

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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SPECIAL COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENTAL RESTRUCTURING

EDUCATION AND CULTURAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

OCTOBER 4, 1991 OUTLINE

ISSUE #1

In order to develop the full potential of Maine people and to provide for a competitive workforce leading to more and better jobs, education must be viewed as a life-long endeavor and the top priority of State government.

POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Education funding needs to be adequate, equitable and consistent;
2. Increase the state share of education funding in return for greater local acceptance and attainment of outcome based performance measures.
3. Open school facilities year round and use as community centers;
4. Increase investment in technical education programs with specific emphasis on equipment;
5. Explore new partnerships between schools and other groups (citizen groups, businesses, etc.) directed at enhancing the system with non-public resources.

ISSUE #2

Modify overall governance of the educational system to enhance efficiency and improve quality, while recognizing the importance of and benefits provided by the autonomous nature of our present education system.

POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Long range strategic planning needs to be instituted between the K-12 system, the University of Maine System (UMS), the Maine Technical College System (MTCS) and the Maine Maritime Academy (MMA) through the creation of a council of presidents and board representatives that would report annually to the Governor and Legislature;
2. Due to the magnitude and priority of educational spending, the Joint Standing Committee on Education should have a more prominent role in the appropriation process, ensuring that dollars

are more effectively allocated on a priority basis as defined in the long range planning process;

3. The missions of the K-12 system, UMS, MTCS and MMA must reflect long term educational directions and minimize overlap;
4. The State Board of Education should have greater authority to establish K-12 education policy. This would make the board more closely resemble the board structures of the UMS, MTCS and MMA.
5. The Department of Education must be granted sufficient flexibility to move resources between regulatory functions and assistance to local districts;
6. Reduce the number of school systems by providing incentives for consolidation;
7. Provide incentives that encourage restructuring of schools.

ISSUE #3

Develop a statewide policy that supports and invests in children and their families so that all children will arrive at school ready to learn and that provides a primary role for the Department of Education in the Pre-K environment.

POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Increase investment in early childhood in order to alleviate the need for expenditures in remedial intervention in later years.
2. Move oversight of the Head Start program to the Department of Education;
3. Expand Head Start to all eligible children and expand the Head Start concept to all children;
4. The Department of Education should serve as a facilitator and provide technical assistance to local communities in establishing early childhood programs and in incorporating early childhood philosophy in the public school curriculum;
5. Encourage delivery of services to children and families on a regional basis that uses, whenever possible, existing school facilities;

6. The Department of Education should serve as a catalyst for providing increased parenting education through local adult education programs;

ISSUE #4

There are opportunities for improving delivery of educational services and effect cost savings through improved coordination, cooperation, and allocation of resources among K-12 system, UMS, MTCS, and MMA.

POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS

1. Encourage creation of new partnerships that expand "ownership" and/or policy making authority over commonly shared resources. For instance, the ITV system, libraries and information management systems;
2. Examine associate degree and certificate programs offered by the UMS and MTCS to ensure that they are appropriately placed and not duplicative;
3. Examine curriculum sharing between the UMS, MTCS and MMA. For example, liberal arts components of MTCS degrees could be delivered by the UMS.
4. Provide access to the ITV System for all Maine schools and provide incentives for broader use;
5. Explore the delivery of technical education programs to better integrate grades 11 and 12 with post-secondary studies and to better share resources to ensure efficiency and quality;
6. Examine regional delivery of special education services;
7. Expand the use of technology so that there is a better flow of information between schools, between the department and schools, and between the institutions of higher learning and the public schools;
8. Better integrate information technology into the K-12 academic curriculum.

SPECIAL COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENTAL RESTRUCTURING
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND CULTURAL SERVICES

The subcommittee began its deliberations by framing the preamble and goals and areas of potential study set forth at the end of this report.

Over the past several weeks, the subcommittee has met with persons knowledgeable about education to explore the issues implicit in the preamble, goals and potential study areas. Every informant has been asked three questions. Do these issues merit study? Are there other issues which the subcommittee has overlooked? What specific problems need to be addressed?

So far the informants have agreed that all the areas merit study and that they pretty well cover the important issues.

At this time, the subcommittee has met with:

1. Senator Estes and Representatives Crowley and Norton of the Legislative Committee on Education,
2. school superintendents Leo Martin, Thomas Edwards and Judith Lucarelli,
3. former Bowdoin College Professor Paul Hazelton,
4. Dean Moore of the University of Southern Maine College of Education,
5. Director Henry Bourgeois of the Maine Development Foundation,
6. Chancellor Woodbury of the University of Maine System.
7. President Fitzsimmons of the Technical College System,
8. President Curtis of the Maine Maritime Academy,
9. and Commissioner Bither of the Department of Education.

