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Educate Maine Releases “Education Indicators for Maine” 2019 Report

Annual review of Maine’s education pipeline identifies progress and challenges

PORTLAND, MAINE – [Educate Maine](#) released its seventh annual [Education Indicators for Maine](#) report Monday. The report is an in-depth examination of Maine’s education system beginning in early childhood and continuing through postsecondary education. The ten indicators measure access, participation, and performance across the system, providing a snapshot of what is working well and where investments in Maine’s education system are needed.

New this year, the report includes disaggregated data based on race/ethnicity and gender. This information is essential to understanding how to better support all Maine students, including Maine’s increasingly diverse student population.

“The main takeaways from this year’s [Education Indicators for Maine](#) are consistent with previous reports, with additional valuable data regarding diverse students,” said Educate Maine Executive Director Jason Judd, Ed.D. “In summary, to well prepare Maine students for postsecondary education and the workforce requires continued investment in expanding access to early learning programs beginning at birth, especially for economically disadvantaged and diverse students. Maine also must remain committed to efforts to close the achievement gap for disadvantaged and diverse youth, improve proficiency at every grade level for all students, and increase the number of Mainers with postsecondary degrees or credentials.”

[Education Indicators for Maine](#) finds progress has been made in several key areas. Notably, the number of Maine people achieving a post-secondary credential of value, (a skilled trade certificate or a college degree that connects a person to a good job and career in Maine), has increased from 37% in 2013 to 45%, surpassing the original 2019 goal of 44%. Educate Maine and its partners in the [MaineSpark](#) coalition are working toward 60% by 2025, the state-based attainment goal that will ensure Maine’s workforce is productive and competitive.

Additional positive findings in [Education Indicators for Maine](#) include that the proportion of school districts offering full-day kindergarten has increased to 98% from 87% in 2013, with Maine doing slightly better than New England on this measure (96%). College completion rates also have increased: 62% of students who enter college complete within 150% of normal program time.

Data indicates the on-going achievement gap for Maine’s economically disadvantaged students (those eligible for the National School Lunch Program) continues to be a challenge. Lower income students start school well behind their peers, continuously perform below their peers by wide margins, and attend college well below the rate of their non-economically disadvantaged peers (50% vs. 75%). 45% of students who are economically disadvantaged complete degrees vs. 70% of those who are not.

Achievement gaps are also significant by race/ethnicity. Reading and math proficiency are lower among American Indian, Alaska Native, Black, and Hispanic students. Four-year high school graduation rates for these students, as well as students of two or more races, is lower than Maine's total high school graduation rate, which was 87% in 2018. Supporting diverse students is the focus of a recent Educate Maine and Maine State Chamber of Commerce policy brief, [*Helping Diverse Students Thrive*](#).

“It is encouraging that Maine education, business and policy leaders are already building on the successes the report identifies and working to address challenge areas head on,” added Judd. “It is our collective responsibility to prepare today’s students for postsecondary education and the workforce. Success in school will result in bright futures and promising career paths for Maine youth, and a strong workforce to help grow Maine’s economy.”

For the full report, please go to <http://www.educatemaine.org/research-reports>.

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About Educate Maine:

Educate Maine champions career readiness by increasing the educational attainment of Maine people, enabling all students to succeed in postsecondary education and in the workplace. Landmark programs include the Maine Teacher of the Year program, Education Leaders Experience, Project>Login, and FocusMaine Intern Experience. More information is available at www.educatemaine.org.