



School Administrative Units (SAUs) award diplomas. The Maine Department of Education's role is to ensure that SAUs base the awarding of a diploma on student proficiency for students graduating after January 1, 2018. The following Proficiency-Based Diploma Extension application is intended to provide the Department and the school administrative unit with evidence of a good fit between the district's current progress and their extension request.

Directions for submitting an extension application

1. Complete the document and provide evidence to support the responses. Our intent is to keep the process streamlined and reasonable and have therefore set word limits of 1000 words for each section in the application and request that districts submit a total of no more than 25 pages of evidence.
2. Convert the extension application document and all pages of evidence to a PDF format and fax your complete application to Diana Doiron at the following fax number: 1-877-227-9838.

Note: Extension applications that are incomplete or lack sufficient evidence will receive feedback requesting additional information. Our plan is to process all submissions within a month of the submittal window. This plan is dependent on the number of submissions received per submittal deadline.

Proficiency-Based Diploma Extension Option 3

At the time of the extension application the SAU will:

- Provide evidence of the proficiency based system in place at the middle school or K-8 level as evidence of the SAU's preparedness to expand the proficiency-based system into the secondary level and its preparedness to award diplomas based on proficiency in the standards of the eight content areas and standards of the Guiding Principles after July 1, 2020.
- Provide a description of the overall plan to meet the goal of awarding of diplomas based on proficiency in the standards of the eight content areas and the standards of the Guiding Principles. The description should include benchmarks for the 2014-2015 school year and each year for which the extension is requested.
- Include a budget for the use of all existing targeted proficiency-based diploma transition funds during 2014-2015 and any 2013-2014 funds that were carried over to support the implementation of proficiency-based diplomas

LIMIT RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS TO 1000 WORDS PER QUESTION AND LIMIT TOTAL ATTACHED EVIDENCE TO 25 PAGES

Submittal Window

1. Indicate the submitting date.

August 18, 2014, 5 pm September 17, 2014, 5 pm October 18, 2014, 5 pm

Superintendents Region

2. Indicate the superintendent region in which your SAU is a member.

Aroostook	
Cumberland	
Hancock	X
Kennebec Valley	
Midcoast	
Penquis	
Washington	
Western Maine	

York	
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3. **School Administrative Unit: RSU 25**
4. **High School(s): Bucksport High School**
5. **Name and title of person completing the extension request:**
Jim Boothby, Superintendent
Evelyn Beaulieu, Director of Curriculum
Dan Clifford, High School Principal
Josh Tripp, Middle School Principal
Christina Ellis, Miles Lane School Principal
Susan Lamoreau, Jewett School Principal & Director of Special Services
6. **Superintendent's name, address, phone number and email:**
Jim Boothby, Superintendent
62 Mechanic Street, Bucksport, Maine 04416
469-7311
Jim.boothby@rsu25.org

Evidence of Preparedness

7. **Describe the proficiency-based system in place at the middle school or K-8 level as evidence of the SAUs preparedness to expand the proficiency-based system into the secondary level and its preparedness to award diplomas based on proficiency in the standards of the eight content areas and the standards of the Guiding Principles after July 1, 2020. Limit your description to 1000 words (approximately 2 pages single spaced or four pages double spaced) and attach evidence to support your description referencing the name of the document(s) and specific page(s) .**

Criteria:

- **Clear description of the proficiency-based education work completed to date**
- **Clear connection between evidence and the work done**
- **Clear description of the impact the proficiency-based work is having on students, staff and community**
- **Clear alignment to extension Option 3**

Beginning in January of 2010, RSU 25 began its journey towards establishing a proficiency-based educational program for the schools of RSU 25. The foundation of this journey can be found in the RSU 25 Strategic Plan which was built on the work of the Future Search activity undertaken inclusive of administrators, teachers, staff, parents, students, town fathers and community members, from all four partner communities. From the direction of the Strategic Plan the district began the work of reviewing our curriculum alignment to the Maine Learning Results and vertically aligning

the curriculums within the district. Extended from the alignment work was the development and implementation of a K-12 district assessment plan and the on ongoing development of common assessments and scoring rubrics.

This work has been supported through the use of:

- Professional Learning Communities (PLC) which meet every Friday from 1:45 – 3PM. The PLC structure has been supported by the school board and built into our calendar since the 2011-2012 school year.
- Aligned with the implementation of the PLC work is our continuing contract with Great Schools Partnership and the use of a school coach (Dr. Craig Kesselhiem) to work with each of the buildings to provide training to the staff and coaching for the leadership (2010-2011). This work originally began at the high school level and is now integrated into each of the buildings and levels within the district.

