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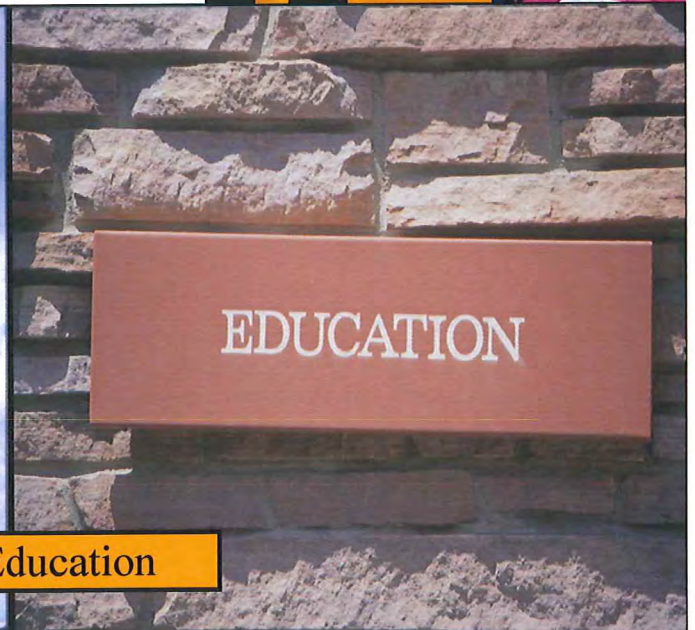
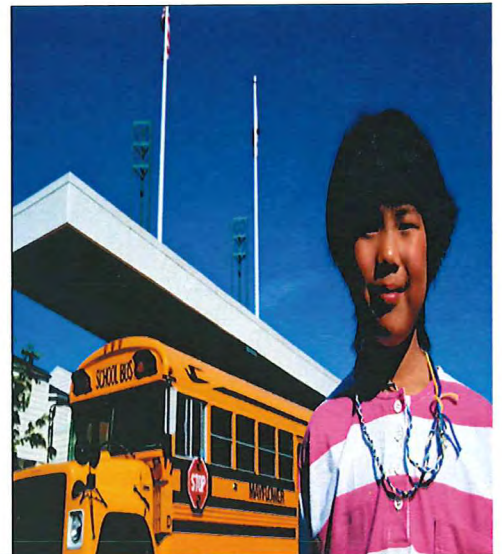
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December 2003

REGIONALIZATION, ESSENTIAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES, LEARNING RESULTS,
INSTRUCTION, POLICY RESEARCH, GOVERNANCE, ADMINISTRATION, HIGHER
EDUCATION, POLICY, EDUCATION FUNDING, SOCIAL SERVICES

High Expectations

Goals for Maine Public Education: A Comprehensive Ten-Year Vision



Prepared by Policy Institute for Public Education



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

JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI
GOVERNOR

SUSAN A. GENDRON
COMMISSIONER

Dear Citizens of Maine:

Maine Citizens are always there to care, facilitate, minister, and do what they can to help their fellow citizens be successful in their endeavors to chip from our rugged granite the ingredients necessary to help us all survive not only rough Maine winters, but also recession and any adverse conditions that befall us.

We are again in the recovery period of another national and state recession. The State is in very difficult economic times. Published demographics and reports from respected sources predict that we have no choice but to change the way we do business through both local and state governments. One of the main changes must come through the manner in which we govern, operate, maintain, and fund public schools from kindergarten through college. We have high expectations for our children's learning; we must have high expectations for the full process of how we make this available to them.

A group of Maine citizens with a great depth of experience in Maine education, other services to children, and Maine Government has formed a non-profit organization entitled Policy Institute for Public Education (PIPE). This report, *High Expectations: A Ten Year Goal Statement for Maine Public Education*, has been developed for and by (PIPE) with the vital assistance of many experts working with PIPE and known as The Roundtable. The names of PIPE and Roundtable members responsible for this report are published within the report.

Maine people recognize that our economic future rests with our best renewable resource, our children. All measures and standards tell us that the level of education our children achieve predicts their economic and social success. The better and higher the education, the more successful the individual and the State become. Education is the best investment any government can make. Witness the enormous changes the G.I. Bill of Rights made to the nation's prosperity through its college education programs for veterans.

I thank the Policy Institute for Public Education and its Roundtable very much and look forward to the continuing updates of the report. We have here a series of obtainable goals for Maine from Maine citizens of accomplishment.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan A. Gendron".

Susan Gendron
Maine State Commissioner of Education

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Kennebunkport, Maine

Richard Barringer
Research Professor, Muskie School
of Public Service, University of
Southern Maine
Portland, Maine

Harvey Berman
Of Counsel
The Spurwink Institute
New Gloucester, Maine

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State Board of Education
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Mike Brennan
Maine State Senator/former Chair,
State of Maine Legislature's Joint
Standing Committee on Education
Portland, Maine

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Dean, College of Education and Human
Development
The University of Maine
Orono, Maine

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Superintendent, MSAD #9
New Sharon, Maine

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Maine Children's Alliance
Augusta, Maine

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Bay CSD 4/Schoodic CSD 11
Sullivan, Maine

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State of Maine Economist
Augusta, Maine

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Director, New England Educational
Policy Center, University of
Connecticut
Storrs, CT

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Education
Kennebunkport, Maine

Jean Mattimore
CEO, Maine Career Advantage
Former Commissioner of Finance and
Administration
Southern Maine Community College
South Portland, Maine

Walter McIntire
School Solutions Partner/former
professor, University of Maine
Portland, Maine

Peter Mills
Maine House of Representatives
Skowhegan, Maine

James Morse
Superintendent, MSAD #47
Oakland, Maine

James Rier
Policy Director, Maine Department of
Education
Augusta, Maine

Jack Rosser
Of Counsel
The Spurwink Institute
New Gloucester, Maine

Gary Seekings
School Solutions Partner/founder of
CyberTours
Kennebunk, Maine

Mark Shibles
Senior Advisor, New England
Educational Policy Center,
University of Connecticut
Storrs, CT

David Silvermail
CEPARE, University of Southern Maine
Portland, Maine

Paul Vestal
Catholic Charities of Maine/Chairman,
Maine Human Rights Commission
Plymouth, Maine



HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Goals for Maine Public Education: A Comprehensive Ten-Year Vision

POLICY INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

December 2003

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Developed by the independent Policy Institute for Public Education after extensive consultation with education constituencies and state government experts, this ten-year vision for Maine public education identifies current accomplishments and needs for improvement of the K-16 system, followed by specific goals to be attained at the end of the period. The goals are based on two major criteria: what is best for Maine children and fiscally most efficient.

