

A dark blue silhouette of a person sitting and reading a book, positioned on the left side of the slide. The background is a dark blue gradient.

MAINE DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION

Maine Learning Results Taskforce: Meeting #1

Beth Lambert, Chief Teaching and Learning Officer



Agenda

- Welcome, Introduction, and Goals
- The Resolve, Our Charge, and Our Path Forward
- History and Evolution of State Standards by Education Commission of the States (ECS)
- Small Group Discussion and Synthesis
- Looking Ahead to Next Meeting



Introductions

Using the chat, please put your name, role, and a few words about what calls you to this work right now.



Our Mandate – Key Study Areas

1. Review purpose and efficacy of the Maine Learning Results
2. Examine 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 legislation

Timeline & Deliverables

- Bi-Monthly, 2-hour Taskforce meetings
- Independent work between Taskforce meetings
- Feb 2026 – Interim Report: Activities and progress
- Feb 2027 – Final Report: Comprehensive findings and proposed updates to the Maine Learning Results and statute



Our 18-Month Journey

- Phase 1 (Fall 2025–Winter 2026): Grounding and shared learning leading to the Interim Report
- Phase 2 (Spring–Fall 2026): Deep dives on structure, representation, and statute
- Phase 3 (Winter 2027): Synthesis and Final Report preparation

How We'll Learn Together

Each meeting includes:

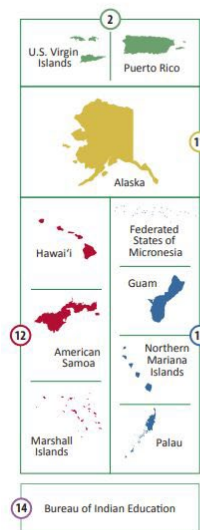
1. Shared Learning – local/state, national, and global perspectives
2. Group Synthesis – connecting insights to Maine's context and priorities
3. Design Forward – Identifying what possibilities we want to pursue next

Between meetings: short learning and reflection activities that keep ideas moving forward

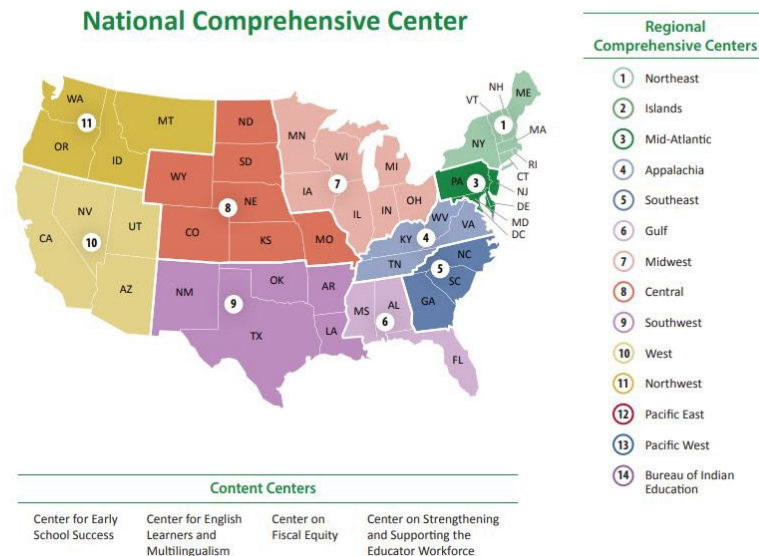
We are not just reviewing a document—we are reimagining what Maine's Learning Results can mean for our students.

Introducing the Northeast Comprehensive Center (NECC)

- 14 regional centers, 4 content centers, and a national center that provide capacity-building services.
- Goal of improving educational outcomes and instructional quality for all students.
- Funded by 5-year grants from the U.S. Department of Education.
- Current grant cycle began in fall 2024, reinstated August 2025.



*The numbers on the map represent the Regional Comprehensive Centers



About the Northeast CC

- Provides capacity-building services to: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont.
- Three focus areas:
 - **Support** the region in making measurable progress toward key education priorities.
 - **Connect** partners with expertise and evidence-based resources.
 - **Highlight** success stories from across the region.



State Standards

History and Evolution of State
Standards



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SPEAKER

Tiffany McDole

POLICY DIRECTOR

Education Commission of the States



STATE LIAISON

Annie Gianni

STATE RELATIONS STRATEGIST

Education Commission of the States



WHO WE ARE.

The essential, indispensable member of any team addressing education policy.



WHAT WE DO.

We believe in the power of learning from experience, and we know informed policymakers create better education policy.



HOW WE DO IT.



Research



Report



Convene



Counsel



Survey Says...

Polls to understand our background
and experience with state standards



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What is a “Standard”?

“Educational standards are the learning goals for what students should know and be able to do at each grade level.

Education standards, like Common Core are *not* a curriculum. Local communities and educators choose their own curriculum, which is a detailed plan for day to day teaching. In other words, the Common Core is what students need to know and be able to do, and curriculum is how students will learn it.”

