ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Educate Maine wishes to thank the many individuals who contributed to Education Indicators for Maine. The genesis of the Indicators comes from our predecessor organization, the Maine Coalition for Excellence in Education's Prepare Maine initiative. Special thanks to Yellow Light Breen and Bob Kautz for their leadership on that initiative.

We also want to thank those individuals who were instrumental in putting this report together: Educate Maine board members Duke Albanese, Ron Bancroft, Tim Hussey, and Meredith Jones; Lisa Pimpton from the Mitchell Institute; Mana Miliard, former Educate Maine communications consultant; the editors at Walch Education; the design team at Brown & Company; and the Educate Maine staff. This report is underwritten by the Davis Family Foundation, the John T. Gorman Foundation and the Nellie Mae Education Foundation. We are greatly appreciative of each foundation’s longtime support of our work.

Finally, we are grateful to the former boards of directors of our predecessor organizations—the Maine Coalition for Excellence in Education and the Maine Compact for Higher Education. These two groups had complimentary missions of improving education and the economy in Maine by ensuring that all citizens had equal access to quality educational opportunities. We are proud to carry on this work.
Welcome to our inaugural Education Indicators for Maine report. We developed this report to help better understand Maine’s education pipeline from early childhood through post secondary. This report focuses on ten indicators we believe best measure Maine’s educational performance.

Each piece of Maine’s education pipeline is connected to and impacted by other parts of the pipeline. In most cases, early indicators foreshadow later success or lack thereof and every indicator impacts our overarching goal that by 2023, 50% of Maine people will have a high-quality college degree, certificate or industry credential. This is not an arbitrary goal. By attaining or surpassing 50%, Maine will reach parity with other New England states in the education levels of its workforce—a feat not previously achieved and key to our state’s future economic prosperity.

Maine’s future depends on how well we prepare our citizens for the 21st century. Participation in high-quality early childhood programs, demonstrated proficiency in 1st-12th grades, preparedness for success in college and career, and matriculation from post-secondary programs are all crucial to moving Maine forward.

We urge you to join us in our efforts by adopting and following these ten indicators for measuring Maine’s future education progress and success. Together we can prepare Maine for a more prosperous future. Together we can Educate Maine.

Sincerely,

Visit www.educatemaine.org to download a copy of this report and to learn more about these ten indicators.
A 3rd grade student who doesn’t read at grade level (as reflected in 4th grade test scores) is four times less likely to graduate from high school than her proficient peers.

By the end of 8th grade, U.S. students are two years behind in math compared to their peers in other countries.
Maine’s future prosperity depends on how well we prepare our people for the 21st-century. Participation in high-quality early childhood programs, raising proficiency in 1st - 12th grade, graduating high school seniors who are prepared for college and career, and increasing the number of Mainers with post-secondary degrees and credentials are all crucial elements to moving Maine forward. Together we can Educate Maine.
High-quality early childhood education lays the foundation for Maine students’ future academic success, and is a strong predictor of the future prosperity of our state. Longitudinal studies show that children who attend quality preschool programs are less likely to require special education, become a teen parent, and commit crimes; they are also more likely to graduate from high school and go to college. High-quality early childhood education is a wise investment for our communities and our state. For every dollar invested in early learning, there is a return of at least seven and a half dollars.\(^1\)

Maine lags behind our New England neighbors in preschool participation, yet we have higher participation in public pre-kindergarten than all the New England States but Vermont.\(^2\) Recognizing that Mainers place high value on public pre-K, but are unlikely or unable to enroll their children in preschool, suggests that as a state, we could maximize children’s development at a lower cost by investing in quality early childhood programs that are integrated with the elementary school system. Such a system would promote cognitive, physical, social and emotional development in our young children, thereby increasing each child’s readiness for and eventual success in kindergarten and beyond.\(^3\)
Entering kindergarten without fundamental skills, such as being able to count to ten or recognize the letters of the alphabet, is like trying to build a house on a weak foundation. Every level thereafter becomes more precarious. Studies continue to show that participation in high-quality early childhood programs is a major factor in a child’s future success. Yet too many of our state’s three and four-year-olds do not have access to these critically important programs. Maine’s total preschool enrollment, including both public and private programs, is far lower than the U.S. and New England averages and overwhelmingly lower than other industrialized nations.

