



MAINE TEACHING CERTIFICATION GUIDE FOR FOREIGN-TRAINED TEACHERS

New Mainers Resource Center, Portland Adult Education



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FOR FOREIGN-TRAINED TEACHERS

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New Mainers Resource Center – Who We Are

The New Mainers Resource Center (NMRC) is a program within Portland Adult Education serving area immigrants and refugees. Our offerings are designed to help New Mainers overcome barriers in order to enter the US workforce. These include: career guidance and employment case management, assistance with credential review and licensing requirements, intensive classes focused on job readiness skills, networking groups, workshops and other offerings.

The Purpose of this Guide

One major challenge faced by skilled professionals, such as teachers, is to successfully navigate the complex re-certification processes here in Maine. The purpose of this guide is to provide foreign-certified teachers with the information they need to make informed decisions about certification and working in the field of education in Maine.

For additional information or assistance from the New Mainers Resource Center contact:

New Mainers Resource Center, *Maine's Welcome Back Center*, Portland Adult Education 14 Locust St. Portland, Maine 04101 Phone: 207 874-8155, Website: www.nmrcmaine.org, Email: Sally Sutton, Program Coordinator, suttos@portlandschools.org

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Table of Contents

<u>Steps to teacher certification</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Applying for certification</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Chart: Where can I take my missing courses?</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Student teaching requirement</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Taking the Praxis exams</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Getting involved with a school</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Frequently asked questions</u>	<u>8</u>

STEPS TO TEACHER CERTIFICATION

***Here are the steps to take if you were a teacher in another country and you are looking to be a teacher in Maine. This process assumes that you have a bachelors' degree from another country and are pursuing certification in Maine without enrolling in a teacher-training program.*

1

Since you will need to complete your fingerprinting before sending in your application, complete this step first. Fingerprints must be taken through Maine's approved processing company, Identogo: <https://www.identogo.com/locations/maine>.

2

You will need to have your post-secondary transcripts evaluated by a NACES approved evaluator, which you can find here: <http://www.naces.org/members.html>.

3

Next you will send in your Initial Certification application, which includes your transcript and transcript evaluation report to the Maine Department of Education (MDOE), who will review your information and send you a letter showing what requirements you have met and which requirements you still need to meet before you can be certified. Instructions for completing the Initial Certification application can be found here: <https://www.maine.gov/doe/cert/initial/application/index.html#app>.

4

You will have slightly different requirements based on the subject and level you wish to teach. You can see the requirements for all the endorsement areas through this web-page: <https://www.maine.gov/doe/cert/initial/requirements.html>. See below for a summary of the common requirements for all endorsement areas:

- You will need the equivalent of 24 credits in the content area you plan to teach in.
- You will need a methods course for the area you plan to teach in.
- All teachers must take a course on teaching exceptional students. See list of MDOE approved courses here: <https://www.maine.gov/doe/cert/initial/exceptionalitycourses.html>
- All teachers are required to pass the Praxis Core and the Praxis II for your content area. Additionally, you will need to pass the Praxis PLT (Principles of Learning and Teaching).
- All teachers are required to complete a student teaching internship. See [page 5](#) for details.
- All teachers will need to send in their fingerprints for a background check.

5

Review the chart on page 2-3 to see where you can take the courses you are missing. In addition to the methods course and the teaching exceptional students course, you can also see which programs will support you in your student teaching internship, which happens once you have completed all other requirements.

6

You may need to take all required courses and Praxis tests before student teaching. You can see which tests are required for your teaching area here: <https://www.ets.org/praxis/me/requirements>. See [page 6](#) for information on passing your required Praxis tests.

7

Once you have completed all requirements, send any relevant documentation to the MDOE (course transcripts, test scores etc.) ([See page 2](#)). Check in with the MDOE to make sure you have successfully completed the requirements for teaching certification.

APPLYING FOR CERTIFICATION

OVERVIEW: If you are pursuing certification by transcript analysis as opposed to completing an approved teacher preparation program, there are two stages to applying. First you will complete your transcript analysis and apply for certification using the directions below. Then, once you receive your Maine Department of Education (MDOE) letter, you will go about fulfilling any missing requirements for certification. Send documentation to MDOE once you have completed the requirements (course transcript, Praxis score etc.).