Three highest priority goals are identified: the need for regionalization or consolidation of school units, the importance of school funding based on the Essential Programs and Services model, and a curriculum built upon the *Learning Results* paradigm.

Eight other goal areas are then identified and described. Advances in instruction, policy research, governance, administration, higher education, policy, education funding, and social services contribute to the larger goal of “. . . high student achievement . . . for a vibrant state economy dependent on a well-prepared and highly skilled workforce.”

INTRODUCTION

Maine education stands at a crossroad. Should the citizens of Maine be satisfied with the status quo in which current high levels of student achievement compared to other states are linked to steadily increasing education costs, causing rising tax burdens at state and local levels? Should Maine continue to expend millions of dollars of scarce state resources building schools for a steadily declining K-12 student population? Should we continue to administer our schools at the local level in a multitude of individual administrative units, which duplicate support services and administrative costs from one small unit to its next-door neighbor?

Or is Maine prepared to make daunting choices in how we administer and finance our public schools in order to commit greater resources to educate students to yet higher levels of performance, while holding high aspirations for their personal futures and thus increasing the number of Maine youth attending and graduating from its institutions of higher education? Should there not be an increased recognition of the close link between a more efficient and effective education system and the development of a vibrant and creative economy? A group of Maine citizens devoted itself to responding to these questions during the past year and engaged in a process which resulted in a desirable, realistic, and attainable plan for Maine education ten years from now and beyond.

POLICY INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Policy Institute for Public Education (PIPE) is a mechanism for problem solving based on a team effort of individuals from several areas of public life. PIPE works through subcommittees, a broad consultant group, and is supported by a small core staff. The work is guided by a Board of Directors comprised of members from the business, education, public policy, and human services communities. PIPE drew on the expertise of its members (a complete list of members may be found on the inside cover of this report), and consulted in-depth with legislators, educators, policymakers, and the State Economist on demographic and economic trends, with special attention on taxation and school funding issues. The Policy Institute also met with representatives of school boards, superintendents, principals, and teachers, while its legislative members were able to illustrate the recommendations with their knowledge of the current political climate for education reform and the perennially debated school funding issue. We appreciate their contributions, but assume full responsibility for this report, which summarizes our findings and recommendations in a plan for education's future in our state.

GOAL STATEMENT

An adequately funded public education system based on the Essential Programs and Services principles is important not only for high student achievement, but also for a vibrant state economy dependent on a well-prepared and highly skilled workforce. Such a system will also result in a cultural climate which promotes a wide diversity of political, intellectual, and technological expression designed to retain young adults in our state. Public funding for municipal and educational services linked to reasonable accountability measures, which assess achievement of the *Learning Results* (1) at the K-12 level, and research leading to similar descriptors of outcomes for public higher education shall ensure equity in taxation for governmental units and individuals, and equality of access to all levels of education for Maine citizens.

We also recognize that developing and presenting this set of goals is but the first step. Proof of its worth will depend on how well it is debated, how well it represents the wishes of Maine citizens, and how well it is implemented. We stand ready to assist in whatever way will be most useful to the students and citizens of the State of Maine.

MAINE EDUCATION TODAY

Today, Maine enjoys an enviable reputation nationally for its K-12 system as shown in the following selected data:

KUDOS

- Maine was rated number one in the nation—the highest performing education system—by the National Education Goals Panel (2) an independent, bipartisan agency of Congress charged with measuring goals for student readiness, student achievement, educational attainment, and school climate. The eight goals are those developed by the nation's governors with the President, and accepted by Congress. The 1999 report ranked Maine a high performing state across all eight goals after examining the state's performance on a host of indicators.
- Maine was rated number one in the nation—the best state in which to raise a child—according to a July 1999 report released by the Children's Rights Council (3) a Washington, D.C. based national advocacy group.
- Maine will have become the first state in the nation to equip all seventh and eighth grade students and teachers with portable, wireless personal computers beginning in 2002 and expanding to grade eight in 2003.
- Maine is receiving national acclaim for its first-in-the-country focus on reforming its high schools (*Promising Futures* report) (4) and is now engaged in a similar groundbreaking effort to address student behavior and ethics through character education (*Taking responsibility* report) (5).
- A 1997 study by *Forbes* magazine revealed that, in a nationwide comparison of the states, Maine gets the "biggest bang for its education buck." Per pupil spending in Maine is near the national average, while its students have the highest composite score on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Average investment and top performance—not a bad scorecard!
- The community colleges enrolled 11,625 credit students this fall, an increase of 15% over last year. Enrollment of degree-seeking students increased by 18% to 8,898 students. Degree enrollment has more than doubled since 1994.
- MCCS will freeze its tuition at \$68 per credit hour for the fifth and sixth consecutive years thanks to funding of \$950,000 from The Bernard Osher Foundation and the State. This is an unprecedented commitment to providing low-cost higher education in Maine.
- MCCS signed a partnership agreement with the Adult Education Association of Maine to increase access to community colleges. Students who need additional academic preparation before they enter a community college can take courses targeted to their needs and return to the community colleges to pursue their college program.

- Maine has successfully connected all of its public schools and public access libraries to the Internet. To the best of our knowledge, Maine was the first state in the nation to accomplish this extraordinary initiative. All schools and libraries connected to the Maine School Library network receive unlimited Internet access at no cost.
- A recent University of Maine System compilation, "Education Partnerships and Initiatives with Schools and Government Agencies," (6) describes more than 150 examples of current collaborative projects between the universities and schools, early childhood agencies, the Maine Department of Education, and the Community College System. Through ongoing and emerging partnerships and enterprising initiatives, the University of Maine System is an increasingly dynamic force and engaged colleague in advancing the quality of teaching and learning at all levels.