If Maine is going to compete on the regional, national and global stage, we must give more Maine children the foundation they need to become successful students, citizens, and future workers.

I am convinced that early childhood development will have the greatest positive impact on the quality of our workforce and the quality of life in Maine.

Mike Dubyak, CEO and Chairman, WEX Inc. South Portland, ME

**PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 &amp; 4-YEAR-OLDS, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE</th>
<th>DOMESTIC</th>
<th>INTERNATIONAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maine</strong></td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>United States</strong></td>
<td>46%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New England</strong></td>
<td>56%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Japan</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>United Kingdom</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mexico</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spain</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>France</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Netherlands</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At least 95% of 4-year-olds in France, the Netherlands, Spain, Mexico, Japan, and the United Kingdom are enrolled in early childhood education programs. Less than half of Maine’s 3 & 4-year-olds are enrolled in preschool—public or private.

“Today’s kindergarten is yesterday’s first grade,” according to the Pew Charitable Trusts. A child entering kindergarten without any formal preschool preparation is likely to be unprepared for the “academic” setting. Specifically, children need to come to kindergarten with a skill set not expected of a youngster twenty years ago: being able to recognize the letters of the alphabet, pay attention in class, and interact with peers. Public pre-kindergarten, like preschool, provides children with a foundation for future academic success. Without this foundation, children enter kindergarten behind their classmates and stay behind. In fact, children who do not recognize the letters of the alphabet have lower level reading skills at the end of first grade and 88% of those struggling readers will still lack sufficient reading skills in 4th grade.\(^8\)

Fortunately, Maine is on its way to addressing this problem. Nearly half of Maine’s school districts offer public pre-kindergarten and almost one-third of our four-year-olds enroll in these programs, well beyond the New England average.\(^9\) Considering Maine’s total preschool enrollment is just under 50%, it is clear that, when offered the opportunity, Maine families send their children to public pre-K. We must be expedient in expanding access to these programs for all Maine’s four year olds, thereby increasing our pre-K and preschool participation levels.

Every school district in Maine should offer a pre-K program with enough space for each eligible student.

**4-YEAR-OLDS ENROLLED IN PUBLIC PRE-KINDERGARTEN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>4-Year-Olds in Public Pre-K</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maine</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gains made by children in quality early-learning programs diminish without full-day kindergarten. Children in full-day kindergarten classes show greater reading and mathematics achievement gains than children in half-day classes. Additionally, full-day kindergarten programs help close the achievement gap between low-income students and their peers. As Maine continues to increase efforts to offer full-day kindergarten, we anticipate seeing gains down the road: from increased proficiency rates to increased access and success in higher education. Lastly, while we continue to increase access to full-day kindergarten, Maine must also develop a statewide kindergarten screening assessment tool. This universal tool would provide teachers with critical information to better identify and address learning challenges—saving money and resources over the long term and increasing the odds that children will be successful later in school.

Full-day kindergarten should be available in every district in Maine.

**FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN IN MAINE**

87% of school districts offer full-day kindergarten. Since 2006, the Maine Department of Education has not collected data on the number of schools within those districts that have full-day kindergarten. As a result, this figure could be misleading if a district has schools that do and schools that do not offer full-day kindergarten.

