



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

JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

PENDER MAKIN  
COMMISSIONER

EXHIBIT #X.B.

TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Michael T. Perry, Director of Higher Education and Educator Support Services, Maine Department of Education, on behalf of Commissioner Pender Makin

DATE: February 12, 2026

SUBJECT: Request to Extend Existing Approval of the St. Joseph's College of Maine Educator Preparation Program by Twelve Months

**BACKGROUND:**

St. Joseph's College of Maine (SJCME) offers state-approved Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) which were last approved by the State Board of Education effective Spring 2022. The Board issued a two-year approval at that time, with a request for an interim report from the institution regarding recommendations from the state review team. SJCME submitted an interim report as requested, which was approved by the State Board in 2024 and confirmed that SJCME's EPPs would remain approved for the rest of their five-year review cycle.

On November 3, 2025, Patricia Waters, PhD, who serves as Education Department Chair and Associate Professor of Education at SJCME, indicated the institution's desire to request a one-year extension of their current EPP approval. Dr. Waters cited SJCME recently hiring two new full-time faculty and the 2025 completion of a "comprehensive review" of programs internally at SJCME. The extension request was then formed as follows:

*These developments reflect our sustained commitment to academic excellence, continuous improvement, and institutional accountability. Postponing the program review for one year will allow the [SJCME Education] department to effectively onboard new faculty and leverage their expertise to enhance program quality and ensure the continued delivery of rigorous, high-impact educator preparation.*

State Board of Education Rule Chapter 114, *Purpose, Standards and Procedures for the Review and Approval of Preparation Programs for Education Personnel*, subsection 3.11(e), allows that "requests for extensions for existing approval, due to extraordinary circumstances, may be granted at the discretion of the State Board of Education."

The Certification and Higher Education Committee of the State Board of Education discussed this request during its regular meeting on January 28, 2026.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That, pursuant to State Board of Education Rule Chapter 114, subsection 3.11(e), the State Board of Education approve St. Joseph's College of Maine's request to extend the existing approval of its educator preparation programs by twelve months, from Spring 2027 to Spring 2028.