

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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December 21, 2017

Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
128th Maine Legislature
Cross Office Building 202
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs:

The Maine Community College System is providing this letter in accordance with 20-A MRSA §10013. This law requires the Maine Community College System, University of Maine System (UMS), and Maine Maritime Academy (MMA) provide the following information about first-generation college students by January 15th of each year:

- A. Data regarding enrollment of first-generation college students and educational outcomes, including graduation rates for first-generation college students compared with other college students;
- B. A summary of strategies used and activities undertaken to increase enrollment and graduation rates of first-generation college students and any available data indicating the effect of those strategies and activities; and
- C. Plans for or recommendations regarding new strategies or actions designed to increase enrollment and graduation rates of first-generation college students.

To meet the requirements of the legislation, MCCS worked with the University of Maine System (UMS) and Maine Maritime Academy (MMA) to coordinate data collection and reporting in order to promote a common framework for determining enrollment and educational outcomes of first-generation college students. Additionally, the three institutions agreed that for the purpose of this report, we would define a first-generation student as one with neither parent having completed a college degree. Each institution determined the level of college completion appropriate to its mission. For MCCS, a student is first-generation if neither parent has earned an associate degree. For UMS and MMA, a student is first-generation if neither parent has earned a bachelor's degree. For consistency, we are also providing data on MCCS students with neither parent having earned a bachelor's degree.

The three institutions agreed that questions on applications for admission related to parents' highest level of education should provide students the opportunity to be specific about the degree completed by each parent. Since previously this information had not been consistently requested or collected by MCCS, our colleges revised their applications for new students entering in the fall of 2014.

Enrollment by first-generation college status

Community colleges serve more first-generation students than any other sector of U.S. higher education. Although nearly one-third of students entering two- and four-year colleges in the United States each year are first-generation (as defined by parental attainment of a bachelor's degree), that figure is nearly twice as high at Maine's community colleges where 65% of all entering students are first generation.

The percentage of entering MCCS students who are first-generation has declined slightly since we began tracking this data in fall 2014. The following table provides an overview of Systemwide data from fall 2014 to fall 2017. The tables on pages 5 and 6 provide a breakdown of the data by entering cohort by college.

| | Fall 2014 | Fall 2015 | Fall 2016 | Fall 2017 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Neither parent has an associate degree | 49% | 51% | 47% | 47% |
| Neither parent has a bachelor's degree | 67% | 68% | 66% | 65% |

Student outcomes

Having begun tracking first generation students in fall 2014, MCCS is now able to report on the three-year (150% time to completion) outcomes of students who entered in 2014 by examining their graduation, transfer, and still-enrolled rates using methods consistent with National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) reporting.

Although, nationwide, first generation students are more likely to be minorities, older, and poorer than their peers and less likely to graduate over time, our data indicate that first-generation MCCS students who entered in the fall of 2014 have graduated at just slightly below the rate of their peers whose parents completed either an associate or bachelor's degree, and three years after entering, they remain enrolled at slightly higher rates than their peers. At the same time, the data suggest that they are considerably less likely to transfer from one institution to another and are therefore more likely to have left school before completing a degree. (See the summary table on the following page.)

| Status | Associate | | Bachelor's | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | 1 st generation | Not 1 st generation | 1 st generation | Not 1 st generation |
| Graduated | 24% | 26% | 24% | 25% |
| Still Enrolled | 12% | 11% | 12% | 11% |
| Transferred | 16% | 21% | 16% | 23% |
| Not Attending | 48% | 42% | 47% | 41% |
| Grand Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

The data, disaggregated by first-generation status, are included in Tables 5 and 6 on pages 7 and 8.

Success strategies

MCCS student success strategies are targeted to first-generation students and others who are at greatest risk of failing to finish their programs of study. They include:

- **Achieving the Dream.** All seven of Maine’s community colleges joined the national Achieving the Dream (ATD) network, one of only two state systems of higher education in the nation to do so. The colleges’ ATD efforts are designed to support and sustain a data driven culture of student success across the MCCS and, in so doing, to raise the success rates of specific populations, among them low-income, first-generation students and those who are most at risk of failing to complete a college credential.
- **TRIO Student Support Services Programs** at each of our colleges. These programs are designed specifically to serve low-income, first-generation college students and offer comprehensive, individual support through academic planning, tutoring, financial aid assistance, financial literacy, and guidance in course selection and registration.
- **On-campus employment opportunities** that allow students to build their work schedule around their classes.
- **Intensive college readiness experiences** offered at no cost in the summer before students enroll in a program of study.
- **Mandatory orientation and college-readiness courses.**
- **Accelerated learning programs** that mainstream remedial students using a model of instruction that combines academic support and college-level coursework.

In addition, through gifts and grants to The Foundation for Maine’s Community Colleges, MCCS has expanded the number of college navigators, or advisors, at all seven colleges, to help ensure that students—especially those with little experience of college—have the academic and personal supports they need to persist and complete a college degree.

Finally, we remain committed to making sure our colleges are as affordable as possible. Maine’s community colleges continue to offer the lowest tuition and fees in New England.

I would be glad to meet with you at any time to address questions or concerns the Committee may have regarding our students who are the first in their family to attend college.

Sincerely yours,

Derek P. Langhauser
President

cc: Commissioner of Education

Tables 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 appear on the following pages.

