

In communities around the state, the country and the world, people have strengthened their educational systems by focusing on seven core priorities:

1. **QUALITY EARLY LEARNING EXPERIENCES** that give all children equal opportunity for healthy growth and development.
2. **HIGH STANDARDS AND PERSONALIZED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES** that maximize success for all.
3. **EFFECTIVE, KNOWLEDGEABLE, WELL-TRAINED TEACHERS** in every classroom to prepare all of our children for success, and strong school, community and state leadership to support effective teaching.
4. **ENGAGED PARENTS, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES** that set high expectations for academic achievement and work together to build a high-quality educational system.
5. **EXPANDED ACCESS TO AND SUPPORT FOR COLLEGE AND WORKFORCE TRAINING** to increase the number of Mainers earning occupational certificates, college degrees and the good-paying jobs to which they lead.
6. **COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS OF RELIABLE DATA** from early childhood through employment that allow teachers, leaders and communities to identify what's working in our educational system and to fix what isn't.
7. **EFFICIENT AND EQUITABLE INVESTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES** to maximize opportunity, equity and accountability.

Preparing for the future means providing a quality education for all of our people, from cradle to career.

We need your help! Many business, education, political, law enforcement, parent and youth leaders have joined this effort to make Education Job ONE, but we need your help, too. At www.preparemaine.org, you can learn more about the **Prepare Maine** initiative and join these partners:

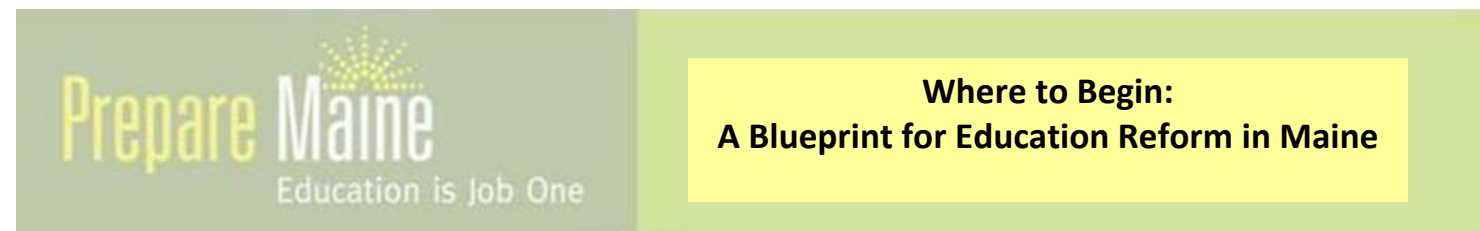
Partner and Supporting Organizations

Androscoggin Chamber of Commerce
 America's Edge
 Bangor Regional Chamber of Commerce
 Fight Crime – Invest in Kids
 Great Schools Partnership
 Jobs for Maine's Graduates
 Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce
 Maine Adult Education Association
 Maine Assembly on School Based Health Care
 Maine Association of Charter Schools
 Maine Children's Alliance
 Maine Children's Growth Council
 Maine Compact for Higher Education
 Maine Curriculum Leaders' Association
 Maine Department of Education
 Maine Department of Labor
 Maine Development Foundation
 Maine Higher Education Council
 Maine Parent Federation
 Maine PTA

Maine Public Health Association
 Maine School Superintendents' Association
 Maine Sheriff's Association
 Maine State Chamber of Commerce
 Many Flags – One Campus Foundation
 Nellie Mae Education Foundation
 Opportunity Maine
 Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce
 RSU 13
 SAD 12/Jackman Leadership Team
 Southern Midcoast Chamber of Commerce
 University of Maine System

Join our growing list of individual supporters.....
 MCEE Members
 Tom Keller, National Research Council
 Bill Nave, 1990 Maine Teacher of the Year
 Sherri Gould, 2005 Maine Teacher of the Year
 Gloria Noyes, 2009 Maine Teacher of the Year
 Kevin Grover, 2010 Maine Teacher of the Year

For more information, contact: **MAINE COALITION FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION** 295 Water St., Suite 5, Augusta, ME 04330
 Phone: 207-469-3231 www.preparemaine.org www.mainecee.org