CHALLENGES

Drawing on State Economist Laurie G. Lachance's report, *Maine's Investment Imperative (7)*, and on other consultants, the Policy Institute identified the following challenges as most pressing for establishing a brighter future:

- The postsecondary educational attainment of Maine's people is below the national average. This means that Maine's workforce is undereducated to meet the demands of a knowledge-based economy. The State Planning Office "found that there are two factors which go a long way in explaining the income differential that exists among the states, namely the percentage of adults with at least a four-year degree and the dollars per employed worker spent on research and development. As of 1998, when the goals of this initiative were developed, 19% of Maine adults had college degrees and \$255 per worker was invested in R&D, giving Maine a rank of 46th and 44th, respectively...."
- Maine is experiencing an outmigration of youth. The loss of youth in the 20-29 year cohort varies geographically, showing greatest declines in the four western mountain counties, Washington and Aroostook counties, with lesser but observable declines in the rest of the State. Similar disparities exist in population changes across Maine counties.
- Maine's population is homogeneous. Maine's 96.5% Caucasian population makes Maine the most racially homogeneous state in the nation. Maine's lack of diversity in race, heritage, ethnicity, or metropolitan corporate experience contributes to a lack of creativity and energy which, research has shown, richly benefit the economic health of a region.
- Maine's tax burden is excessively high, placing Maine in 1999 second only to New York State in state and local taxes, while neighbor New Hampshire holds 50th place.
- Perhaps the greatest concern for Maine parents and teachers: Maine ranks poorly on various comparisons with other New England states regarding indicators of educational aspirations—our youngsters complete high school at a high rate, but they do not pursue postsecondary study as they should. Recent data show an increase in plans by high school students to enroll in postsecondary education programs from 57.3% in 1992-1993 to 64.3% in 1998-1999. Recall, however, that in 1998 only 19% of Maine's adult population held at least a four-year college degree.

TEN-YEAR VISION

Goal statements for components of an enhanced public education initiative follow, with the three highest priority areas identified and described (REGIONALIZATION, ESSENTIAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES, LEARNING RESULTS). Following the three highest priority items, recommendations are presented as goal statements—what things should look like ten years from now—in eight additional categories: INSTRUCTION, POLICY RESEARCH, GOVERNANCE, ADMINISTRATION, HIGHER EDUCATION, POLICY, EDUCATION FUNDING, and SOCIAL SERVICES.

The criteria for the selection of goals were (a) what is best for Maine students academically, and (b) how to provide this education in the most efficient and cost-effective manner.

HIGHEST PRIORITY GOALS

I. REGIONALIZED COOPERATIVE SERVICES/NUMBER OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS

A. Establishment of Regional Cooperatives

Goal: The first priority in assuring a more effective, efficient and research-based public education system has been given to the establishment of education regions. Their boundaries are based either on the existing vocational regions or alternative designs familiar from other states. These new governance units provide, for all children within a region, a rich variety of academic courses and extracurricular offerings. Reduced costs in meeting central service needs, as well as greater capacity to hire highly qualified teachers and administrators are additional benefits of the system.

Boundaries of these regions are based either on the existing vocational education regions or alternative designs such as the superintendents' regions or the higher education professional development regions or combinations of these alternatives. The regions in which cooperatives might deal with special education, transportation, or others directly related to services to children will require consideration to distance while those involved in such areas as professional development and assessment might be less concerned about the distance factor.

Research has shown that the size of schools—especially high schools—has a significant influence on student learning. High schools in large cities sometimes attempt to educate as many as 5,000 students, a number far too large to meet the needs of individual students, to provide a nurturing environment during this critically important time of life or to assure that every student is known by a group of teachers, guidance counselors, and administrators. Research also shows, however, that a high school

with too few students deprives these students of many opportunities in their academic preparation: few if any foreign language courses, a lack of advanced science and mathematics offerings, as well as a constrained extracurricular program. Maine is home to a large number of these small schools with limited programs yet requiring major local tax effort for their existence. Costs for local administration, teachers for high quality but low enrollment courses, as well as building maintenance are duplicated in neighboring schools throughout our state where 24 out of 129 high schools have enrollments of fewer than 200 students.

(1) Regionalization of school districts, with attendant combination of high schools, would provide a richer yet more cost-effective curriculum for all students.

Since salary and staff costs represent 70-80% of average school budgets, a study (8) presented in May 2003 focused on a comparison of these costs.

The study reveals compelling evidence for regionalization or consolidation by comparing Maine's staffing averages with those of comparable states (W. Virginia, N. Dakota, S. Dakota, Idaho, Oregon).

Drawn from U.S. Census Public Employment Data (9), the evidence shows that for populations of 10,000, Maine full-time equivalents exceed those of the U.S. and the selected states, e.g.:

- local government FTEs are 377 for the U.S., while Maine employs 410,
- administrative non-school FTEs: 15 for the U.S., 24 for Maine,
- K-12 total FTEs: 220 for U.S., 280 for Maine.

A comparison of Maine with Idaho (both at approximately 1.3 million in population) shows that while Maine has only 16 counties vs. 44 for Idaho, Maine's 492 municipalities compare to only 200 for Idaho.

By 2012 Maine's Legislature and State Board of Education will have taken action to create regionalized cooperatives and initiated several school consolidations.

B. Regional Bargaining

Goal: Multiple bargaining agreements for individual school units are replaced by regional master contracts for teachers, administrators, and school staff, thus reducing regional and statewide bargaining costs such as attorney fees and multiple board expenses.

Currently, each of Maine's school units negotiates multiple contracts for its employees. A regionalized system would allow for the development of a single contract for each employee group (aides, teachers, administrators, etc.). Larger size regions provide the opportunity for agreement on a number of desirable but previously unattained issues: greater use of contracted services for busing, busi-

ness, central office staff, and perhaps even for certain curricular areas. A longer school year may be achieved, while negotiable topics may be extended to a variety of other issues. School board size is limited to no more than nine members for greater efficiency. A greater number of qualified principal and superintendent candidates are available to the reduced number of school units.

Within the regions the coordination of efforts will establish region-wide services that impact both the instructional and business components of education. Regionally supported efforts will create depth and rigor for local assessment systems, special education programming, advanced placement courses, adult education programs, school choice, magnet schools, and other systems of teaching and learning. Additionally, positive fiscal impact will be made in transportation, food services, purchasing and other appropriate areas where efficiencies can be identified.

