



New Hampshire

Department of Education Technical Advisory

Serving New Hampshire's Education Community

Subject: Minimum Standards for School Approval-
Local school board policies with respect to changes related to
competency education

School Approval Standards:
Ed 306.04 (a)(13),(14),(16),(25),(26),
(j), (k)(3). Ed 306.14(b)(1).
Ed 306.141(a)(1,2,5, & 6).

- I. **Ed 306.04 (a)(13), (14), (16), (25),(26); (j), (k-3), Policy Development**
- Ed 306.14 (b-1), Basic Instructional Standards**
- Ed 306.141 (a-1,3,5, & 6), Basic Instructional Standards**

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 to local school board policies for competencies and performance assessment.

III. Department Comments:

Ed 306.04 (a)(13), (14), (15), (16), (25), (26); (j), (k)(3) Policy Development

Ed 306.04 (a)(13), (14)

(a) In accordance with Ed 303.01, the local school board shall adopt and implement written policies and procedures no later than July 1, 2015 relative to:

(13) Providing alternative means of earning credit toward a high school diploma or equivalent such as extended learning opportunities, and distance education to meet the requirements of RSA 193:1,(h) until July 1, 2015;

(14) Providing alternative means of demonstrating achievement of identified graduation competencies toward the awarding of a credit for a high school diploma or equivalent such as extended learning opportunities, career and technical education courses, and distance education no later than July 1,2015 to meet the requirements of RSA 193:1,(h);

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Department Comment

This language, which was the previous rule in Ed 306.04 (13) and shall apply until July 1, 2015. Before July 1, 2015 districts will want to develop written policies and procedures for Ed 306.04 (14). On that date, Ed 306.04 (14) will take effect. At that time, the current (13) will be eliminated. The # (14) rule will then be renumbered as # (13).

Ed 306.04 (a)(15), (16)

(15) How a credit can be earned, as provided in Ed 306.27(e) until July 1, 2015;

(16) How a credit used to track achievement of graduation competencies can be earned no later than July 1, 2015, as provided in Ed 306.27(e);

Department Comment

The term "can", in the context of these rules, has been determined to mean 'the only way in which.' By July 1, 2015 districts must have written policy that defines how students will earn credits toward graduation through the attainment of the (locally) defined graduation competencies as identified in (25). Districts will also need to make sure their graduation competencies are in place by the school year 2015-16.

Ed 306.04 (a)(25), (26)

(25) Graduation competencies consistent with RSA 193-C:3 that students are expected to demonstrate for graduation in content areas no later than July 1, 2015 as follows;

- a. Arts education;
- b. Information and communication technologies;
- c. English;
- d. Mathematics that encompasses algebra, mathematical modeling, statistics and probability, complex applications of measurement, applied geometry, graphical presentation and interpretation, statistics and data analysis;
- e. Physical sciences;
- f. Biological sciences;
- g. US and NH History;
- h. US and NH government/civics;
- i. Economics, including personal finance;
- j. World history, global studies, or geography;
- k. Health education; and
- l. Physical education; and

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(26) Graduation competencies consistent with RSA 193-C:3 that students are expected to demonstrate for graduation no later than July 1, 2015 that encompass multiple content areas outlining the knowledge, skills and work-study practices necessary for success in colleges and careers.

Department Comment

Districts must now ensure, beginning July 1, 2015, that students are demonstrating achievement in work-study practices. Districts must, as of that date, have policies and procedures that include competencies for work-study practices and the expectation that students must demonstrate achievement in these competencies in order to qualify for graduation. For more on work-study practices, see the TA on definitions. Additional guidance on work-study practices will be released in the Fall, 2014.

Ed 306.04 (j)

(j) The policy relative to meeting the instructional needs of each student shall require administrators and educators to consider students' differing talents, interests, and development when planning the educational programs specified in Ed 306.

Department Comment

This relates to Ed 306.02 (p), which states, "Personalized learning" means a process which connects learning with learner's interests, talents, passions, and aspirations including actively participating in the design and implementation of their learning;

Ed 306.04 (k)

(k) The policy relative to partnerships among schools, families, and communities shall comply with the following standards:

(3) Schools shall frequently communicate school performance, student progress, personalized learning strategies as adopted by the local school board and in accordance with district and graduation competencies, and academic opportunities, using both print and online formats;

Department Comment

Over the years, the department has witnessed an interesting phenomenon related to educational transformation and reform. New initiatives that were instituted with the knowledge and input of the whole school, families, and community have taken root and flourished while those which were developed internally and implemented without an opportunity for input and without the prior knowledge and understanding of students, educators, families and local community are short-

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lived and sometimes have a dramatic demise. Community forums and listening sessions are strongly encouraged when developing and implementing educational change.

Ed 306.14 (b)(1), Basic Instructional Standards

(b) The local school board shall require that each school has an instructional program which includes the following:

- (1) A policy on homework, including its relationship to the grading system;

Department Comment

Until July 1, 2015, the above wording is in place and is the same as the previous rule.

Ed 306.141 (a)(1), Basic Instructional Standards

(a) The local school board shall require no later than July 1, 2015 that each school has an instructional program which includes the following:

- (1) A policy on homework, including its relationship to the grading system;

Department Comment

As of July 1, 2015, Ed 306.14 (b-1) becomes Ed 306.14 (a-1) and although the wording will not change, other changes in the Minimum Standards for School Approval relative to competency achievement and performance assessment will necessitate that districts examine their policies on homework and consider the implications for grading. National literature regarding standards based or competency based grading suggest that homework be classified as formative assessments and not be more than a minor portion of final grades.

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

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