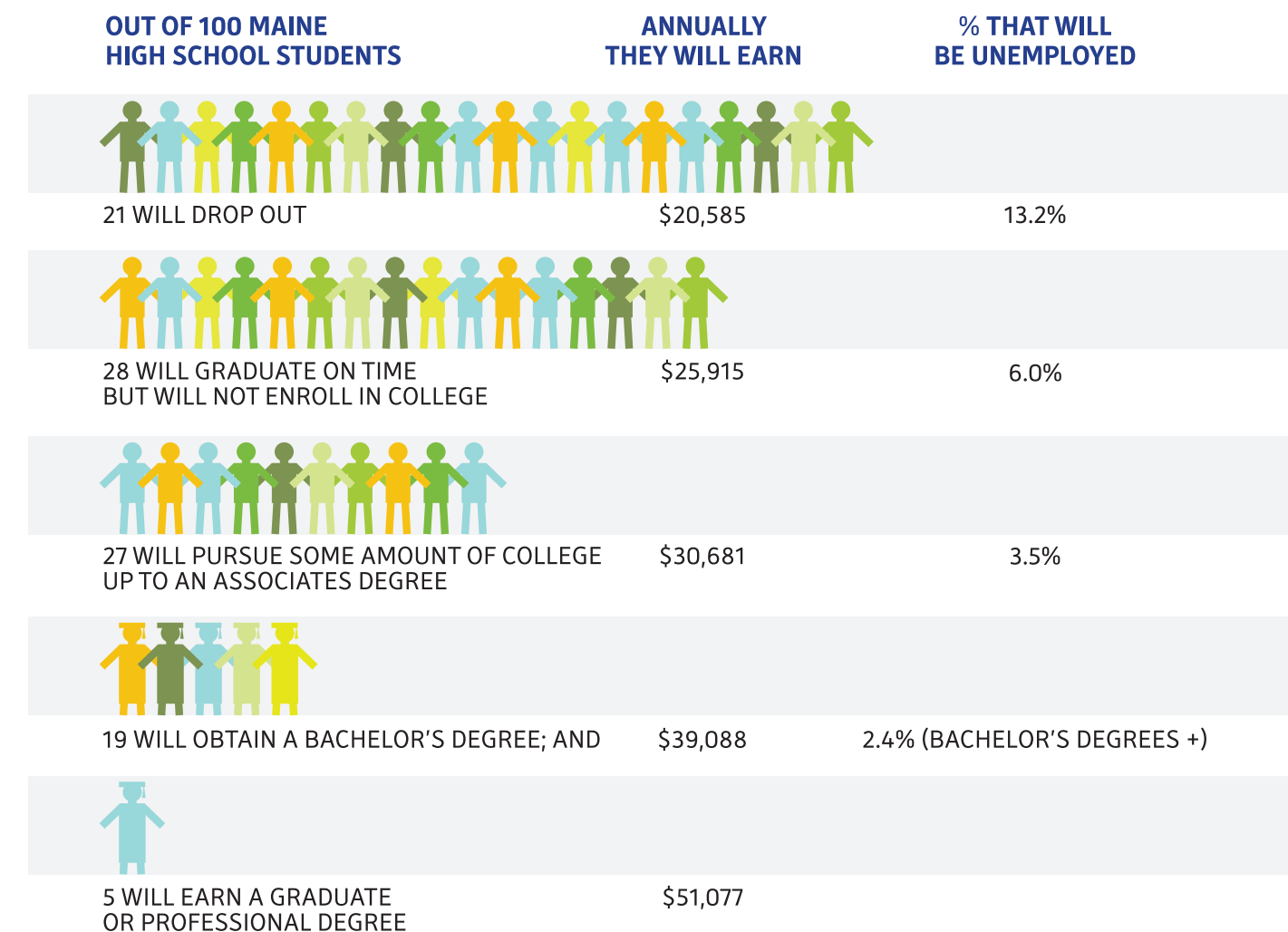


Maine people want better jobs, a stronger economy and a brighter future. Therefore, all Maine citizens must work together to create the necessary foundation for prosperity – a high-quality education system, from early childhood through college and workforce training. We must work together to ensure:

- All young children have access to quality programs that advance their development
- All students graduate from high school prepared for college, career, citizenship and life
- Many more Mainers complete a college degree or occupational certificate

MAINE'S FUTURE DEPENDS ON IT!

MAINE'S LEAKY EDUCATIONAL PIPELINE



Remodeling our education system so that it prepares ALL people for the future will require many reforms, and it will not happen overnight. Teachers, administrators, students, parents, taxpayers, businesses – we all have a stake! There are many education reforms that we must pursue over the next decade to create the economy we all want, and we can start now by setting these four goals, pursuing these proven strategies, and measuring our achievement:

GOAL 1: Ready at the starting gate

By 2020, 90% of Maine children are ready for Kindergarten.

Strategy: Ensure all young children have access to quality programs that provide early learning opportunities and enhance their development. The early years matter because early experiences affect the maturing brain’s architecture, establishing either a sturdy or a fragile foundation for later development and behavior.

Tactic 1: Make universal preschool programs available for all 4 year olds.

The benefits of providing young children with high-quality educational opportunities far exceeds the costs, with reduced special education and remedial costs, increased high school graduation rates, and decreased public welfare and incarceration rates as adults.

Maine must do more to expand preschool, eliminate the backlog in Head Start, and support efforts to coordinate school and community-based programs.