- RSU 25 is a member of the Maine Cohort for Customized Learning and as an active member of this organization we have participated in numerous trainings to support the transition to proficiency based education for both our teachers and school leaders.
- RSU 25 schools have sent numerous teams to multiple sites to observe proficiency based learning. We have sent teams from all levels of our system and have used those experiences to add depth to our conversations and to bring together theory and practice.
- Bucksport High School has been the host to more than a half dozen school visitation to observe our proficiency based education transition efforts. These experiences have helped us be more reflective and have been a tool to help refine our practice.
- RSU 25 has worked with partner schools from the Penobscot Region Educational Partnership to provide training to both staff and administration on topics directly related to proficiency based instruction.

The transition work to proficiency based programming began in the high school, specifically with the ninth grade team in 2011-2012. The work of the ninth grade team focused on establishing the learning targets for each of the courses offered to ninth grade students and has extended each year to the remaining grade levels in the high school. The work of the high school included the establishment of common scoring and reporting practices for each grade level and eventually the entire school. The current practice has evolved so all courses taught at Bucksport High School have a common syllabus template and common scoring practices. Students' grades will be derived from formative assessments and summative assessments. Formative Assessments will represent 20% of the academic grade and summative assessments will represent 80% of the academic grade.

A significant change in the historical grading practice was the removal of student behavior from the academic performance report. A school wide rubric was developed to evaluate each student's work ethic and conduct. This reporting mechanism is used continually to provide feedback and stimulate dialogue between the students and the faculty. Every two weeks students self-evaluate their code of conduct performance and meet with the teacher to receive feedback and discuss the student's self-evaluation relative to the teacher's evaluation. This code of conduct score, once established through the process is included in the electronic gradebook available to the student, parent and teacher. The student receives both an academic grade as well as a guiding principle code of conduct/work ethic grade for each course. Both scores are recorded in the Infinite Campus software.

While the initial proficiency based work started at the high school, similar work has been on going at both the K-4 and the 5-8 levels of the district. In addition to the curriculum alignment work and the assessment work significant professional development has been delivered to support the teaching and learning process in a manner that best meets the needs of the learners. Both professional practices and structures have changed that now allows for the employment of flex grouping in K-4 both inter- and intra- grade level.

For the first time, parents and students are now provided grade level brochures that publish the ELA and math learning targets, aligned to district standards, expected for each grade level (K-4). This public document provides students, parents and community members a road map of expected learning for each child as they move forward to meet the standards established for graduation. These brochures provide similar information to the course syllabi published at the high school, which have also been developed in a standard format for all courses and define the learning targets that will be taught in each course.

As a district we have seen a steady improvement in academic performance as measured by local assessments, NWEA, and State assessments. Three years ago our elementary and middle school were identified as CIPs schools and this past year both school were identified as high priority reward schools. The high school has seen an improvement in graduation rates, academic performance as measured by a reduction in students failing courses, a positive performance trend in student performance as measured by the SAT, and a reduction in discipline referrals. Strong support of the proficiency based work we are doing comes from the students themselves. Students identify the proficiency based classroom as more motivating and a better learning experience.

Our request to implement Option 3 will allow us time to:

- Complete our work identifying and finalizing our 9 – 12 graduation standards in all eight content areas. This work will be integrated with our promotion standards in grades K-8.
- Review and revise our board policies.

- Review and revise our high school transcript
- Refine our classroom practice
- Train staff and implement the use of software to track student progress
- Complete our work to integrate Maine Guiding Principles K-12

Overall Implementation Plan

- 8. Provide a description of the overall plan to meet the goal of awarding diplomas based on proficiency in the standards of the eight content areas and the standards of the Guiding Principles after July 1, 2020. The description should include benchmarks and metrics for the 2014-2015 school year and benchmarks for each year for which the extension is requested. Limit your description to 1000 words (approximately 2 pages single spaced or four pages double spaced) and attach evidence to support your description referencing the name of the document(s) and specific page(s).**

Criteria:

- Overall plan is aligned with the SAU shared vision focus areas
- Benchmarks for progress in 2014-2015 include activities/actions that will support the achievement of the benchmarks and metrics to measure them.
- Evidence included clearly supports the benchmarks

In keeping with the RSU 25 Strategic Plan to implement proficiency-based education, the following completed components of our system are identified in section 1 and the benchmarks for 2014 – 2015 to ensure a systemic implementation of proficiency-based education as identified in section 2.