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?:

- Once you apply initially, you will receive your letter from the MDOE. The time this takes will vary depending on volume of application MDOE receives. If you are eligible, you will receive a two-year provisional certification. You will then need to factor in how long it will take you to complete all requirements once you receive the MDOE letter.

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?:

- Fingerprinting will cost about \$50.00-60.00.
- Application for Initial Teacher Certificate will cost \$100
- Each additional Teacher Endorsement - \$35

WHAT IS REQUIRED FOR THE APPLICATION?

1. The first step of the process is to complete your transcript analysis (completed by a NACES accredited evaluator) and send it to the MDOE.
2. Once you have the transcript analysis or MDOE has received the report, you will apply for Initial Certification, using the application and instructions found here: <https://www.maine.gov/doe/cert/initial/application/index.html#app>. Steps 3-7 indicate what you will need to complete this initial application.
3. Like most states, Maine requires that teaching applicants complete a criminal history record check. Fingerprints must be taken through Maine's approved processing company, Identogo: <https://www.identogo.com/locations/maine>.
4. Complete and sign application.
5. Include additional documentation, if necessary. This could include any proof of past teaching experience and certification, U.S. transcripts, test scores etc.
6. Enclose appropriate non-refundable fees.
7. Submit application to address below in the contact bar.
8. After applying, the MDOE will send you a letter that indicates what requirement areas you have completed, and what you still need to complete. The MDOE will have a file with your information, so as you go about completing the requirements (taking Praxis tests and missing courses for example), make sure to send all proof and documentation to the MDOE.
9. Once you believe you have completed all missing requirements, check in with MDOE using contact info below to request certification.

TIPS

1. NACES is the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services

2. You can submit your application and wait for the evaluation from the board BEFORE you do your fingerprints. However, you will be required to do them before the board issues your certification.

3. While paper applications are still being used for initial certification, MDOE is moving toward an Online Certification system. You will need to set up an online account as a way to monitor your application. Check out the Maine Educator Information System (MEIS) to set up an account: https://www.mymainecertification.com/SSO_PROD/WizardPages/CreateUserAccountStep1.aspx



CONTACT

Maine Department of Education
<https://www.maine.gov/doe/index.html>

Mailing Address
Department of Education
Certification Office
23 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0023

Contact Person
Stephanie Fyfe
207-642-6603
cert.doe@maine.gov

WHERE CAN I TAKE MY MISSING COURSES?

