

Subject: Minimum Standards for School Approval - Definitions  
 (with respect to changes related to competency education)

School Approval Standards:  
 Ed 306.02  
 (a),(c),(d),(e),(g),(j),(l),and(r)

## I. Ed 306.02 (a), (c), (d), (e), (g), (j), (l), (r), Definitions.

### II. Introduction:

The 2014 School Approval Standards address the change that must take place from a traditional classroom-only educational system, to a transformed educational system that includes competency-based learning environments and multiple pathways to graduation, resulting in students that are truly college and career ready.

This technical advisory for the Minimum Standards for School Approval, to take effect on August 1, 2014, is issued in order to provide support to school boards, districts, schools, educators, and communities as they work to build learning communities that engage learners and support depth of knowledge.

The department comments below address the changes in the 2014 Minimum Standards for School Approval relative definitions that relate to competency education.

### III. Department Comments:

#### Ed 306.02 (a), (c), (d), (e), (g), (j), (l), (r), Definitions

Ed 306.02 Definitions. Except where the context makes another meaning manifest, the following words have the meanings indicated when used in this chapter:

#### Ed 306.02 (a)

(a) "Acknowledgement of achievement" means when a student has demonstrated achievement of district competencies and or graduation competencies consistent with RSA 193-C:3;

#### Department Comment

*Definition of "District Competencies is outlined in (g) below; definition of "Graduation Competencies is outlined in (j) below.*

#### Ed 306.02 (c)

(c) "College and career readiness" means alignment with the knowledge, skills, and work-study practices students will need to enter and succeed in postsecondary opportunities – whether college or career;

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**Department Comment**

*Definition of “work-study practices” is outlined in (r), below. These are also sometimes referred to in national literature as “habits of engaged learners.” The term work-study practices is established in NH Statute.*

**Ed 306.02 (d)**

(d) “Competencies” means student learning targets that represent key content-specific concepts, skills, and knowledge applied within or across content domains. Specific and required types of competencies include district competencies and graduation competencies;

**Department Comment**

*Definition of “District Competencies” is outlined in (g) below; definition of “Graduation Competencies” is outlined in (j) below. They are benchmarks that guide the school’s determination that students are demonstrating proficiency of learning and preparing for college and career readiness. District competencies inform the progression of curriculum K-12 and result in a continuum of learning expectations leading up to graduation. Graduation competencies are those needed for a student to be college and career ready, which includes core academic course competencies and associated knowledge, skills, and work-study practices. Both District Competencies and Graduation Competencies are locally-determined competencies, although a district may decide to include or adopt the statewide competencies developed by the NHDOE for performance assessment as part of their Graduation Competencies.*

**Ed 306.02 (e)**

(e) “Credit” means the record keeping structure that is awarded to a student who demonstrated achievement of graduation competencies organized around the specific credit;

**Department Comment**

*Previously, a student was described as achieving “mastery” of the competencies. This wording has been changed to “demonstrated achievement of graduation competencies” to emphasize the Department’s commitment to local decisions regarding what constitutes proficiency in competency attainment. While we have published a Competency Validation Rubric to help guide districts in requiring more rigorous levels of depth of Knowledge in student competency attainment, this remains a local decision.*

**Ed 306.02 (g)**

(g) “District competencies” mean specific types of competencies that are common across the

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district and organized in developmental progressions that lead to achievement of graduation competencies;

**Department Comment**

*District competencies inform the progression of curriculum K-12 and result in a continuum of learning expectations leading up to graduation. Both District Competencies and Graduation Competencies are locally-determined competencies, although a district may decide to include or adopt the statewide competencies developed by the NHDOE for performance assessment. .*

**Ed 306.02 (j)**

(j) "Graduation competencies" means specific types of competencies that are common across the district and define learning expectations for each student for graduation from high school;

**Department Comment**

*Graduation competencies are those needed for a student to be college and career ready, which includes core academic course competencies and knowledge, skills, and work-study practices. Both District Competencies and Graduation Competencies are locally-determined competencies, although a district may decide to include or adopt the statewide competencies developed by the NHDOE for performance assessment. While it is possible, and is a local decision, it is not likely for a student to be able to "test out" of graduation competencies because of the complex, deep, and integrated demonstration over time required to demonstrate achievement. Districts may want to write local policy describing the "over time" aspect of achieving graduation competencies in order to be prepared for this type of question from parents and students.*

**Ed 306.02 (k)**

(k) "Instructional time" means the period of time during which pupils are actively working toward achieving educational objectives under the supervision of an educator or other staff member;

**Department Comment**

*Instructional time is determined locally.*

**Ed 306.02 (l)**

(l) "Mastery" means a high level of demonstrated proficiency with regard to a competency;

**Department Comment**

*The term "mastery", meaning "a high level of demonstrated proficiency with regard to a competency" has implications for the local grading system, especially if credit is being awarded*

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*for less than mastery. If a student is deemed proficient it is assumed that the student has demonstrated mastery across the continuum of district competencies with the content/curricular areas.*

**Ed 306.02 (r)**

(r) "Work study practices" means those behaviors that enhance learning achievement and promote a positive work ethic such as, but not limited to, listening and following directions, accepting responsibility, staying on task, completing work accurately, managing time wisely, showing initiative, and being cooperative.

**Department Comment**

*A work group made up of more than 40 NH educators have further developed guidance on work-study practices. This guidance will be released shortly after review by the NH State Board of Education.*

**IV: For more information on this Technical Advisory, please contact:**

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