Section 1:

Completed to date at the Jewett School and Miles Lane School Grades K-4

- Identified promotion standards for ELA and math
- Developed a common reporting system to be piloted 2014-2015
- Implemented flex grouping in grades K-4 and restructured classrooms to allow for inter and intra grade flex grouping
- Implemented common formative and summative assessments and rubrics in ELA and math grades K-4
- Implemented common unpacking standards process

Completed to date at Bucksport Middle School

- Identified promotion standards for ELA and math
- Implemented flex grouping for grades 5 & 6 in ELA and math
- Implemented intervention blocks grades 5-8

Completed to date at Bucksport High School for Grades 9 – 11

- Identified standards for each content class as documented in their syllabus.
- Identified common formative and summative assessments for same courses, different divisions.
- Common grading practices implemented
- Common unpacking standards process
- Student Code of Conduct
- Co-teaching special education and general education teachers in core content areas of ELA and math
- Intervention time for special education student support in achieving standards
- 2013 – 2014 Special education staff participated in MDOE Professional Development on Writing IEP goals
- Development of IEPs utilizing graduation standards
- Intervention Block 9 for all students available for support in achieving standards
- Summer school is now based on standards recovery
- Staff awareness of their accountability of student progress in achieving standards
- Community is aware of impact of implementing proficiency - based education at the high school through Freshmen Night and Open House presentations by administration, newsletters, school board presentations, curriculum steering committee meetings, and community forums.

Section 2:

2014 – 2015 Benchmarks for RSU 25:

K – 4: Building on our identified learning targets, Grades K – 4 will:

- Pilot a common reporting format.
 - This will be measured by the use of the new reporting system for each of the three trimesters
 - The meeting notes maintained from the meetings (minimum three) the principal will have with the established parent advisory group
 - Parent information nights will be held three times throughout the year
- Training for staff on software to track student progress on learning targets
 - Completion of training activities
- Piloting student tracking data management system
 - Two staff members will be trained and will actively pilot software
- Continued training and support to accommodate and differentiate instruction for all students

- This ongoing goal will be measured by the participation of teachers in scheduled professional development activities
- Training and support to integrate Guiding Principles in our curriculum
 - Work in PLCs will focus on identifying structures to integrate and measure student learning of the guiding principals

5 – 8: Building on our identified standards for content areas, Grades 5 – 8 will:

- Identify core promotion standards
 - This will be measured by the drafting of promotion standards in all eight content standards
- Draft accompanying common assessments and rubrics
 - This will be measured by the evidence of the product and the piloting of the assessments

- Draft a common reporting format
 - This will be demonstrated by the development of a reporting system that is presented to the Curriculum Steering Committee and to the School Board

- Training for staff on software to track student progress on promotion/graduation standards
 - Completion of training activities

- Piloting student tracking data management system
 - Staff members will be trained and will actively pilot software

- Continued training and support to accommodate and differentiate instruction for all students
 - This ongoing goal will be measured by the participation of teacher in scheduled professional development activities

- Training and support to integrate Guiding Principles in our curriculum
 - Work in PLCs will focus on identifying structures to integrate and measure student learning of the guiding principles

9-12: Building on previous work Grades 9-12 will:

- Identify graduation standards for all eight content standards for all students

- This will be demonstrated by the creation of the product that will be than reviewed by the curriculum steering committee and the school board
- Review and revise as needed the high school transcript document
 - This will be demonstrated by the product that will be the outgrowth of the work currently underway with the high school principal, guidance department , and Dr. Kesselhiem of great Schools Partnership
- Identify common assessments to be used for courses with multiple sections
 - This will be measured by the evidence of the product and the piloting of the assessments
- Training for staff on software to track student progress on learning targets
 - Completion of training activities
- Piloting student tracking data management system
 - At least one staff member form each grade level will actively pilot software
- Continued training and support to accommodate and differentiate instruction for all students
 - This ongoing goal will be measured by the participation of teachers in scheduled professional development activities
- Training and support to integrate Guiding Principals in our curriculum
 - Work in PLCs will focus on identifying structures to integrate and measure student learning of the guiding principals

District

- Review and revise policies that will need change to reflect a proficiency based system
 - Schedule of policy committee meetings, board minutes, and revised policies

System of Supports for Student Learning

9. Describe the system of supports you have in place for middle school students when proficiency is not demonstrated. Describe your plan for growing the system of supports into the high school. Limit your description to 1000 words (approximately 2

pages single spaced or 4 pages double spaced) and attach evidence to support the description referencing the name of the document(s) and specific page(s).