SCHOOL	SUMMARY	EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS COURSE	METHODS COURSE	STUDENT TEACHING	COST	LINKS
University of Southern Maine	You can take the exceptional students course here as a non-degree student, and you may be able to take your methods courses here if you work at a partner school (Portland Public Schools, Westbrook, South Portland, Lewiston, Gorham, RSU 14, SAD 6. (https://cms.usm.maine.edu/extended-teacher-education-program-etep/school-partnerships) While you will need permission from the instructor to enroll in any course, there are no specific requirements for taking courses here as a non-degree student.	Yes, you can take this as a non-degree student. This is generally offered as an on-campus class, course each semester. Exceptionality courses are EDU 335 and EDU 540 at USM.	It is possible that you could take your methods course here, with instructor permission. Instructor permission may include an English proficiency exam. Reserved first for students in the program and anyone working with a partner school.	No, you cannot take this class as a non-degree student. However, through the 2-year ETEP program you can earn credit for student teaching through paid internships, working as an Ed Tech III, and long-term sub. In this case you would need to be a matriculated student with program and school district approval.	\$253/\$262 per credit hour for in-state undergraduate courses, plus fees. A 3-credit course for an in-state resident tends to be around \$980.00 dollars, plus applicable fees.	PROGRAM WEBSITE: https://usm.maine.edu/school-of-education-human-development/programs GRADUATE PROGRAM (ETEP): https://usm.maine.edu/extended-teacher-education-program-etep COURSE CATALOGUE: https://usm.maine.edu/school-of-education-human-development/sehd-course-descriptions
St. Joseph's College	If you are pursuing certification in a 7-12 endorsement area, the 'Alternate Route Secondary Certification' would be ideal for you. These on-line courses are at the graduate level, and an under-graduate degree would be the only prerequisites. You can take any required course you need here, including student teaching and a methods course that covers multiple endorsement areas.	Yes, you can take exceptional students course (ED512) as a non-degree student.	Yes, you can take methods courses as a non-degree student (ED523 offers secondary methods that fit the MDOE requirement for any content area).	Yes, a 15-week student teaching course is offered, but students must find their own placements. All other requirements will need to have been completed first. For secondary teachers only.	All on-line 3 credit courses are 1,230.00 dollars, with around 100 dollars in book fees. The student teaching course (12 credits) is 4,920.	PROGRAM WEBSITE: https://www.sjcme.edu/academics/online/programs/master-science-education/ COURSE CATALOGUE: http://catalog.sjcme.edu/preview_program.php?cactoid=30&poiid=2060&reurnto=993
University of New England	UNE is good for those who are just seeking the exceptional students course.	Yes, you can enroll in Edu220 as a non-degree student. There are no prerequisites.	No, you cannot take methods courses if you are not enrolled in the program.	No (only students enrolled in the program can take this course).	1,050.00 for SPE220 (a 3-credit undergraduate course).	PROGRAM WEBSITE: https://www.une.edu/cas/education COURSE CATALOGUE: http://www.une.edu/registrar/2018-2019-academic-catalog/undergraduate-catalog/education-al-studies
Maine Education Consortium (MEC)	MEC works with Endicott College to offer online graduate courses geared towards helping teachers meet certification requirements. Non-degree students can take any of the courses offered, and there are no additional entrance requirements beyond bachelors transcript analysis.	Yes, you can take the exceptional students courses offered as a non-degree student. No prerequisites for non-degree students.	Yes, you can take any methods course here as a non-degree student. No prerequisites for non-degree students.	Yes, you can take the student teaching course through MEC as a non-degree student. You will have to be finished with all other certification requirements before you begin student teaching, and you will need to find your own placement.	\$1095 – for all 3 credit course. Very minimal fees. Student teaching course is the same amount of credit and price.	PROGRAM WEBSITE: https://www.maineeducator.com/ COURSE CATALOGUE: https://www.maineeducator.com/all-courses/

WHERE CAN I TAKE MY MISSING COURSES?

SCHOOL	SUMMARY	EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS COURSE	METHODS COURSE	STUDENT TEACHING	COST	LINKS
Southern Maine Community College	You can take courses here as a non-degree student. There is an education track and an Early Childhood Education (ECE) track, and you can take the exceptional students course in either. You can only take the student teaching in the Early Childhood track. Prerequisites for all courses could be waived with instructor permission, depending on your teaching experience and transcript analysis.	Yes, you can enroll in this course as a non-matriculated student. EDUC230 is the exceptional students class for the Education program. ECED210 is the exceptional students class for the Early Childhood Education program.	Yes, you can take methods courses as a non-degree student. There are only a few methods courses here: EDUC 220 and ECE-200, ECED-250. Instructor permission required.	Yes, students can take the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Practicum as a non-degree student. The ECE program offers a student teaching practicum; the Education program does not. The ECE practicum does have prerequisites, but they may be able to waive those if students have background in the field.	EDUC230 is \$386.10 for on-campus, in -state tuition. Generally, on-campus courses are \$451.10 for in-state, and 733.10 for out of state. Generally, online courses are \$668 for in-state.	PROGRAM WEBSITE: https://www.smccme.edu/academics/degree-programs/education/ COURSE CATALOGUE: https://www.smccme.edu/academics/degree-programs/education/#current
University of Maine at Augusta	You can take the exceptional students and methods courses here as a non-degree student. Most classes are online. You will need to pass Praxis Core before you take any secondary methods courses. Taking any course as a non-degree student will require instructor permission so they can waive prerequisites. You can only take the student teaching course here if you taken two specific courses through the UMA program, see student teaching column for more information.	Yes, you can take any exceptional students course as a non-degree student.	You can take methods courses as a non-matriculated student, and prerequisites will most likely be waived. Praxis Core is a prerequisite for all secondary methods courses. Otherwise, prerequisites could be waived based on instructor permission	By application only. There are specific prerequisites for non-degree students wishing to complete student teaching which include: Praxis Core and Praxis II, letters of recommendation, the exceptional students course, method(s) course from UMA: EDU 251 and EDU 395. UMA requires the latter two classes in order to assess student's readiness and dispositions for the classroom.	\$228.00 a credit hour plus mandatory and variable fees Maine Residents. Generally online courses are \$810.00 for a three credit course. Some of the education classes do have additional fees if they are at the 400 level or above. The course fee for EDU 395 is 75.00. The course fee for student teaching is 200.00.	PROGRAM WEBSITE: https://www.uma.edu/academics/programs/education/ COURSE CATALOGUE: https://www.uma.edu/academics/courseguide/

