

Maine Learning Results Taskforce

Topic: Launch and Historical Framing

Date: October 29, 2025

Location: Virtual (Zoom)

Time: 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Meeting Goals

- Understand the charge and purpose of the Taskforce under Legislative Resolve LD 1701.
- Build shared context on the history and evolution of state standards through insights from the Education Commission of the States.
- Reflect on Maine’s Learning Results, honoring their legacy while envisioning the future.
- Identify emerging themes and guiding principles through small group discussion to inform next steps.

Presenters and Facilitators

- Beth Lambert, Chief Teaching and Learning Officer, Maine Department of Education
- Tiffany McDole, Policy Director, Education Commission of the States (ECS)
- Annie Gianni, State Relations Strategist, ECS
- Ellen Cushing and Beth Ratway, Northeast Comprehensive Center (NECC)

In Attendance

Taskforce Members

Thomas Ambrose, Kim Barnes, Erik Blacksmith, Stephanie Bresett, Steve Bussiere, Elizabeth Coen, Brian Cole, Glenn Cummings, Jen Curtis, David Dorr, Jon Doty, Sade Francis, Melissa Frans, Peter Geiger, Heidi Goodwin, Angela Hardy, Tori Hildreth, Jason Judd, Ruth Kermish, Julie Kimball, Kevin Lavoie, Deb Macintyre, Diana Mahar, Heather Manchester, Sarah Marshall, Courtney McLellan, Jodi Mezzanotte, Jennifer Nickerson, Kerry O’Brien, Hermenegildo Paulo, Mercedes Pour, Renita Ward Downer, Heather Whitaker, Kaitlin Young, and Kathryn Bosse.

DOE Staff

Beth Lambert and additional staff supporting facilitation and logistics.

Partner Organizations

Education Commission of the States (ECS) and Northeast Comprehensive Center (NECC).

Discussion Summary

1. Introduction – Beth Lambert

Beth welcomed members and framed the session as the start of a two-year journey to review, reimagine, and renew the Maine Learning Results. She emphasized that this Taskforce is not simply revising a document but rather rethinking the purpose and potential

of standards for Maine's future. Members introduced themselves in the chat and shared what they bring to the work, reflecting a wide range of experiences across education systems and regions.

2. Context: The Resolve and Our Charge

Members reviewed the charge outlined in LD 1701, which directs the Taskforce to:

1. Review the purpose and efficacy of the Maine Learning Results.
2. Examine their structure and interdisciplinary coherence.
3. Assess representation of diverse cultures and traditions.
4. Review Title 20 A §6209 for needed revisions.
5. Develop findings and recommendations, including potential legislation.

Beth outlined the timeline and deliverables, including the Interim Report (February 2026) and Final Report (February 2027), and introduced the Northeast Comprehensive Center as the facilitation partner.

3. Historical and National Context – Education Commission of the States (ECS)

Tiffany McDole and Annie Gianni provided an overview of the history and evolution of state standards nationwide. Key takeaways included:

- The distinction between standards (what students should know and be able to do) and curriculum (how learning occurs).
- National shifts toward coherence, alignment, and real-world relevance.
- The special sauce of top performing systems: alignment among curriculum, assessment, and professional learning.
- The ongoing balance between consistency across states and local flexibility.

ECS encouraged members to consider how Maine's next generation of standards can reflect both coherence and creativity.

4. Small Group Discussions and Synthesis

Taskforce members engaged in facilitated breakout discussions to reflect on three guiding prompts:

- What legacy of Maine's standards should we honor and build on?
- If the Maine Learning Results were a blueprint for the future, what would they make possible for learners, educators, and communities?
- What values or principles should guide us as we rethink their purpose and potential?

Emerging Themes:

- **Guiding Principles:** Broad agreement that the Guiding Principles remain a defining strength of Maine's system and should continue as a central feature, though potentially updated for relevance and clarity.
- **Equity and Access:** Members emphasized the need for equitable opportunities across geography, resources, and student pathways, ensuring that where a student lives does not

determine what they can learn or achieve.

- **Multiple Pathways:** A shared desire for flexibility in how students demonstrate learning, including options for CTE, apprenticeships, and community-based learning.
- **Integration and Coherence:** The next iteration of standards should reduce silos and emphasize cross disciplinary, real-world learning that connects content areas.
- **Accountability vs Aspiration:** Several groups discussed the need to clarify whether the Learning Results should function as aspirational goals or accountability measures, a foundational decision that will shape subsequent design work.
- **Relevance and Belonging:** Participants stressed that standards must feel connected to Maine's identity, communities, and workforce realities, while inspiring curiosity and engagement for learners.
- **Future Focused Design:** Many called for a less is more approach, with clear, streamlined standards that include digital literacy, social emotional skills, and adaptability in an evolving world.

Action Items

- **Next Taskforce Meeting:** December 17, 2025, 3:00–5:00 p.m. via Zoom.
- **Early Perspectives Survey:** Taskforce members will complete the 10 minute Microsoft Form survey by November 22, 2025, to capture baseline beliefs and hopes about the Maine Learning Results. Results will inform the December meeting.
- **NECC Follow Up:** NECC will synthesize emerging themes from small group discussions and share a summary with the group prior to the next meeting.
- **Resource Access:** Meeting slides, recording, and breakout group notes will be shared in the Taskforce folder for reference.

Looking Ahead

The December 17, 2025 meeting will include discussion of the Early Perspectives Survey results and a presentation from the Learning Policy Institute on the Science of Learning and Development. This session will help the Taskforce explore how current research on how students learn can inform the ongoing conversation about the purpose, structure, and efficacy of Maine's state standards.