- **DISTRICTS WITH FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN**
- **DISTRICTS WITHOUT FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN**


**Educare of Central Maine**

Educare of Central Maine is an innovative full-day, year-round program that provides children with a strong foundation for successful learning. Educare partners with the Kennebec Valley Community Action Program Early/HeadStart and the Waterville Public Schools, resulting in a seamless transition for its students into elementary school. The results are impressive: children living in poverty who enroll in Educare as one-year-olds enter kindergarten as well prepared as children from higher socio-economic groups.
In 2002, Maine was honored for leading the nation on a composite of indicators by the Congressionally-authorized National Education Goals Panel. For several years before that, Maine was a performance leader among the states on National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) tests in reading, math, writing, and science. Yet in recent years, Maine’s NAEP rank* has dropped from a leading state to an average state, with other states accelerating while Maine’s NAEP scores have stalled. Only 32% of our 4th graders and 39% of our 8th graders are reading at proficiency. In math, where we’ve seen some increase, only 45% of 4th graders and 39% of 8th graders are proficient. Finally, while Maine has made great strides in our high school graduation rate (85% in 2012), only 48% of these students are graduating proficient in math and reading. These numbers reveal that significant changes are needed for Maine’s education system. We must do better to prepare our students for success in college and career.

Nationally, the academic achievement gap—the difference in academic performance between low and middle-income children—has widened significantly over the last 25 years. In Maine, the gap is much smaller than the U.S. average, yet we must go further to decrease this gap in order for Maine to be competitive in the 21st century. The “graying” of our state, the decline of manufacturing jobs, and the increased demand for highly skilled workers means Maine needs all of its people to graduate from high school prepared for college, career, and citizenship. Fortunately, important reform efforts like the Common Core State Standards and Proficiency-Based Learning have the potential to give every student in Maine, from Calais to Kittery, a high-quality, rigorous education that builds upon a student’s mastery of a subject and results in high-school graduates who are better prepared for success in college and career.

* Every two years, NAEP takes a sampling of students across the country to provide a national benchmark and track states’ progress.
Maine is striving to better prepare our students for success in college and career through two reform efforts: Proficiency-Based-Learning and the Common Core State Standards. In 2011, Maine joined 46 other states and the District of Columbia in adopting the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), a set of rigorous K–12 standards developed by educators, the National Governors Association, and the Council of Chief State School Officers. The CCSS are informed by the highest standards in the country and around the world. They raise the bar to help deepen students’ knowledge, conceptual understanding, critical thinking and problem solving skills. In 2011 Maine’s Learning Results were updated with the Common Core’s English Language Arts and Math standards.

Proficiency-Based Learning (PBL) is a system of instruction and assessment that is based on mastery of the knowledge and skills students are expected to learn before progressing to the next level, advancing to the next grade, or receiving a diploma. The PBL model is a student-centered approach where teachers may customize lessons to a student’s interests, needs and progress, resulting in higher engagement and success for that student. PBL in Maine relies on a set of state standards, the Learning Results, to define proficiency in a given subject area, as well as in cross-content skills, known as the Guiding Principles. In May 2012, the Maine legislature passed LD 1422, a law requiring proficiency-based diplomas by 2017. Governor LePage signed the law, and these new diplomas commence with the Class of 2018.

From Aroostook to York counties, districts are implementing these more rigorous standards and transitioning over to proficiency-based learning in their classrooms.

“Proficiency-Based Learning is the hardest thing I’ve done, but it’s also the best teaching I’ve done...because of this, our students are going to be more prepared.”

Kristi Fecteau, Teacher
Gray-New Gloucester
June 1, 2012 | BDN
Fourth-grade testing provides the first quantitative snapshot of how well we are preparing our students for academic and vocational success. Since 2005, Maine's math scores have improved marginally, while reading scores jumped five points in the last two years. A possible reason for this dramatic jump may be early results from the implementation of the Common Core Math and English Language Arts standards in 2011[27].

Not only do 4th-grade scores predict 8th-grade scores, they also affect high school and college attainment. Students who don't read proficiently by 3rd-grade (as reflected in 4th-grade test scores) are four times more likely to leave high school without a diploma than proficient readers[28].

We must continue to raise our students' reading and math proficiencies. And we must be more vigilant about making sure our students advance only when they can demonstrate mastery of skills.

### 4th-Grade Reading Proficiency (NAEP Scores)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Maine</th>
<th>New England</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

37% of Maine students were at or above proficiency in reading in 2013.