The subcommittee has scheduled six future meetings for September 13th, 20th and 27th. These will have different foci than the earlier meetings.

The subcommittee will meet with President Connick of the University of Maine at Augusta to discuss the role of Maine's community colleges and the organization of the Inter-active Television Network.

The subcommittee will meet with several educators to discuss what needs to be done to ensure every child begins school ready to learn. The presenters will be from the Departments of Education and Human Services, from the Division of Community Services in the Executive Department and from the University of Maine at Farmington.

The subcommittee will meet with several school board members to discuss with them what they perceive to be the one thing, other than more money, which will help them bring about change.

They will also be asked how the geographic organization of school districts affects school governance.

The subcommittee will meet with several high school students and recent graduates attending post-secondary schools to ask them what one thing, other than money, they think will improve schools. Those in post-secondary school will also be asked how well high school prepared them for further study.

Finally, the subcommittee will meet separately with several school principals and several elementary and high school teachers to ask them what one thing, other than money, they think will improve schools.

Several specific questions have emerged from the subcommittee's meetings with its informants. The subcommittee believes these will form the nuclei of its studies for the remainder of the fall and has organized its next six meetings around several of these questions.

The questions have been inserted into the subcommittee's study outline at the points where they seem most pertinent.

Preamble

It is the responsibility of state government to serve the citizenry of the state, its human resources, through investment in a comprehensive system of quality education and cultural opportunities that are accessible, equitable and effective.

Should education be the number 1 priority in Maine state government?

How can we educate the public about the importance of education?

How can we better educate school boards to improve their relations with local constituencies?

In an era of limited financial resources and increasing demands for quality education, it is imperative that all institutions within Maine's educational delivery system work together to more efficiently and effectively deliver education services. Although Maine is recognized as a leader in educational reform, an unprecedented commitment to education must occur if the State is to meet the six National Goals for Education adopted by the President, the nation's Governors and the Congress.

How can we ensure every child begins school ready to learn?

How can we integrate early childhood with education?

Goals

1. State investment in human capital must be adequate and educational services (broadly defined) at all levels must be rational and well-coordinated.
2. Education programs in the state must be funded from sources that are adequate and equitable.
3. The state must establish appropriate minimum levels of educational opportunity and performance.
4. Maine's workers must be adequately trained to meet the state's present and future needs for a skilled and adaptable work force.
5. All citizens must have access to and opportunities for lifelong cultural and educational opportunities.

Study Area I Coordination of Resources

There is an apparent lack of coordination in the use of resources by the state's educational delivery systems. The subcommittee wishes to explore the potential links which may be forged between the state's educational institutions so that faculty, academic programs, buildings and facilities and cultural resources may be shared.

What mechanisms can be employed to encourage more cooperation and collaboration among educational institutions?

How can we form linkages among the Department of Education, the University of Maine System, the Technical College System and the Maine Maritime Academy?

Is there adequate communication among the various educational sectors and between state government and local schools?

Study Area II Geographic Issues

The subcommittee will examine the question of whether schools in the state are efficiently organized geographically. This question concerns not just the configurations of our public schools (organized as school administrative districts, municipal schools, school unics, etc.), but also higher education. The possibility of sharing resources between geographical areas may also be explored.

Can we better organize local schools to improve quality and efficiency?

What is the relation between the Department of Education and local schools?

How can we help the Department of Education become more of a facilitator for local schools?

The subcommittee is also interested in whether geographical differences influence the educational delivery system.

Study Area III Opportunities for Expanded Use of Technological Development in Communications

To maintain a quality educational system, we must encourage the wise use of developing technologies.

Given their cost and complexity, how can we expand the use of technology for all systems both for delivery and for technical education?

How ought we to budget for the replacement of instructional capital equipment such as computers and machine tools?

Study Area IV Life-Long Learning

The subcommittee plans to study the realities of life-long learning in Maine. Attention will be focussed on adult education, worker training and retraining, and the concept of pursuing further education (formal academic, informal and cultural) for the joy of learning.

How can the state facilitate change and innovation in adult education?

What does the Oregon model for secondary education have to offer us a guide for preparing people for life-long learning?

Study Area V Coordination Between Government and Educational Institutions

The subcommittee will examine current efforts at coordination between educational institutions and government agencies dealing with labor, corrections, health and human services, and similar areas.

Who sets education policy for the state and what are the roles of of the State Board of Education and the Boards of Trustees of the University of Maine System, the Technical College System and the Maine Maritime Academy?

How does educational policy integrate with economic development policy?

What is the link between Legislative appropriations for education and educational policy?

How can we ensure long-range educational planning?

How can we provide the Department of Education more flexibility in the internal allocation of staff and resources?

Certification should be addressed broadly, rather than in detail.

How can we provide local schools more flexibility in their allocation of staff and resources?

How can we encourage creative competition among schools?