

GUIDANCE ON SCHOOLS' COMPLETION OF REGIONAL SCHOOL CALENDARS UNDER PUBLIC LAW, CHAPTER 686, §2.20-A, SUBSECTION 2-A, "REGIONAL SCHOOL CALENDARS; PLAN; RULES.

Applicability: School administrative units, Private schools approved for tuition purposes, Career and Technical Education Centers, Career and Technical Education Regions.

Implementation: Regional calendars and waiver requests must be submitted by email, using 2024-2025 templates provided at www.maine.gov/doe/regionalcalendar, by June 1, 2024, to regionalcalendar.doe@maine.gov. Finalized/approved individual school calendars must also be submitted at that time.

Regional school calendar: Single calendar in effect for each Career and Technical Education (CTE) center and all affiliated school administrative units, including charter schools, as well as for each CTE Region and its school administrative units (SAU). For each such calendar, no more than 5 instructional days may be included on which all the individual school/unit calendars are not aligned. Cooperation in making this regional school calendar a reality is appreciated as this collaboration can allow for joint ventures in teacher professional development and other educational initiatives.

Access to Career and Technical Education Programs: Must be provided for entire instructional time required for those programs by department rules, currently set at 350 hours per year under Chapter 232 "Standard Criteria for Maine Secondary Vocational Programs."

Required annual instruction time: Maine Rule, Chapter 232. Requirements vary slightly by program, but all require a minimum of 350 hours unless originally approved at less.

Instructional Day: "School day in which both students and teachers are present, either in a school or in another setting." (Chapter 125, §2, Subsection 12). At least 175 of the 180 days schools are maintained each year shall be used for instruction (Title 20-A, Chapter 209); remainder may be used for in-service education of teachers, administrative meetings, parent-teacher conferences, records' days, and similar activities. *Please keep in mind that an instructional day must be at least three hours in length. Early release and late start days are not currently counted toward the dissimilar instructional day count, however, the above 350 hours per year of access of students to Career and Technical Education Programs must be maintained on such dates.*

Local Approval of Regional School Calendar: To be made by local SAU. Each SAU Superintendent and each CTE Center or Region Director must sign off to approve the Regional School Calendar.

Waiver for requirement of not more than 5 dissimilar days in Regional School

Calendar: Must be completed using form provided by the Maine Department of Education at www.maine.gov/doe/regionalcalendar. Waivers must explain reason for request and must present plan which ensures all students in CTE programs will be provided with access to full required annual instructional time (Maine Rule Chapter 232). The form must be signed by all Superintendents for associated SAUs, and, in case of CTE regions, Directors.

Note: Among reasons considered for a waiver would be that of participation in agricultural harvesting by schools in Aroostook County. *Differing teacher in-service days are not a qualifying rationale for a waiver.*

Submission of Documents: Regional School Calendar, Individual Calendars for each SAU and waiver request, if required, must be submitted by the Director of the local CTE Center/Region by email at regionalcalendar.doe@maine.gov to the Maine Commissioner of Education by June 1, 2024 for a decision on approval by July 12, 2024.

Questions?

Please contact Emily Doughty at emily.doughty@maine.gov 207-592-0314 or Dwight Littlefield at Dwight.a.littlefield@maine.gov 624-6721, at the Maine Department of Education.