Each regional entity will have developed a master plan, with incentives for the coordination of services in order to enhance efficiency as well as instructional services. As a part of this planning process, it has been essential to study the number of administrative units within each region. This process was begun in 2002 when questions were raised by the Department of Education and State Board of Education concerning the fiscal implications of the construction of new school facilities while continuing declines in school-aged populations are projected. Considerations for greater efficiency include reducing the number of Local Education Agencies within the State of Maine. It is clear that appropriate and more efficient governance can be provided with fewer school districts.

C. Maine School Facilities

Goal: to have fully implemented and refined the needs-based system established via legislation in 1998, including mandated maintenance and renewal, a system of state oversight, and regionalized solutions to facility needs.

The State Planning Office in cooperation with the Regional Cooperatives and the Department of

Education shall be fully involved in planning, site selection, and other details.

II. ESSENTIAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Goal: By 2012 the Essential Programs and Services model has been well established as the basis of assuring adequate and equitable opportunities for every person in the public schools of Maine.

The Essential Programs and Services Model (EPS) is designed to ensure that all schools have the programs and services that are essential if all students are to have equitable educational opportunities to achieve Maine's *Learning Results*. The core of EPS is a funding plan to help ALL students, which means, "achieving common ends through uncommon means."

Two central tenets of the model are:

1. adequate resources based on each child's unique needs, and
2. distribution and use of resources determined at the local level.

The EPS model is designed to answer two questions:

1. How much should it cost to educate our children?
2. How much of the total costs should the State pay?

Developed over the last several years, EPS now is supported by the Maine Department of Education,

the State Board of Education, the Maine Leadership Consortium, and most recently in an article in the *Maine Townsman*, organ of the Maine Municipal Association (10).

Herman cites data developed by the State Board of Education showing that statewide costs for K-12 education under EPS are almost identical to those in the current school funding formula, though arrived at in a different manner.

Components of EPS are:

1. total student populations in grades K-5, 6-8, and 9-12;
2. three specialized student populations: economically disadvantaged, limited English proficiency, and all K-2 students; and
3. teacher staffing data.

Importantly, they are unique in that they tie to the *Maine Learning Results*, and describe how communities should focus their resources.

III. MAINE LEARNING RESULTS

Goal: By 2012 the *Maine Learning Results* are firmly established as the basis for education planning and instruction. The *Learning Results* are based on the belief that all students can learn to high levels of literacy and include a description of what students need to know and be able to do. Learning should be demonstrated using multiple measures, and academic freedom shall prevail for educators regarding the “means”—methods of instruction, selection of learning materials, and the design of the curriculum.

Starting more than 15 years ago, educators, students, parents, and citizens-at-large devoted large amounts of time and great effort in attempting to answer the question of what Maine students should know and be able to do. A beginning vision was outlined in the document *Maine's Common Core* (11), which for the first time provided specific curriculum goals for Maine schools. Defined by a gubernatorial commission, the document received not only statewide discussion and commendations, but was highlighted as a cutting-edge model at national meetings of the Education Commission of the

States; the Council of Chief State School Officers; and in presentations to legislators in Georgia, Colorado, and North Carolina. During the following years this initial work was greatly enhanced in both depth and public acceptance. The *Maine Learning Results* were adopted into law in 1998. Since that time, the *Learning Results* have become the touchstone for Maine curriculum development, local and state assessments, including reconfiguring the Maine Educational Assessment, teacher development, and preparation.

OTHER RELATED GOALS

IV. INSTRUCTION

A. Student Assessment

Goal: An assessment system is in place, which holds individual schools accountable for the academic performance of students and provides for continuous improvement in planning and instruction.

The need for assessment of student progress is consistent with the requirements of No Child Left Behind (12) legislation and Maine's *Learning Results*. The implementation of any and all assessments, be they individual or systemic, will require prior agreements as to purpose and scope as well as preparation of teachers and administrators for implementation.

A successful assessment system will measure the extent to which students are achieving or making progress toward meeting curriculum or content standards. These same assessments will inform teachers and administrators of results that should be directed toward guiding teaching strategies and further curriculum adjustments. Finally, school assessments provide information to the various pub-

lics as to the overall accomplishments of teaching and learning when measured against clearly defined goals: national, state, or local.

Assessments must be viewed as a set of tools guiding teaching, learning, curriculum development, and certifying student mastery of content. Assessment policies have been developed in response to demands for accountability. Acknowledging the technical and time requirements of quality assessment task development, teachers are provided access to a secure website, operated and maintained by the Department of Education. Collections of valid and reliable assessment tasks are available for all grade levels and in all content areas. Teachers are able to scan and download items selected in order to specifically match unit or lesson learning outcomes.

B. Teachers

Goal: Maine will have available an adequate pool of talented and committed graduates from preservice preparation programs. In addition, there will be incentives, both financial and educational, to attract so-called non-traditional applicants to alternative certification programs. Differentiated compensation programs will attract qualified applicants to shortage areas such as the physical sciences, mathematics, and special education. Disincentives to careers in education will be reduced (retirement benefits, low starting salaries, government pension offsets precluding most teachers from accessing social security benefits).

The salary structure for teachers has historically been a disincentive to entering the profession. This problem has grown in the past decade, as salaries have become not competitive with other professions. Salaries and benefits in 2012 are sufficient to attract and retain the best candidates for teaching positions. In Maine, salaries will equal the national average when adjusted for cost-of-living.

Teacher leadership positions, differentiated roles for teachers, and performance-based career ladder systems are provided with differentiated salaries and responsibilities. Such positions provide opportunities for recognition and advancement for teachers. Pay incentives to teach high-need disciplines or in high-need areas are provided.

Retirement and retention programs to increase teachers' ability to move to other states without loss of benefits have been developed. Disincentives to careers in education such as low retirement benefits and government pension offsets that preclude many teachers from accessing social security benefits have been addressed.

Alternative routes to teacher certification to provide opportunities under strict standards for those college graduates prepared in other disciplines or with different experiences to enter teaching have been established.

