



About the School Approval Rules: Takeaways from the NHED Proposed Overhaul

The NH Department of Education's proposed rule changes would undermine and weaken public schools instead of moving them forward.

About the school approval rules

In addition to state laws, all public schools must comply with administrative rules in order to operate in New Hampshire. These administrative rules, known as the Minimum Standards for Public School Approval (or "Ed 306" rules), should be rigorous yet flexible so that local public schools can meet the needs of the students, teachers, and communities they serve. They should also make sure that all students have access to a high-quality curriculum in a safe school, no matter where they live, and empower local communities to design and implement learning environments tailored to their needs.

Proposed rules could undermine and weaken public schools

Revisions to the public school approval rules are an opportunity for us to reimagine how our public schools can create authentic, meaningful spaces where all of our students can learn, grow, and thrive. However, the New Hampshire Department of Education and the State Board of Education are in the process of an overhaul that could undermine the public schools in communities and statewide by removing important safeguards for students, teachers, and families, undermining teachers, and opening the door to the commodification of education.

Major Impacts

REMOVING GUIDANCE FOR SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS FOR ALL: Removes guidance for safe and healthy schools, fair and equitable discipline practices, facilities requirements, and protections for students and staff that could impact school climates.

PRIVATIZING LEARNING: Replaces instruction with open-ended definitions like "opportunities," which could lower the bar for what constitutes a course or credit and set the conditions for the state to outsource them to private companies.

DILUTING CREDITS: Removes the role of certified educators in making sure that courses and credits meet the criteria and have the same level of academic rigor as required by the state and school district.

REMOVING SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS: Removes requirements for schools to adopt policies to support the needs, talents, and interests of each student when developing educational programs.

Open Questions

How are these changes in the best interest of New Hampshire's students and families?

If the rules are removed from school approval standards, would that allow the state to defund those parts of public schools?

What's the purpose of removing certified teachers from approving credits towards graduation?

The proposed rules change the expectation for the achievement of competencies from "mastery" to "proficiency;" what's the reason for lowering this expectation?

How will the rules ensure that all students, regardless of where they live, have access to high-quality educational opportunities?

If the intent of the rule changes is to expand pathways and opportunities, how will the state ensure that schools have the resources to support students in navigating the pathways, and ensure that every student receives a meaningful, rigorous, and engaging educational experience?

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