### 4th-Grade Math Proficiency (NAEP Scores)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Maine</th>
<th>New England</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

47% of Maine students were at or above proficiency in math in 2013.
By 8th grade, Maine’s proficiency scores show little improvement and still lag behind New England. In reading, 38% of Maine students are at or above proficiency, compared to 43% of students in New England. In math, 40% of Maine students are proficient, compared to 43% in New England. Eighth-grade achievement scores reveal the coherence between 4th-grade scores and college attendance. The data is important to track because it provides a strong indication of the future outcomes of our students—from 8th-grade scores we can predict 9th-grade course performance, which influences high school graduation and college attendance.

Students who are not reading at grade level early on will be severely disadvantaged at every level of education thereafter. The sooner they are given academic support, the easier it will be to get them back on track to proficiency and success in higher education and in their careers and lives.

---

**8TH-GRADE READING PROFICIENCY (NAEP SCORES)**

38% of Maine students were at or above proficiency in reading in 2013.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Maine</th>
<th>New England</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**8TH-GRADE MATH PROFICIENCY (NAEP SCORES)**

40% of Maine students were at or above proficiency in math in 2013.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Maine</th>
<th>New England</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**SOURCE:** National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard (2013)
HIGH SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT

Over the past ten years, Maine has steadily increased its high school graduation rate to 85%, making us 11th in the country in secondary school degree attainment.\[33\] In addition, the percentage of Mainers obtaining their GEDs is higher than both the U.S. and New England averages.\[34\] This is no small feat. Thanks to Maine’s dedicated educators and a statewide network of adult education, workforce partnerships, drop-out prevention programs and school-to-work organizations like Jobs for Maine’s Graduates, Maine students have multiple pathways to degree completion. Every Mainer needs a high school diploma or equivalent to earn higher wages, reduce unemployment, and gain access to higher levels of education.

85%

85% of Maine students graduated from high school in 2012.

GRADUATION RATE VERSUS PROFICIENCY

85% | GRADUATION
85% of Maine students graduated from high school in 2012.

48% | PROFICIENCY
Only 48% of Maine 11th graders are proficient in reading and math in 2012.

Although 85% of our students are graduating from high school, less than half of them are proficient in math and reading. As a result, students are graduating unprepared for college and career. Employers face a lack of skilled employees, even in tough economic times, and consistently spend their resources on training and retraining their workers. Moreover, unprepared students enter the community college and public university system requiring remediation before advancing to college level courses. Graduating from high school needs to be a springboard to future success whether in college or career. We must ensure that our students are equipped with the skills and knowledge to be engaged and productive citizens.

Current education reform efforts, such as Proficiency-Based Learning, may provide the solution to Maine's preparedness problem. By progressing students based on their competency of a subject, educators and parents can ensure a student’s mastery and skill before she advances to the next level and/or receives a diploma. In addition, rigorous standards like the Common Core, which have been adopted and integrated into Maine’s Learning Results, will help deepen a student’s learning and equip her with the skills and knowledge required for 21st-century jobs on a global playing field.

Increasing graduation rates and student preparedness will help strengthen Maine’s future prosperity and economic competitiveness.

PROFILE

Hermon High School Bridge Year

Through the Bridge Year program, students can earn college credits while attending high school. The program is a collaboration among United Technologies Center (UTC), Eastern Maine Community College (EMCC), University of Maine, and Hermon High School. Students can obtain an associate’s degree within 12 months following high school graduation with the option to transfer into a bachelor’s degree program.
By 2018, the demand for college-educated workers in Maine is projected to be seven times greater than that for high school graduates.\(^{[37]}\) Moreover, in the next 10 years, 90% of high-growth jobs will require education beyond high school.\(^{[38]}\) Yet, as the “grayest” state in the nation, our state’s demographics present a significant challenge in meeting future job demands. As more Mainers retire, they will be taking their skills and knowledge from the workforce. As a result, our state’s future economic vitality depends on filling these vacancies with a well-educated and well-trained workforce.\(^{[39]}\) A commitment to providing people with the knowledge, skills, and resources to obtain occupational certificates or college degrees is an important factor in our state’s economic prosperity. To do so, we must recognize and address the barriers to college attainment—specifically preparedness and cost.\(^{[40]}\)