Increased information collection regarding the demand/supply of teachers on a statewide basis is readily available.

All teacher preparation programs in Maine meet rigorous program approval and accreditation standards.

Rigorous admission and graduation standards for teacher preparation programs are in place. Standards, tests of content knowledge, and performance assessments have been established to ensure that candidates are qualified.

Mentored induction programs for new teachers are readily available and assistance programs to provide support for experienced teachers have been funded.

C. Strengthening Maine's Teaching Force: Teacher Recruitment and Development

Goal: To define the issues, determine strategies, and implement policy to ensure that high quality teaching occurs in every Maine classroom.

No issue relative to the future of education in Maine is more central than attracting and retaining teachers and providing them with necessary support so that they can facilitate learning in all students. The federal legislation embodied in "No Child Left Behind" as presently designed will not fully address

that challenge. School districts continue to lose many of their teachers to retirement or positions elsewhere. Retention of teachers in the profession is truly a national crisis caused by low salaries, too few incentives, difficult working conditions, and increasing demands.

Job Design and Compensation Issues

State financial support is provided to students in higher education preparing to become teachers.

Data collection efforts pertaining to teacher supply/demand circumstances in Maine are in place.

Teacher Preparation Programs

All teacher preparation programs in Maine meet rigorous program approval and accreditation standards.

Regional Teacher Development Centers

The University of Maine System, the Maine Department of Education, and the nine regional superintendents' associations, will have created regional teacher development centers serving in-service teachers statewide. These centers operate under the direction of a board of directors comprised of representatives of the regional superintendent's association, teachers, principals, one or more campuses of the University of Maine System, the Maine Department of Education, and representatives of regional K-16 partnerships.

The Regional Teacher Development Center (RTDC) concept represents an enduring infrastructure to support continuing individual teacher development statewide. Most school professional

development initiatives tend to focus on broad-based school and district needs rather than on the individual teacher's needs. Certainly, the RTDC's work exists within the context of school improvement initiatives underway, but it focuses on assisting the individual teacher and directly influencing what goes on in his/her classroom.

These centers are supported by a combination of federal Teacher Quality Act funds via local school systems, by the University System, and by the Maine Department of Education.

The RTDCs provide alternative certification programs for those employed as teachers with conditional certification, induction support for those new to the profession, professional development opportunities connected with the teacher's discipline or pedagogy, access to graduate degree programs regionally, and support for teachers seeking certification under the auspices of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

Continued funding of the RTDCs from the Department of Education, the University of Maine System and the local school systems are built into the base budgets of each of these entities.

Statutory provisions allowing regional entities like the RTDCs to become legally established fiscal entities enabling them to become eligible for direct funding from the State have been enacted.

D. Special Education

Goal: Special education funding will have been incorporated into the Essential Programs and Services model, similar to other aspects of public education. Approaches to assuring a consistent approach to identifying those in need of special education services will be applied based upon federal and state laws and guidelines and on a coordinated approach via the regional cooperatives.

Every effort shall have been made to influence the federal government to meet its funding responsibilities in order to assure adequate revenues on

behalf of all students including special education students.

E. High School Reform

Goal: In 2012, the practices that have been found to propel secondary student achievement and development are implemented throughout all Maine secondary schools. Through evidence collected by the Center of Inquiry on Secondary Education after 12 years of investigation, the Department of Education, with the support of the relevant professional education organizations, created policies and procedures for the conduct and practices of Maine's secondary schools. The new policies and procedures promote:

1. a safe, respectful and caring environment;
2. high universal expectations with a variety of learning opportunities;
3. understanding and actions based on assessments data;
4. teachers' practices, which values and builds upon the contributions and needs of each learner;
5. equitable and democratic practices; and
6. coherence among mission, goals, actions, and outcomes.

Since the 1998 publication of *Promising Futures, A Call to Improve Learning for Maine's Secondary Students* (13), innovative and successful strategies to support the achievement and development of secondary students have been designed, implemented, and measured. It is not enough to invite secondary schools to improve learning opportunities and results for students. Rather, with the known efficacy of selected strategies, policies and procedures for all secondary schools that are proven to lead in increasing academic achievement and positive personal development for all learners have been created and funded. For example, quoting from *Promising Futures*, "Every student employs a personal learning plan to target individual as well

as common learning goals and to specify learning activities that will lead to the attainment of those goals," (14) or "Every school has a comprehensive professional development system in which every staff member has a professional development plan to guide improvement." (15) Maine's Department of Education leads this initiative to transfer the knowledge gained about effective secondary schooling from isolated practices that benefit a few, to policies and procedures that positively impact all secondary students in Maine. Aiding this reform effort is the Center for Inquiry on Secondary Education, funded through federal and state funds, as well as by a generous contribution from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

F. Technology

Technology for Instruction

Goal: Maine students will attend schools which provide environments, instructional capacity, and curricula ensuring that our students complete their education having the tools necessary for pursuing the exploding capacity of technology to provide access to information and analytical tools.

- Maine teachers are employed in schools that are technologically sophisticated, having state-of-the-art hardware and software, adequate staff development opportunities, and access to appropriate curriculum materials.
- Using technology, complementary forms of education are available to support learners at all levels. Virtual schools are accessible using the web and the ATM system making course and program offerings available to

students in our most remote regions or when specialized courses are needed. Learners of all capabilities are sup-

ported through technology when instruction is delivered exactly when it is needed.

Evaluating the Impact of Technology Research

Goal: A research program will have been established to determine the educational value of the various communications infrastructures within Maine. This will include a close look at the impact on student learning, accessibility, teacher training and professional development, adult education, and community use.

- Teacher training institutions will imbed within their programming an understanding of the new telecommunications technology and the ability to take advantage of these technologies to enhance learning of students.
- There exists public realization that K-14/16 education is the norm and that all parties involved charged with education of individuals in Maine work together to see that all students have the opportunity to reach their potential and aspirations. The University of Maine System, the Community College System, and the private colleges in Maine will have developed communication networks that link all K-16 education institutions.
- All students in grades 7-12 (at a minimum) will have their own laptop devices that interact within a K-16 environment.
- The regional cooperative approach within the State will permit regional management of the communications technologies.
- A set of policies relative to educational technology will have been developed as to such issues as ethics, privacy, and respect.
- The K-16 system takes advantage of telecommunications technologies presently in place and develops policies and procedures to allow students the opportunity to receive education that does not relate directly to seat time and a specified place.
- All schools and libraries will have access to broadband technology.
- School administrative units will have developed and implemented similar calendars and schedules so that technologies in place can be used efficiently to provide education opportunities to all students statewide.
- Telecommunications technologies available will be viewed as a supporting service to assist with the implementation of the learning process and should be considered as one of the tools for improvement of student learning.