Criteria:

- **Clear description of the practices/protocols for improving student performance and ensuring feedback is timely, specific to each student and delivered when and where it has the most benefit**
- **Clear description of practices for regular monitoring of student progress**
- **Clear description of equity of opportunity for support in any content area and Guiding Principle**

The following are the components of our proficiency-based education system that support our students when proficiency is not demonstrated. In addition to these specific activities, the high school uses infinite campus software and the grade book is viewable through the parent portal. Grades 5 - 12 teachers are also required to track the number of interactions they have with each student's parent(s) and report the contacts monthly to the principal.

Grade 9 team weekly meetings: The 9th grade team consists of the 9th grade teachers of English, science, math and social studies, special education building coordinator, two guidance counselors, school social worker and the high school principal. Teachers are responsible for 16-20 students and they track their progress throughout the year. Each 9th grader's academic and social performance is discussed in these meetings at least once a week. There is a google document that tracks each student and meeting throughout the year. Based on the conversations and the established protocols students are categorized into one of three levels: level 1, level 2, or level 3. Level 1 students are on track and are being successful. Teachers will continue the students' progress weekly. Level 2 students are students who need additional supports either academically or socially. Level 3 students are individuals who have received additional supports but are not responding to the intervention programs and will need additional services either from within the school structures and/or external interventions. (See Risk Review)

Grade 10 team weekly meetings: The 10th grade team consists of the 10th grade teachers of English, science, math and social studies, special education building coordinator, two guidance counselors, school social worker and the high school assistant principal. Teachers are responsible for 16-20 students and they track their progress throughout the year. Each 10th grader is discussed in these meetings at least once a week. There is a Google doc document that tracks each student and meeting throughout the year. Based on the conversations and the established protocols students are categorized into one of three levels: level 1, level 2, or level 3. Level 1 students are on track and are being successful. Level 2 students are students who need additional supports either academically or socially. Level 3 students are individuals who

have received additional supports but are not responding to the intervention programs and will need additional services either from within the school structures and/or external interventions. (See Risk Review)

9 – 12 RISK Review weekly meetings: The Risk Review Team is made up of two guidance counselors, school social worker, special education building coordinator, school resource officer, diversions program counselor assistant principal, principal. The team meets once a week for the entire school year. This team makes decisions on students that are passed on to them by the 9th or 10th grade teams or any other professional in the school. These students are “At Risk” students that may need intervention beyond the school walls. There is a Google document that tracks each student and meeting throughout the year as well as articulation agreements with outside agencies. Typically, the student has social emotional issues which are hampering their academic success.

5 – 8 RISK Review weekly meetings: Our Middle School just received national recognition that they will be named the first Middle School in the country to be named a BARR program that includes a Risk Review Team at the Grade 8 level during the 2015 – 2016 school year. This model is based on our 9 – 12 model described above.

Student Intervention Block:

Grades 9 – 12: A tutorial intervention for 9th-12th grade students that takes place after school from 2:30pm-4:00pm. The 9th graders have a dedicated teacher and a quiet place to work. Grades 10-12 are in a separate classroom with a different teacher. With parent permission teachers can assign a student to Period 9 at any time if they need extra time. Once a student has period 9 assigned, the time is treated the same as any academic period in terms of student responsibility and accountability.

Grades 5 – 8: A promotions standards tutorial intervention block for students takes place during our school day and instruction is provided by content area teachers.

Grades 1 – 4: A promotion standards tutorial intervention block for students takes place during our school day and our revised schedule provides instruction each day for math and ELA for students not meeting proficiency.

Standards Recovery Support: 9 – 12: A tutorial intervention program that students may access either voluntarily or by referral. This support is available throughout the course of the day and is available for students when they have a study hall or after school. The support in this program is specific to standards recovery and the work needed to prepare students to demonstrate proficiency.

Summer School: Held in late June and July for standards recovery. Students attend summer school if they have not completed all assessments to earn class credit and/or demonstrate

proficiency on the standards within the class. The focus of the work for the students is on gaining the knowledge and practice needed to demonstrate proficiency as measured by the summative assessment. The duration of summer school is not regulated by seat time but rather the time necessary for a student to demonstrate proficiency of the standards they need to complete the course.