Other places to consider:

Other University of Maine programs	The teaching programs at the other University of Maine campuses will also allow you to take some courses as a non-degree student. These could be useful to you if you live close to these campuses. Some will also allow you to take the student teaching practicum through their program. The prices are similar at all campuses for instate tuition.	University of Maine at Orono University of Maine at Fort Kent / Presque Isle University of Maine at Farmington
Maine Community Colleges	The community colleges listed to the right have an education program, and commonly can offer the required exceptional students course at a very affordable rate, compared to the other institutions listed here. Community colleges could also be a great place to take any required content area courses if you are missing those. Some offer a few select methods courses as well.	Eastern Maine Community College Central Maine Community College Kennebec Valley Community College York County Community College

CAUTIONARY NOTE: For all courses, you should confirm with the program or department chair that there are no additional prerequisites or other entrance requirements not listed on this chart or on the website, such as demonstration of English proficiency or documentation of your transcripts or diploma. Even if there is not an official requirement for you to demonstrate your level of English, for you to be successful in the course it will be important for your English to be at an appropriate level. Additionally, you should check in with the registrar about total costs per courses and schedules, as these may change semester to semester.

STUDENT TEACHING REQUIREMENT

STUDENT TEACHING OVERVIEW

Completing a student teaching internship or practicum is a requirement for teacher certification in Maine. However, you may be able to obtain a conditional certification, which is given to those who have not completed the student teaching requirement. See below for more details. If you need to complete this requirement, you will do it through one of the teaching programs listed on pages 2 and 3, generally after you have completed all other certification requirements. The length of time and the process for completing the student teaching requirement depends on which course you enroll in. Most are 15 weeks to one-year and require course-work in addition to your time teaching. However, if you complete a year of teaching under one of the certificates listed below, this requirement will be waived. Additionally, it is possible that this requirement could be waived based on the MDOE review of your work experience.

CERTIFICATION OPTIONS

If you complete the student teaching requirement through an accredited program (see chart on pages 2-3) in addition to completing your other certification requirements, you will be granted a two-year provisional certificate. However, see below to see if you are eligible for alternative certificates.

Provisional Certification: The provisional license is the entry-level certification for Maine teachers. The certification is valid for two years and can be extended for one year, if necessary. While you hold this license, you should work towards earning a professional certification.

Professional: To advance your provisional license to a professional license, you will need to have at least two years of experience teaching. The license is valid for five years and can be renewed.

Conditional Certification: A conditional teaching certificate can be issued to an individual with a completed bachelors degree who is looking to teach while working towards their certification requirements. This is available to those who have not completed the student teaching requirement. This is a one-year certificate. You will come up with a plan for completing your required courses and tests. Contact the Maine Department Education to inquire about the procedure for obtaining a conditional teaching certificate.

Transitional endorsement: Issued to teachers who are assigned to teach in areas for which they are not endorsed. Transitional Certificates are one-year certificates and are renewable up to four times depending on course-work progress and superintendent discretion.

TAKING THE PRAXIS EXAMS

OVERVIEW: In order to be certified as a K-12 teacher in Maine, you will need to pass the Praxis Core and the Praxis II test for your endorsement area. In addition, you will need to pass the PLT Principles of Learning and Teaching Praxis test, unless you complete a teacher training program in Maine. You may need to complete all tests before student teaching. Your letter from the Maine Department of Education may indicate that you can opt out of some of these tests, so review the letter carefully.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

- You may need to take up to three praxis tests. Consider how long it will take you to study for these tests.
- Register through this link: https://www.ets.org/praxis/register/dates_centers/
- You will receive official scores 10-16 days after you complete the test.

