruction and graduation requirements established under section 6209.~~

1. Minimum instructional requirements. ~~A comprehensive program of instruction~~ The instructional requirements leading to a high school diploma must include a minimum 4-year program that meets the ~~curriculum~~ requirements established by this ~~chapter~~ section and any other instructional requirements established by the commissioner and the school board.

2. Required subjects. ~~Courses~~ Instruction in the following subjects ~~shall~~ must be provided in separate or integrated study programs ~~to all, and~~ students and required must complete the following minimum requirements for a high school diploma:

- A. English--4 years or the equivalent in standards achievement;
- B. Social studies and history, including American history, government, civics and personal finance--2 years or the equivalent in standards achievement;
- C. Mathematics--2 years or the equivalent in standards achievement;
- D. Science, including at least one year of laboratory study--2 years or the equivalent in standards achievement; and

E. Fine arts, which may include art, music, forensics or drama--one year or the equivalent in standards achievement.

2-A. Implementation of multiple pathways and opportunities. Students may demonstrate achievement of the standards through multiple pathways ~~as set out under~~ including those identified in section 4703 and multiple opportunities. Achievement may be demonstrated by evidence documented by course and learning experiences using multiple measures, such as, but not limited to, examinations, quizzes, portfolios, performances, exhibitions, projects and community service.

2-B. Policy. The following are the fundamental policies in the State's high school diploma standards:

A. To ensure that a diploma indicating graduation from a secondary school signifies that the graduate has completed the requirements described in this section and is ready to enter a postsecondary educational program or a career as a clear and effective communicator, a self-directed and lifelong learner, a creative and practical problem solver, a responsible and involved citizen and an informed and integrative thinker;

B. To recognize that in order to help students to reach the goal described in paragraph A, school administrative units must align their instruction with the system of learning results established under section 6209; and

C. To encourage school administrative units to develop innovative multiple pathways that allow all students to learn and demonstrate their achievement through multiple means and measures pursuant to subsection 2-A.

3. Satisfactory completion. A diploma may be awarded to ~~a secondary school students~~ student who have ~~has~~ satisfactorily completed all diploma requirements in accordance with the academic standards of the school administrative unit and this ~~chapter section.~~ All secondary school students must achieve the content standards of the parameters for essential instruction and graduation requirements established pursuant to section 6209. ~~Children~~ A child with disabilities a disability, as defined in section 7001, subsection 1-B, who ~~successfully meet the content standards of the parameters for essential instruction and graduation~~ satisfies the local diploma requirements in addition to any other diploma requirements applicable to all secondary school students, as the manner specified by the goals and objectives of their the child's individualized education plans, may plan must be awarded a high school diploma. Career and technical students may, consistent with the approval of the commissioner and the local school board, 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.

4. Exception. A secondary school student who has satisfactorily completed the freshman year in an accredited degree-granting institution of higher education or a secondary school student who has satisfactorily completed the junior and senior years in a dual enrollment career and technical education program formed pursuant to chapter 229 may be eligible to receive a high school diploma from the secondary school the student last attended, although the student may not meet the graduation requirements of this Title.

5. Advanced study. Nothing in this chapter may prevent the award of a diploma to a student who has completed all diploma requirements in fewer than 4 years of study.

6. Exception for certain veterans. A secondary school may award a high school diploma to a person who meets all of the following requirements. A diploma may be awarded posthumously.

- A. The person or the person's family must apply to the secondary school for the diploma.
- B. The person must either:
 - (1) Have attended the secondary school or attended a secondary school in the geographic area now served by the secondary school; or
 - (2) Currently reside in the geographic area served by the secondary school.
- C. The person must have left secondary school:
 - (1) Before or during World War II to serve in the Armed Forces during World War II;
 - (2) Before or during the Korean Conflict to serve in the Armed Forces in the Korean Conflict;
 - (3) Before or during the Vietnam War to serve in the Armed Forces during the Vietnam War era. For purposes of this subparagraph, "Vietnam War era" means the period beginning February 28, 1961 and ending May 7, 1975; or
 - (4) To serve in the Armed Forces during the period of wartime or peacetime after a period of wartime described in subparagraph (1), (2) or (3).
- D. The person did not graduate or receive a high school diploma because of service in the Armed Forces.
- E. The person received an honorable discharge or a certificate of honorable service from the Armed Forces.

For purposes of this subsection, "Armed Forces" means the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps or Coast Guard; and the Merchant Marines only for the period of December 7, 1941 to August 16, 1945.

7. Applicability of requirements. This section applies to the granting of diplomas to secondary school students beginning January 1, 2019.

Sec. 2. 20-A MRSA §4722-A, as amended by PL 2017, c. 466, §10, is repealed.