Lack of adequate academic preparation is a significant problem—50% of students in the community college system and 12% of students in the University of Maine system require remedial courses; students do not get credit for such courses, yet have to pay for them. Remedial courses cost students collectively around $2 million annually. Fewer than 25% of students who take remedial courses earn degrees or transfer from two-year to four-year institutions.\(^{[41]}\) Preparing our students for college means demanding mastery of skills as reflected by proficiency-based high school diplomas.
Maine's college-going rate (the number of students who enter college in the fall immediately after graduation) increased from 57% in 2006 to 63% in 2012. Despite this gain, Maine suffers from the education “funnel effect,” whereby each step along the education pipeline results in a decrease in participation. This funnel effect is most prominent in first-generation, low-income, and minority students, yet the incremental gain in earnings with a college degree is much larger for these groups than among their more affluent peers. We must eliminate the barriers that keep students from enrolling in, persisting in, and graduating from college.

Our students need to be well prepared and supported and college must be affordable for everyone.

This graph exemplifies the “funnel effect” in our education pipeline, showing how participation and attainment drop at staggering rates at each level of education beyond high school. Of 100 9th graders, only 32 will earn a 2 or 4 year degree. This graphic represents actual numbers, not percentage of participation, and reflects the most current data.

**THE EDUCATION FUNNEL EFFECT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Of 100 Entering 9th Graders</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85 Will Graduate From High School</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54 Will Enroll In College</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 Will Graduate From A 2 Or 4 Year College</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COLLEGE-GOING RATES IN MAINE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rate</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Student Clearinghouse Student Tracker report for Maine, Maine DOE. June 2013
ON-TIME COLLEGE GRADUATION

Maine’s on-time graduation rate (six years) from public four-year institutions is the lowest in New England and just above the U.S. average. Our community college graduation rate is dramatically higher than New England and the U.S.,[49] yet only half that of our four-year institutions’ rates. The cumulative impact can’t be understated: Maine needs students graduating on time and entering the workforce because our economy depends on it. Maine workers with a bachelor’s degree earn 50% more than those with only a high school diploma, and their unemployment rate is less than half.[50] The average lifetime labor earnings of Mainers with bachelor’s degrees are 94.7% higher than those without: $2,267,384 compared to $1,164,420.[51]

Increasing the number of on-time college graduates is imperative in order to maintain and strengthen our economy.

**ON-TIME COLLEGE GRADUATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>ME Community College</th>
<th>ME Public University</th>
<th>ME Private University</th>
<th>N.E. Community College</th>
<th>N.E. Public University</th>
<th>N.E. Private University</th>
<th>U.S. Community College</th>
<th>U.S. Public University</th>
<th>U.S. Private University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), National Center for Education, U.S. Department of Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE MEAN INCOME IN MAINE WITH A HIGH SCHOOL DEGREE:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$24,902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOME COLLEGE:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$29,695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BACHELORS &amp; ABOVE:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$52,890[48]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Maine's per capita income, an important measure of economic prosperity, is the lowest in New England. Although Maine's public university system has the lowest tuition in New England, Maine residents pay more per capita income than the rest of New England. The net cost of a Maine four-year public university is 34% of per capita income versus 29% for New England. Our students are taking out more loans than the rest of New England and the U.S.—$7,366 compared to $6,466 and $5,811, respectively, for public four-year institutions.

Now, more than ever, Maine needs to find ways to decrease the net cost of college and make college more affordable for all its citizens.
MAINERS WITH COLLEGE DEGREES

College degree attainment results in significant benefits for individuals, taxpayers, and society as a whole. In addition to increased earnings and lower unemployment, degree holders enjoy better health, longer life, reduced crime, greater tolerance and increased civic involvement.\(^{[56]}\) If we are successful in raising academic achievement for all Mainers we can create a positive cycle: more college-educated parents engaging in educational activities with their children, and raising better prepared students with brighter job prospects.