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

- Praxis Core is \$90 per individual subtest or \$150 for all three subjects combined test.
- The Praxis II tests range from \$60 to \$160 dollars.
- Praxis Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT): \$146.

TEST INFORMATION

PRAXIS CORE

- Praxis Core is the replacement test for the Praxis I (pre-professional skills test PPST). The Praxis I will phase out as of August 2018. You can take sections of the Praxis Core and Praxis I, and minimum composite scores will not apply.
 - Maine applicants for initial teacher certification must obtain a composite score of (468) on three sections of the Praxis Core, with no single score on any section being more than three points lower than the required.
1. Reading (minimum 156) : 56 questions to complete in 85 minutes
 2. Writing (162 minimum score): 40 questions to complete in 40 minutes and 2 essays to complete in 60 minutes
 3. Mathematics (150 minimum score): 56 questions to complete in 85 minutes

PRAXIS II, SUBJECT ASSESSMENTS —

- Praxis II tests measure general and subject-specific teaching skills and knowledge. Tests include both selected-response and constructed-response (essay) questions.
- Each different endorsement / certification area requires a different Praxis II. See the list here to see which Praxis II you will need to take, and the qualifying scores: <https://www.ets.org/praxis/me/requirements>.

PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING AND TEACHING (PLT) TESTS —

- The Praxis PLT measures your general pedagogical knowledge at one of four grade level ranges: Early Childhood, K–6, 5–9 and 7–12. These tests feature selected-response questions and short constructed-response prompts based on information provided in case studies.
- Applicants for certificates requiring the Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) PRAXIS exam must meet a passing score on test 0622/5622.

TIPS

1. Designate MDOE (R7368) as score recipient.
2. Core Test Preparation Materials are available:
 - <http://www.ets.org/praxis/prepare/materials/5712> (reading)
 - <http://www.ets.org/praxis/prepare/materials/5722> (writing)
 - <http://www.ets.org/praxis/prepare/materials/5732> (mathematics)
 - <https://www.affordablecollegesonline.org/college-resource-center/praxis-exam-prep/> (Praxis Test Prep, including study guides and practice tests)

GETTING INVOLVED WITH A SCHOOL

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED IN A SCHOOL:

When pursuing certification, it is wise to form a connection with a local school right away through one of the options below. This will help with your student teaching placement and possibly help you to secure a conditional teaching certificate. In addition, it will familiarize you with the culture of the classroom in the U.S., as it may be different from your teaching experience in another country. Most of these positions will require a background check of some kind, depending on the position and the school.

Ed technician: Becoming an Educational Technician (Ed Tech) is a great way to begin working at a school while pursuing certification. This can provide a new teacher with opportunities to expand teaching skills and learn about teaching diverse students. You can form a connection with a school that could benefit your path to certification through a teaching internship or conditional teaching certification. Find out about your eligibility and apply here: <https://www.maine.gov/doe/cert/initial/edtech/>.

Ed tech I and II: To work as an Ed Tech I, you will need the equivalent of a high school diploma. To become an Ed Tech II you will need 60 approved college-level credits.

Ed tech III: Ed Tech III's are given more responsibilities in the classroom and a higher salary. To become an Ed Tech III you will need 90 approved college level credits (in an educationally-related field).

Substitute teacher: Local districts tend to be able to decide what qualifications someone will need to substitute teach. However, in many cases you can substitute without teacher certification. In some cases, if you just have a high school diploma, you may serve as a substitute in an emergency situation. This allows you to teach for no more than 10 days in any one teaching assignment, up to 60 days per school year. If you have two or more years of college, you may serve as a substitute for up to 60 days per school year. You may have to undergo substitute teacher training, based on your school district's requirements.

Paid non-certified positions: There are many different paid positions at schools that do not require teaching certification. These are a great way to start working while pursuing your certification. Some of the jobs available are: monitors for recess etc., early-childcare assistants, bus drivers, cafeteria workers and cooks, building custodians etc.