G. Early Intervention

Goal: By 2013 every four-year-old in Maine shall have access to a publicly supported education program. Such programs shall be designed to meet the goal of every child coming to school ready to learn. In addition, every kindergarten child should be enrolled in an all-day program.

The premise of this effort is to provide a public education meeting the test of what is best for children. What is best starts with early childhood education. Increasingly, public policy professionals

recognize the critical role early intervention plays in providing equity of opportunity in social and intellectual development and physical and mental health.

H. The Role of State Agencies Responsible for Special Needs Children

Goal: To assure that state mental health and human service agencies provide funding for specialty services in schools.

Based upon a review of the history of the responsibility of various state agencies to fund services for special needs children in school settings, it appears that much of the responsibility is currently being borne by education agencies at the state and local levels, while limited responsibility is borne by mental health and human services agencies. Historically, when special needs children were placed in state institutions (Pineland, Augusta Mental Health Institute, and Bangor Mental Health Institute) the financial burden was shared by the Department of Human Services and Mental Health Institute state agencies. With the movement of children out of state institutions and into community services, in-

cluding public schools, those agencies ceased sharing financial support.

During the ten-year period defined in this report, a formula for greater responsibility for providing assistance in supporting appropriate treatment, programmatic, and medical costs to special needs children in public schools will have been developed and implemented. Many of these children will continue to be served in public schools but with adequate assistance from the mental health and human services state agencies. State agency responsibilities for special needs children will have been written into law and adequate appropriations will have been defined in order to support such laws and services.

V. POLICY RESEARCH

Goal: To assure that current research and practice are part of policy deliberations and considerations when promulgated by the Department of Education, the State Board of Education, and the Legislature.

This goal includes assurance that education practices in Maine are current, practical, supportable and based on the best available research from private, and public bodies, including findings by federal programs such as the regional education laboratories and education research centers.

The State will have further developed appropriate clearinghouses for education research and program evaluation to assure that current research and practice are part of policy deliberations and considerations when promulgated by the Department of Education and the Legislature.

This entity shall not replace efforts within the University System to maintain independent research and development units but shall promote a coherent approach to data collection, analysis, research, and translation of research findings into practice.

Although established as an independent body, the governance model shall ensure the representa-

tion of the State Board of Education, the Commissioner of Education, higher education agencies, the Legislature, and other appropriate and related entities.

Base funding will have been established by the Governor and Legislature, and support for the mission shall include private and public grants.

VI. GOVERNANCE

A. Vocational Regions and Centers

Goal: To define a system which has addressed the issues of funding, schedules, and other critical problems and to develop state public policy with regard to vocational education.

The Legislature, State Board of Education, and Governor have addressed the issues of equitable funding, the development of a common calendar and schedules, and availability of programming in at least 5 of the 16 occupational cluster areas. Additionally, the establishment of a career and educational planning program as a part of the *Learning Results* and the establishment of a process of maximum use of technology has been implemented.

The Governor and the Legislature have authorized a blue-ribbon study committee to develop statewide public policy with regard to vocational education. The study will create a comprehensive vision for high school vocational schools and centers; analyze, assess and make recommendations for improvement of the current delivery systems in Maine; address issues of financial and programmatic inequality among vocational schools and centers; and make specific recommendations that will improve the two distinct models currently in place.

The study panel may also include recommendations to replace the two models with a single design either following one currently in existence or an alternative.

Within the regional cooperatives, technical centers will have been fully assimilated into the cooperative efforts, and where possible, technology and academics will have been developed in a manner permitting students ease of access to both systems. Among the issues to be addressed is the adequacy and appropriateness of the models for governance of the technical centers.

Where school construction activities are undertaken, these parallel systems (academic and vocational) will have been considered in the planning process. Funding for the centers will have been assimilated into the Essential Programs and Services model.

B. School Choice and Specialized Magnet Schools

Goal: Each region's cooperative will include school choice as part of planning efforts. A second specialized magnet school has been established.

Each of the Regional Cooperatives has a strategic plan for the creation of cooperative activities, including school choice. The concept of school choice will be piloted in five of the regions. Models

for school choice are available to all of the regions for review and potential adoption in all regions based upon evaluation of the pilot programs.

The Department of Education will determine whether public school choice will be voluntary or mandatory.

Based upon the success of the specialty mathematics and science school at Limestone, a second

school for the arts will be established. Planning for this school included an analysis and identification of need. The State Board of Education has developed a strategic plan and policies for more extensive development of specialized magnet schools.

C. Child Development Services (CDS)

Goal: To place CDS services in the combined Department of Mental Health and Human Ser-

The services currently provided by Child Development Services (CDS) will have been moved out of the Department of Education and into the State agency responsible for prevention, early intervention, and direct service for special needs children. The CDS system will have returned to its original mission of identifying young children in need of early intervention services and no longer be a service provider agency.

The emphasis of this system (CDS) in conjunction with various service delivery agencies, local schools, and cooperative regions will be to assure that young children are adequately prepared to attend public schools.

VII. HIGHER EDUCATION

A. Role

Goal: To acknowledge the role of higher education in the economy and reflect that role in public policy decisions.

At the turn of the century, high schools were added to the American education system, and before long there was a widespread public expectation of access to high schools to prepare people for the demands of a changing economy. Now, at the

turn of the new century, the knowledge economy demands associate and bachelor's degrees for the same reasons. For public policy decision makers, it is important to consider K-16 as the fundamental education spectrum.

B. University of Maine System

Goal: To support a seamless PreK-16 relationship that incorporates changing standards and increasing accountability for schools, students, and educators. The University of Maine System (UMS) has made the preparation of teachers both at the bachelor's and master's levels a priority.

