



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
23 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0023

PAUL R. LEPAGE
GOVERNOR

THOMAS A. DESJARDIN
ACTING COMMISSIONER

March 2, 2015

Brian Carpenter
Superintendent of Schools
RSU 20, Belfast
PO Box 363
Belfast, ME 04915

Dear Superintendent Carpenter:

This letter acknowledges receipt of RSU 20's request for an extension to meet the proficiency-based graduation requirements. The information and evidence presented in RSU 20's request for Extension Option 3 gives the Department reasonable confidence that the benchmarks that are established for the 2014 -2015 school year will be met and will inform the development of benchmarks for the 2015-2016 school year. Extension Option 3 provides you the opportunity to collaborate with the proficiency-based system in the middle school which will support student readiness to demonstrate proficiency when they arrive at Belfast High School. Extension Option 3 allows you the time to build the system and be ready to award proficiency-based diplomas after July 1, 2020. There are no penalties if you discover your school administrative unit is prepared sooner to award a proficiency-based diploma representing readiness for career and college experience without the need for remediation in all content areas.

Under a provision in Maine's Basic School Approval Statutes (Maine Revised Statutes 20-A §4502, subsection 8), I grant a waiver of the requirement to award proficiency-based diplomas after January 1, 2018 and extend the time to transition to proficiency-based graduation requirements to after July 1, 2020. This extension is given with trust in the good faith and effort of the staff and students of Belfast to work diligently to meet these benchmarks and is contingent upon an annual report to the Maine Department of Education regarding the school administrative units progress toward meeting the requirements of Maine Revised Statutes 20-A §4722-A. This annual report will be embedded in the annual extension renewal process and will need to show evidence of collaboration between the middle school and high school.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Tom Desjardin'.

Thomas A. Desjardin
Acting Commissioner of Education