Volunteer: Get in touch with the volunteer coordinator at any school to find out about needs and opportunities. Volunteering is a great way to get involved with a school if there are no paid positions available.

Adult education: Adult education teachers often teach English as a Second language, or Adult Basic Education, which could be basic reading and writing or preparation for taking the high school equivalence test (HiSET). Talk to the program coordinators to find out any teaching opportunities or needs in their programs.

Private schools: Private schools are not bound by the same certification requirements for teachers as public schools. A private school can review your information and make their own decision about hiring you for any open position at the school.

For jobs and positions currently available in Maine (including public and private schools and adult education), please review this website:

<https://www.servingschools.com/>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How does the Maine Department of Education evaluate my transcript?

Based on your transcript and transcript analysis, MDOE is looking for the following equivalences:

1. A minimum of 24 semester hours in the subject area you plan to teach: English, life science, mathematics, physical science or social studies.
2. Three semester hours in a methods course appropriate to the subject and level you plan to teach.
3. Completed an approved course for “Teaching Exceptional Students in the Regular Classroom”.
4. Completed student teaching internship.
5. Completed Praxis Core, Praxis II in your teaching area, and Principles of Learning and Teaching (Praxis PLT).

2. What is commonly missing from people’s certifications?

The evaluation letter you will receive back from the MDOE will indicate which courses and tests you need to take. Commonly, teachers from other countries are missing an approved methods course as well as a course on teaching exceptional students. Please see the list of MDOE approved courses on teaching exceptional students here: https://www.maine.gov/doe/cert/initial_exceptionalitycourses.html. Additionally, most teachers are missing the student teaching requirement, and certain Praxis tests.

3. Should I enroll in a teacher preparation program?

If you have completed a bachelors degree in another country and have worked as a teacher, you may pursue the transcript analysis route to teacher certification rather than enrolling in a teacher preparation program. It is likely that you will only need to take some courses, pass the Praxis tests, and complete student teaching. Teacher preparation programs are designed to prepare you for teaching in public schools in Maine that include understanding proficiency based learning in a standards aligns system that provides access to all students, including Response to Intervention (RtI) systems. You can compare the cost and time of a teacher preparation program verses only taking the courses you need as a non-degree student.

4. When do I need to take my Praxis exams?

Some programs will require that you complete your Praxis tests prior to beginning your student teaching. Some will request that you complete Praxis Core and PLT before student teaching, and take the Praxis II while you are student teaching. If you are entering a teacher preparation program, most programs ask that you complete Praxis Core prior to teaching. Check with the place you are doing your course work or student teaching to see if they require passing scores on a praxis as a entrance requirement for any courses.

5. Do I need to take courses at the graduate level?

You can take courses at either level. Undergraduate courses will fulfill the course requirements you need. If you are looking for certification as an educational specialist, guidance counselors, literacy specialists, etc., you will most likely need graduate-level courses. Taking courses at the undergraduate level is often significantly cheaper than graduate courses.

6. What endorsement areas have teacher shortages?

Review current teaching opportunities here: <https://www.servingschools.com/>. There are many programs that offer student loan cancellation, deferment, and repayment assistance to teachers providing classroom instruction in teacher shortage areas. The Maine Department of Education intends to propose the following as K-12 teacher shortage areas during the 2017-18 school year for the entire state: Special Education (includes teachers and speech-hearing clinicians), World Languages (French, German, Russian, Spanish, Latin), Science, Mathematics, English as a Second Language (ESL), Gifted/Talented, School Librarian and Industrial Arts.

7. How do I know if I qualify for in-state tuition?

Review this document to understand more about immigration status and qualifying for instate tuition.

<https://usm.maine.edu/sites/default/files/student-financial-services/IV-G-Final-8-25-14.pdf>

There are many factors that go into deciding if someone has state-residency for tuition purposes, but overall if you have lived in Maine for more than 12 months for reasons other than your education, you are considered a resident. You do not need to be a citizen to be eligible for residency status.

8. Here is a link to the MDOE’s own FAQ page: <https://www.maine.gov/doe/cert/statutes/index.html>



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