State, federal, corporate, and UMS funding for research examining the most effective and relevant strategies for preparing highly qualified teachers, for establishing regional teacher development centers, and for providing substantial scholarships to attract talented students to the profession will increase ac-

cessibility, credibility, and incentives for aspiring and current educators.

UMS and its seven campuses encourage and support a seamless PreK-16 relationship that addresses the changing standards and expectations for

today's students and educators. The *Maine Learning Results* and national standards have changed the way PreK-12 students are taught and assessed and their expectations of instruction and learning as they enter higher education. UMS admissions and high school graduation criteria will be aligned to improve educational expectations between high school and college and to smooth the transition as students move from high school to college.

Recognizing that a significant percentage of Maine classroom teachers are not fully qualified for certification in their teaching field, UMS works to provide standards-based alternative routes to certification for committed individuals with strong con-

tent-area backgrounds. Research on high-achieving schools in Maine has found a strong correlation between student achievement and the number of teachers with master's degrees. However, accessibility to graduate programs is a problem for Maine teachers in the State's vast rural areas. UMS will ease this problem by creating statewide access to graduate programs and expanding the technology needed to support more extensive distance education opportunities. Modern communication technologies link UMS campuses and public schools, offering advanced and specialized courses, increasing academic options and advancing regional and statewide efficiency of services.

C. Community College System

Goal: To support the growth of the Community College System to meet the needs of Maine.

The creation of the Community College System in 2003 is a significant step in bringing higher education within the reach of more of Maine's citizens. However, creation was only the first step; the next is to provide funding to support expansion of the System to meet the maximum demand from students by the end of the decade.

Maine's economy and labor force have benefited from both the number and skill levels of the graduates of this system. A greater number of Maine's high school students recognize that they have access to professional and academic career paths through

an affordable and effective Community College System.

In addition to its well-established existing curriculum, the Community College System now offers the Associate in Arts, a degree traditionally used by students as preparation for transfer to a baccalaureate program or when they are clarifying their career goals. This degree helps students who may need additional academic or financial support start their college experience in a local community college designed to provide that assistance.

D. Course Articulation

Goal: A core of academic courses for the first two years of education in both Community College and University System campuses insures transferability of credits among institutions.

Articulation agreements between the public high school, the Community College System and the University of Maine System are in place, allow-

ing students easy access to institutions and programs most appropriate to their career goals.

E. Bond Initiative

Goal: The State of Maine has established through passage of a bond package a fund for the purpose of providing scholarships, loans and other forms of financial assistance for citizens of the state pursuing post-secondary education programs

In addition, loan forgiveness programs will be in place for persons pursuing teaching careers in isolated and/or high poverty communities and in content areas where documented shortages are identified (e.g. physical sciences, special education, foreign languages).

VIII. ADMINISTRATION

A. Leadership

Goal: To have defined the issues related to the problems of leadership and proposed solutions to these in order to assure a cadre of well-prepared and creative leaders for Maine's schools and school districts.

The design of administrators' jobs may encourage their effectiveness and can lead to increased personal motivation and performance. However, the demands of the position placed on superintendents and principals may limit their effectiveness. Tasks expected of these leaders have changed in complexity and intensity, but the form of the profession remains the same. To many, the job seems no longer doable.

The issue of salary and benefits proportionate to the expectations and responsibilities of administrative positions must be addressed to attract and retain high quality people. Administrative positions have become more highly pressured, more demanding, and more highly profiled positions, requiring long workdays and a long work year where salary may be disproportionate to salaries in the private sector.

The expansion during the past dozen years of the influence of federal and state governments on the education reform agenda is a major factor in educational governance. Through a myriad of laws, mandates, regulations, and inducements, federal and state initiatives have provided much more direction than in the past. The consequence is that governing public education has become much more complicated.

Unless the current trend is altered, school districts will continue to lose many of their administrators to retirement or positions elsewhere. The demand for school leaders is increasing, and there are apparently fewer people attracted and available. At present, recruitment to administrative positions is unstructured and largely based on self-selection.

IX. POLICY

A. Roles of Local School Boards and Superintendents

Goal: The role of school boards as policymakers has been reaffirmed. Boards grant expanded responsibilities to superintendents who are chief executive officers of the school unit.

Superintendents shall hire school principals who are educational and administrative leaders of their schools. Boards, superintendents, and principals promote school-based management, empower-

ing teachers, other school employees, and community members to participate in decisions regarding public education.

B. State Board of Education

Goal: The State Board of Education is the lead body in the development of short-and long-range plans for K-12 education. Legislation affirming this role has been enacted.

The State Board of Education, a lay board whose members are appointed by the Governor, approved by the Senate, and serving staggered five-year terms, is ideally suited to take the lead in setting Maine's education agenda. Board members are broadly representative of all regions of the State and possess a greater degree of independence because their terms of office span the tenure of legislators, governors, and commissioners of education. The

State Board has achieved renewed stature in recent years due to its talented membership, effective leadership and new responsibilities, such as the development of learning standards. A new section of Maine law confirms the State Board of Education's roles as Maine's education policy leader and chief advocate for K-12 public schools, in full partnership with the Commissioner and the Department of Education.

C. Certification Committee for Non-traditional Teachers and Administrators

Goal: A process for attracting and certifying non-traditionally prepared future teachers and administrators has been established.

In order to address the need to attract teaching professionals through a non-traditional process, the State will have established a committee to assess individuals with higher education degrees outside of the traditional teacher education track. This committee will have been authorized legislatively and will require the endorsement of its findings by the State Board of Education.

cific experiences with college courses and training in order to move into the initial phases of becoming a classroom teacher or administrator. As stated earlier, determinations of the committee will require approval of the State Board of Education.

This committee will determine whether individuals coming before it are those who due to their experiences, personal attributes, and their training may be appropriate to deal with children and adolescents in the classroom. Once deemed appropriate, the committee can charge the individual to gain spe-

The membership shall include, but not be limited to, representation of the teachers' associations, the State School Boards' and Superintendents' Associations, the Principals' Association, the State PTA, the State Board of Education, the Commissioner's Office, the teacher preparation institutions, and others deemed appropriate through the process of legislation.

D. Ten-Year Plan Requirements

Goal: Ten-year plans for public education are updated regularly.