– *Common Core State Standards*



What is a “Standard”?

Minnesota: “Academic standard” means a summary description of student learning in a required content area (Minn. Stat. Ann. § 120B.018)

New Hampshire: “Academic standards” means what a student should know and be able to do in a course or at each grade level. (N.H. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 193-E:2-a)



What is a “Standard”?

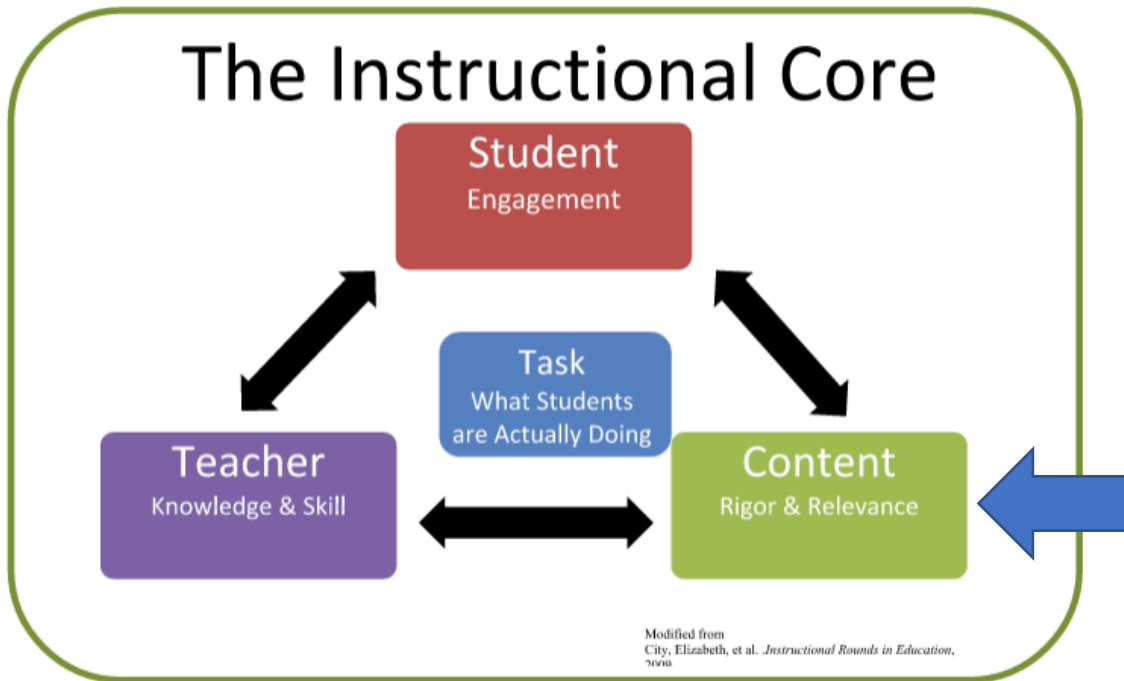
Colorado – 5th Grade Math

5.NBT.A. Number & Operations in Base Ten: Understand the place value system.

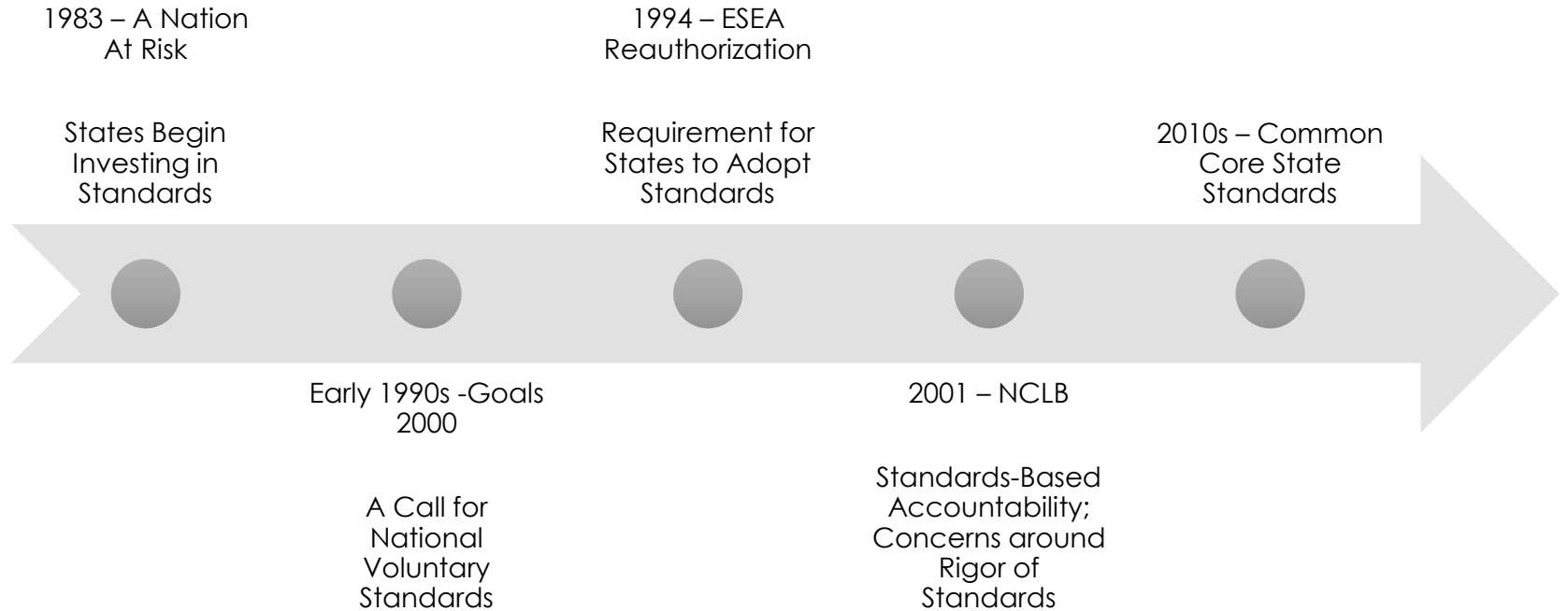
d) Use place value understanding to round decimals to any place.