Tactic 2: Require the use of a high-quality Kindergarten screening assessment, and ensure all at-risk children have a developmental screening by age two.

78% of Maine’s children do not have developmental screening before kindergarten.

Maine needs to implement a high quality, universal screening and provide the interventions necessary so all kids are ready for school. Universal Kindergarten screening is required in 21 states to guide curriculum and instruction, evaluate schools and programs, inform policy decisions and measure progress.

Additional indicators of achievement to consider:

- % Maine children age 0-5 enrolled in high quality childcare (including center, family, Head Start, public PK)
- % four-year olds enrolled in public pre-kindergarten

Goal 2: Ready to read and calculate for learning

By 2020, 90% of 4th graders are proficient in reading and math.

Strategy: Ensure all children are proficient in reading and math by the end of 3rd grade. Up until 4th grade, children *learn to read and calculate*. Once in 4th grade, they begin to *read to learn* and will fall behind in all subject areas if they are unable to read effectively.

Tactic 1: Ensure school districts identify students struggling with reading and math and provide the additional support they need.

Ensuring 3rd graders are proficient in reading and math substantially reduces special education costs and learning disabilities, and can accurately predict high school graduation. Maine must ensure that all schools implement a high-quality intervention program and provide the professional development necessary for it to be effective. Additionally, children must be provided the health and behavioral services necessary to achieve educational success.

Tactic 2: Provide the support necessary for all K-3 teachers to demonstrate proficiency in teaching reading and math.

The National Council on Teacher Quality gave Maine a failing grade in preparing new teachers in part because the state does not require elementary school candidates “to pass a test of the science of reading or a rigorous mathematics assessment.”

Diverse states have developed excellent models that ensure all K-3 teachers and administrators are working together to make sure all students have the support they need to be successful learners.

Additional indicators of achievement to consider:

- % schools where students are making yearly academic growth

Goal 3: Ready for college, career, citizenship and life

By 2020, 90% of students graduate from high school with a standards-based diploma.

Strategy: Ensure students can demonstrate proficiency before earning their high school diploma. Students graduating from high school without having mastered basic subjects and skills are at a severe disadvantage as they enter adulthood.

Tactic 1: Support schools in offering multiple pathways for meeting learning standards and provide targeted intervention for students who fall behind.

In 2010, more than half of 11th graders did not meet standards for critical reading, math, writing, or science. Those pursuing higher education will have to pay for remedial classes that earn no credit. Those who look for work will not meet basic requirements of today’s employers.

We must do more to meet the needs and learning styles of all students with multiple learning pathways that lead to a college ready diploma. Jobs for Maine’s Graduates is one example that helps students stay engaged and be prepared for their future and should be expanded to all Maine schools.

Tactic 2: Require teacher and administrator evaluations based on diverse measures of student progress, and professional development that improves performance.

An effective teacher is the most important school-based factor impacting student achievement, and high-quality professional development substantially raises student performance. The National Council on Teacher Quality gave Maine failing grades for identifying effective teachers and for removing ineffective teachers.

Maine needs a comprehensive evaluation system to identify effective teachers and administrators, improve teaching through professional development, and provide low-performing teachers the support they need to improve or remove them from the classroom.

Additional indicators of achievement to consider:

- % 8th and 11th graders meeting or exceeding standards on the Maine state assessment
- % high school graduates enrolling in college or workforce training that do not require remediation
- % schools where students are making yearly academic growth

Goal 4: Ready for 21st century careers

By 2020, Maine will exceed the New England average for working-age adults that hold an associate’s, bachelor’s or higher degree, or industry recognized credentials.

Strategy: Make post-secondary education opportunities more affordable, accessible, and relevant to the needs of students, industry and society. Within a decade, 90% of the fastest growing, well-paying careers will require postsecondary education.

Tactic 1: Expand need-based grants and support individual tax credit programs that support more high school graduates and adults in college and workforce training programs.

For most Maine families, college costs require nearly half of their annual income. The average student debt in 2009 was \$29,143, the third highest in the country.

We must expand grants and support tax credit programs that help Mainers afford the education they need. Other solutions include: Adult Education College Transitions and the Competitive Skills Scholarship Program, and encouraging families to take advantage of college savings accounts.

Tactic 2: Require public higher education institutions to implement plans that improve efficiency, productivity, student progression, and degree completion rates.

Maine ranks poorly in focusing our higher education spending on instruction and has the lowest degree attainment rates in New England.

Our public higher education institutions must improve efficiency and collaboration, ensure more students earn a degree or industry recognized credential, and promote educational opportunities relevant to Maine’s economy. Effective models include Early College, joint two- and four-year degree programs, rewarding schools for degree completion, sector partnerships, and better advising and career planning.

Additional indicators of achievement to consider:

- % 6-year bachelor degree completion rate
- % 3-year associate degree completion rate
- % degree-earners ready for high-demand, high-growth, high-wage careers