In the next decade, 90% of high-growth jobs will require education beyond high school.\(^{[57]}\) Anecdotally, Maine business leaders cite the need for a better educated workforce as a primary factor in whether they will expand their business and/or move to a neighboring state with the more educated workforce they need. Our state has the lowest proportion of degree holders in New England\(^{[58]}\), which is a significant factor for Maine having the lowest incomes in the region. We must do much better in providing people with knowledge, skills, and resources to obtain occupational certificates and college degrees that lead to high-paying jobs. And we must provide our businesses with the well educated workforce they need to thrive and expand.

For the future prosperity of our state and our economic wellbeing, Maine must increase the number of college degrees to match the New England average. By 2023, our goal is for Maine to attain or surpass the New England average of 50% of its people possessing a college degree, certificate, or industry credential. This is an attainable goal, but we all must work together to make it a reality.

**MAINERS WITH COLLEGE DEGREES - GETTING TO 50% BY 2023**

By 2023, our goal is for Maine to attain or surpass the New England average of 50% of its people possessing a college degree, certificate or industry credential.

\[\begin{array}{c|c|c|c|c|c|c}
\hline
\hline
41.7% & 34.3% & 37.3% & 44.1% & \text{NEW ENGLAND’S CURRENT EXPECTED TRAJECTORY} & \text{MAINE’S CURRENT EXPECTED TRAJECTORY OF DEGREE HOLDERS} & \text{MAINE’S NEW TRAJECTORY TO ATTAIN OR SURPASS 50% ATTAINMENT} \\
\hline
\end{array}\]

IN ORDER TO ASSURE A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR MAINE,

WE NEED AN EDUCATED WORKFORCE.
AND, TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN GOOD BUSINESSES,
WE NEED MORE COLLEGE GRADUATES.

MICHELLE HOOD,
PRESIDENT AND CEO,
EASTERN MAINE HEALTH SYSTEMS
BREWER, ME
TAKE ACTION!

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

We each have a role to play in improving Maine’s education pipeline. Together we can prepare Maine’s students and adult learners for success and positively impact Maine’s future prosperity.

Parents
- Advocate for your child: if you believe your child needs extra help, ask for it.
- Make sure your child takes challenging courses, particularly in English, math and science.
- Get your child to school on time every day, ready to learn.
- Know the academic requirements and your child’s progress in meeting them.
- Support professional development for teachers.
- Attend local school board meetings.
- Emphasize the importance of education to your child’s future.

Educators
- Commit to ongoing communication with students and parents about each student’s academic progress.
- Implement a variety of support systems and instructional practices that will ensure the success of students: classroom based, school based, assessment support, and essential skills support.
- Use data to inform instructional practices.
- Offer rigorous classes.
- Advocate for professional development.
- Invite business and community leaders to your classroom.

Business
- Encourage your employees to get involved in their child’s education by attending parent teacher conferences, volunteering in schools, mentoring.
- Encourage your employees to continue their education.
- Offer tuition reimbursement.
- Host career exploration meetings with high school students.
- Share your hiring criteria with students, parents and educators: explain what you are looking for in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes.
- Support professional development for educators.

Elected Officials
- Adopt our goal of 50% post-secondary degree attainment by 2023 and work with your colleagues to positively impact the ten indicators highlighted in this report.
- Visit a school and a classroom and find out what educators in your area need most in order to improve student performance.
- Support programs, rules and/or laws that increase participation in and make more accessible high quality early childhood programs.
- Support professional development for educators.

Community
- Engender a culture of high academic expectations from your schools, district administration, faculty and students.
- Attend school board and town budget meetings.
- Become a mentor for students.
- Be informed about what is needed for students and schools to be successful in today’s economy.
- Visit a classroom - talk to students and teachers.
- Support professional development for educators.
EDUCATE MAINE is a business-led education advocacy organization whose mission is to champion college and career readiness and increased education attainment. Educate Maine was formed by the merger of the Maine Coalition for Excellence in Education and the Compact for Higher Education in December 2011.