Just as this document attempts to lay out a long-range plan, the State will have adopted a requirement that the Ten-Year Plan should be amended and added to annually in order to assure a current ongoing ten-year vision for public education. This shall be the responsibility of the Commissioner and State Board of Education in conjunction with the

regional cooperatives, the established Research and Evaluation Entity, the State Planning Office, the Governor's office, and the Maine State Legislature.

This proposal assures that a vision for public education extends beyond the legislative cycles of the Legislature and Governor.

E. Maine Constitution Education Clause

Goal: The State Constitution has been rewritten and fully endorsed requiring the State, as well as the local administrative units, to jointly provide adequate and equitable education to each Maine student.

The importance of education and its vital connection to Maine's economic future argue for consideration of a clearer, stronger, and less equivocal statement of state support for education.

It is recognized that a clearer assignment of state and local financial responsibilities and a commitment to funding an adequate and equitable education will impel the state in collaboration with local units to fund education at a sufficient level.

X. EDUCATION FUNDING

A. Education Funding Program for Maine

Goal: An adequate and equitable education-funding program has been established.

An adequate and equitable education-funding program provides the answer to three key questions.

1. How much should it cost to educate our children?
 - a. Essential Programs and Services model answers this question.
2. How much of the total cost should the State pay?
 - a. Current EP&S legislation requires 50%.
3. How much of the cost of educating each child is the responsibility of the local community vs. the responsibility of the State?
 - a. Not addressed by EP&S. This is basically a function of the state education subsidy formula. It needs to work.

An equitable education funding system will include criteria that shall have been both for students and for taxpayers.

1. Criteria related to students
 - a. Adequacy
 - b. Equity
 - c. Predictable
 - d. Dependable
2. Criteria for tax policy
 - a. Equitable
 1. Taxpayers in equal financial circumstances should pay equal amounts of taxes for education.
 2. Taxpayers with unequal financial circumstances should pay differing amounts appropriate to their situation.
 - b. Efficiency of administrating and collecting taxes.
 - c. Sources need to be reliable or managed fiscally for a predictable amount to be available each school year.

B. Proposals Regarding School Funding

Goal: To ensure student and taxpayer equity.

The primary goal of the school funding formula is to ensure student and taxpayer equity in the distribution of state resources. Student equity will be attained by implementation of the *Learning Results* (instruction and assessment) and the EPS funding model guaranteeing each child equal opportunity for academic success.

In order to achieve the equity goal, the school funding formula has been changed so that factors other than property valuation are utilized in determining a community's ability to pay. In addition

to addressing problems with the school funding formula, there also will be established a stable source of revenue that reduces reliance on local property taxes.

The proposals submitted by various experts in school funding was an effort to simultaneously reform the school funding formula and increase the overall funding for K-12 education. These efforts will result in greater student and taxpayer equity, reduce sprawl, and encourage economic development.

C. Federal Revenue Sharing in Education Funding

Goal: To have lobbied for a broader federal role for funding of public education.

The federal government will have redefined and expanded its role in the support of the states in their quest to establish and maintain quality education programs. In the past, the federal government had provided financial support via a variety of categorical programs. The estimates of this categorical support in regard to the total costs of education in general are estimated to be in the 7% range.

In the ten-year period, the federal government recognized that adequately funding education by the states was the most pressing issue to be addressed by states. If the federal government was to establish education as a major priority while at the same time recognizing the rights of the states to control and oversee education, then an approach to assisting in across-the-board funding was the solution.

The federal government established a revenue sharing approach which incorporated a distribution formula quite similar to those used by the State to fund the locals. It gave consideration to the wealth and capabilities of each of the states in determining what share each of the states would receive. This multibillion dollar approach will have addressed the major problem of the states in regard to education much in the way well-established Medicaid program addresses the problem on health care.

Each state is required to establish a state plan which the federal government approves and monitors as a condition of receiving financial distributions and adequate accountability.

XI. SOCIAL SERVICES

Goal: In ten years Maine will have established a definition of the role of education including the social service needs of children in learning environments. Teacher training, support services, family stability, health, nutrition, curriculum elasticity, access to information, understanding of emotional developmental, and mental health issues should be considered when defining the role of education

Over the course of the next ten years, the educational paradigm, as it relates to the full continuum of special needs populations, from prevention to intervention, should include the following:

- Implementation of a delivery system for assessment, consultation, collaboration, training and access to out-of-location expertise.
- The establishment of statewide teleconferencing capacity.

A. Medicaid in Public Schools

Goal: The public schools will have the capacity to identify and provide a variety of services to Medicaid eligible students. These services include all of the allied support services: speech and language, occupational therapy, counseling, and, in some cases, physical therapy. Public schools have the capacity to either provide these services directly on a fee-for-service basis or to contract with an external agent to provide the same set of services. Contracting allows the school system to access all of the same benefits without having to manage or pay for the billing system.

As regional cooperatives are implemented across Maine, these new cooperatives should incorporate Medicaid capacity as part of their strategy. Working with private, nonprofit agencies would create partnerships that could maximize service,

assessment, training, physical therapy, assistive technology, grant writing, and private funding opportunities that are currently available but not prioritized.

B. School-Based Health Centers

Goal: To have investigated the potential effectiveness of creating integrated services within public schools.

Even among families who possess health insurance, access to good health care is not always a readily available option. Coupled with instances of parents or other caregivers without a mode of transportation to travel to a doctor, living in medically underserved communities, and the stark reality of neglected and abused children, many youngsters appear at the schoolhouse door in physical and emotional states that impede learning. Due to the urgency, it is important that schools and communi-

ties collaborate in linking families with health care providers.

Inherent in the increasingly common practice of placing integrated services within the public schools is the creation of a work situation where different professions must function together to resolve the multiple needs of children. Since a number of models of integrated service exist, such a study is imperative.

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Our description of what public education in Maine should be in ten years, hence should cause extensive discussions among all participants in the public policy debate to further refine the goals and to develop an action plan for implementation. A comprehensive roadmap must be devised for the attainment of the goals, including consideration of their practical implications, possible adaptations, and cost-benefit calculations.

The Policy Institute for Public Education stands ready to assist in this ongoing process.