Why Do We Have Standards?



Why State Standards? A Brief History



How Does the U.S. Compare to other Nations?

“Key levers of such learning environments include high-quality curriculum, vetted and relevant materials, excellent teacher training and expert instruction, and tailored, timely assessment. The “special sauce” that drives success is alignment and coherence: top performers ensure that these various elements work together to become more than the sum of their parts.”

-National Center on Education and the Economy, NCEE Blueprint



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What Makes a “Good” Set of Standards?

We've seen a variety of arguments,
including that standards should be...

- Common
- Challenging
- Connected to Citizenship & Prosperity



Standards That Are Likely to Influence Teaching...

- 1) Specific
- 2) Consistent
- 3) Have Authority
- 4) Have Power
- 5) Have Stability

*Assessing the Role of K-12 Academic Standards in
States – Workshop Summary*

Porter, Polikoff & Smithson (2008)



Where States Diverge...

- How specific are the state standards?
- What is the “architecture” of the standards?
- Should standards include elements that cut across disciplines?



Where States May Head...

- Updating skills and knowledge to match shifting landscapes
- Aligning with Portrait of a Graduate
- Revisiting focus & specificity
- Maintaining awareness of policy alignment





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Your education policy team.

THANK YOU



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Reflection and Small Group Discussion

Directions:

- Break into small groups and reintroduce yourselves.
- Spend 30 minutes discussing the following 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 the purpose and potential of the Maine Learning Results?*
- Close by identifying 2–4 key ideas to carry forward.



Emerging Themes

Room #1: 1) implementation and more forward presentation of guiding principles that cross content areas 2) specific focus on multiple access points

Room #2: 1) Maine connections should be kept 2) Need for multiple pathways, students should be able to have flexibility with on and off ramps 3) importance of community base, place based, solutionary experiences for students – real world relevance 4) Guiding principles are pretty great- need some updating, but important

Room #3 1) Document cannot be bohemuth and needs to be used by anyone coming to teach and needs to be understandable to parents and community 2) equity and multiple pathways and accessible to all learners 3) guiding principles are really important to learners

Room #4: 1) Underlying is to decide and clearly articulate if the standards are meant to be aspirations, a guaranteed access, or whether they are accountability standards (every kid must learn these things) 2) appreciation for taking the wholistic look and need to continue once system is redesigned – STEM, Humanities standards, etc 3) Vision of a graduate work – looking at the standards as a developmental continuum and not grade span referenced

Room #5: 1) importance of equitable access for students 2) appreciation for the framework that remains flexible for interpretations 3) improve the integration of content areas in order to create opportunities for student to develop real world skills 4) Equity

Room #6: 1) Focus on preparing student to succeed after schooling – teaching students how to learn rather than what to learn 2) Every student can learn and deserves that space to do so 3) looking at students across all content areas

Room #7: 1) guiding principles are great but might need some tweaking 2) equity 3) how do we allow all learners from all abilities to demonstrate learning

Looking Ahead

- Next Meeting December 17th from 3-5pm via zoom.
- Interim work: Early Perspectives Survey (early November, due Nov 22)



Closing Reflection

“What is one possibility you hope this group will explore together?”

Thank You & Contact Info

- Beth Lambert – beth.lambert@maine.gov
- Northeast Comprehensive Center
 - Ellen Cushing – ecushing@air.org
 - Beth Ratway – bratway@air.org
- Education Commission of the States
 - Tiffany McDole – tmcdole@ecs.org
 - Annie Gianni – agianni@ecs.org

Resources

[Assessing the Role of K-12 Academic Standards in the States](#) (2008)

[NCEE Blueprint: Designing Systems that Work](#)

[Standards-Based Reform in the United States: History, Research, and Future Directions](#) (2008)

[Standards-Based Reforms: Looking Back to Look Forward](#) (2024)