Proficiency-Based Diploma Transition Funds

10. Identify the approximate percentage of the 2013-2014 proficiency-based transition funds and how these were applied to proficiency-based education expenditures in the following areas:

- **Policy:**
- **Practice:**
- **Community Engagement :**
- **One-year Carry Over: 100%**

11. Provide a description of the intended impact for your transition funds. Attach a budget for the 2014-2015 transition funds and any 2013-2014 transition funds that were carried over after June 30, 2014. For each expense, identify the amount and date by which it will be expended. Limit your description to 1000 words (approximately 2 pages single spaced or 4 pages double spaced). Attach a budget document and limit the budget document to 2 pages.

Criteria:

- **Clear description of intended impact for your use of transition funds**
- **Budget aligns to intended impact**

In the 2014-2015 school year, RSU 25 will use the transition funds to provide the support and structures needed to continue our transition to a proficiency based system. Our work plan identifies the areas of focus to be time for teachers to complete their work identifying the graduation and promotion standards in all eight content areas. This work is planned for workshop days, and early release days. The focus of the transition funds is to complete and connect our work K-12. The monies will be used for:

- 1. Teacher training in the delivery of proficiency based education**
 - a. will include continued site visits for the teacher who have not participated in previous site visits **\$1000** (travel and substitute cost)
 - b. will include training for our math teachers in specific delivery of math content in a proficiency based classroom **\$ 5,000** (outside contracted trainer, substitutes, & supplies as needed)

- c. will include training for teachers in delivery of science content in a proficiency based classroom \$1,000 (internal trainer, substitutes, & supplies as needed)
- d. will include Complex Reasoning Training \$3,000 (outside contracted trainer, substitutes, travel & supplies as needed)
- e. will include training for teachers in the delivery of ELA content in a proficiency based classroom \$2,000 (outside contracted trainer, substitutes, travel & supplies as needed)

2. Collection and reporting of student performance data relative to proficiency acquisition

- a. Will include training for pilot teachers in the Educate software to collect and report on student performance relative to the standards \$1,000 (outside contracted trainer, substitutes, & travel)
- b. Will include the cost of hosting Educate software for one year as we train and pilot the data collect system \$3,000 (annual fee)

3. Professional development opportunities for leadership associated with Maine Cohort for Customized Learning

- a. Will include travel to monthly meetings and conference \$3,000 (conference fee and travel)

4. Communication with parents and the community

- a. Will include multiple opportunities to meet with parents to communicate, educate, and answer questions regarding proficiency based education \$4,585 (cost for communication and supplies for informational meetings and mailings)

FY 14 allocation: \$11,828.00

FY 15 allocation: \$11,757.00

Total allocation: \$23,585.00

Total Projected Costs: \$23,585.00

Option 3 Authorization Page

Annually the SAU will provide evidence of progress and will submit an extension renewal request to the Maine DOE by July 1. This request will include:

- evidence of progress toward the identified annual benchmarks;
- goals and benchmarks for continued progress over the next school year toward the awarding of diplomas based on proficiency of the standards of the eight content areas and the standards of the Guiding Principles; and
- a budget for use of additional proficiency-based diploma transition funds.

We certify that the information contained in the extension application accurately reflects the current status of our implementation of proficiency-based diplomas.

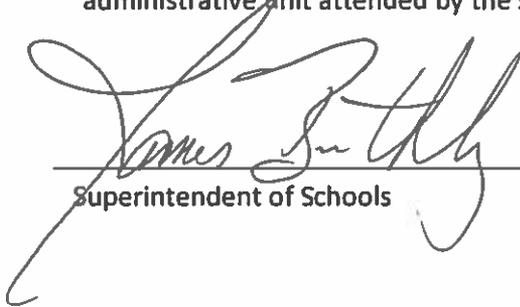
We certify that the criteria for awarding a diploma beginning after July 1, 2020 will be the following criteria from Maine Revised Statutes 20-A §4722-A:

A. Demonstrate that the student engaged in educational experiences relating to English language arts, mathematics and science and technology in each year of the student's secondary schooling;

B. Demonstrate proficiency in meeting state standards in all content areas of the system of learning results established under section 6209;

C. Demonstrate proficiency in each of the Guiding Principles set forth in department rules governing implementation of the system of learning results established pursuant to section 6209; and

D. Meet any other requirements specified by the governing body of the school administrative unit attended by the student.



Superintendent of Schools

1/20/15
Date



Chair of School Board

1-20-15
Date