Maine Community College System

TABLE 1: Fall 2017 Entering Degree-Seeking Students by College and by Number and Percentage of First-Generation Students

| College | Entering Students* | Neither parent has a(n): | | | |
|-------------|--------------------|--------------------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| | | Associate | | Bachelor's | |
| | # | # | % | # | % |
| CMCC | 723 | 385 | 53% | 514 | 71% |
| EMCC | 649 | 294 | 45% | 417 | 64% |
| KVCC | 511 | 271 | 53% | 380 | 74% |
| NMCC | 229 | 93 | 41% | 142 | 62% |
| SMCC | 1,395 | 612 | 44% | 839 | 60% |
| WCCC | 134 | 71 | 53% | 106 | 79% |
| YCCC | 335 | 138 | 41% | 187 | 56% |
| MCCS | 3,976 | 1,864 | 47% | 2,585 | 65% |

*Only first-time and transfer-in students with reported parental education levels are included in the table above.
Fall 2017 total entering students: 4,486

TABLE 2: Fall 2016 Entering Degree-Seeking Students by College and by Number and Percentage of First-Generation Students

| College | Entering Students* | Neither parent has a(n): | | | |
|-------------|--------------------|--------------------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| | | Associate | | Bachelor's | |
| | # | # | % | # | % |
| CMCC | 734 | 365 | 50% | 524 | 71% |
| EMCC | 701 | 334 | 48% | 472 | 67% |
| KVCC | 486 | 251 | 52% | 360 | 74% |
| NMCC | 220 | 107 | 49% | 161 | 73% |
| SMCC | 1,501 | 648 | 43% | 852 | 57% |
| WCCC | 133 | 63 | 47% | 96 | 72% |
| YCCC | 386 | 188 | 49% | 265 | 69% |
| MCCS | 4,161 | 1,956 | 47% | 2,730 | 66% |

*Only first-time and transfer-in students with reported parental education levels are included in the table above.
Fall 2016 total entering students: 4,571

TABLE 3: Fall 2015 Entering Degree-Seeking Students by College and by Number and Percentage of First-Generation Students

| College | Entering Students* | Neither parent has a(n): | | | |
|-------------|--------------------|--------------------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| | | Associate | | Bachelor's | |
| | # | # | % | # | % |
| CMCC | 775 | 428 | 55% | 569 | 73% |
| EMCC | 596 | 287 | 48% | 396 | 66% |
| KVCC | 499 | 266 | 53% | 371 | 74% |
| NMCC | 174 | 87 | 50% | 124 | 71% |
| SMCC | 1,626 | 786 | 48% | 1015 | 62% |
| WCCC | 148 | 87 | 59% | 112 | 76% |
| YCCC | 406 | 201 | 50% | 285 | 70% |
| MCCS | 4,224 | 2,142 | 51% | 2,872 | 68% |

*Only first-time and transfer-in students with reported parental education levels are included in the table above. Fall 2015 total entering students: 4,350

TABLE 4: Fall 2014 Entering Degree-Seeking Students by College and by Number and Percentage of First-Generation Students

| College | Entering Students* | Neither parent has a(n): | | | |
|-------------|--------------------|--------------------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| | | Associate | | Bachelor's | |
| | # | # | % | # | % |
| CMCC | 629 | 345 | 55% | 460 | 73% |
| EMCC | 477 | 198 | 42% | 312 | 65% |
| KVCC | 392 | 185 | 47% | 272 | 69% |
| NMCC | 190 | 98 | 52% | 133 | 70% |
| SMCC | 1,669 | 831 | 50% | 1,065 | 64% |
| WCCC | 106 | 69 | 65% | 87 | 82% |
| YCCC | 454 | 210 | 46% | 311 | 69% |
| MCCS | 3,917 | 1,936 | 49% | 2,640 | 67% |

*Only first-time and transfer-in students with reported parental education levels are included in the table above. Fall 2014 total entering students: 4,483

TABLE 5: Three-Year Outcomes of MCCS Fall 2014 Entering Degree-Seeking Students by First-Generation Status

| Status | First-generation | | | | Not first-generation | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|---|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| | Neither parent has a(n): | | | | One (or more) parent has at least a(n): | | | |
| | Associate | | Bachelor's | | Associate | | Bachelor's | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Graduated | 457 | 24% | 645 | 24% | 506 | 26% | 318 | 25% |
| Still Enrolled | 240 | 12% | 322 | 12% | 226 | 11% | 144 | 11% |
| Transferred | 302 | 16% | 433 | 16% | 423 | 21% | 292 | 23% |
| Not Attending | 937 | 48% | 1,240 | 47% | 826 | 42% | 523 | 41% |
| Grand Total | 1,936 | 100% | 2,640 | 100% | 1,981 | 100% | 1,277 | 100% |

*Only first-time and transfer-in students with reported parental education levels are included in the table above.
 Fall 2014 total entering students: 4,483.
 Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding error.

TABLE 6: Three-Year Outcomes of Fall 2014 Entering Degree-Seeking Students by First-Generation Status and College

| | | First-generation | | | | Not first-generation | | | |
|--------------------|----------------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|---|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| | | Neither parent has a(n): | | | | One (or more) parent has at least a(n): | | | |
| | | Associate | | Bachelor's | | Associate | | Bachelor's | |
| College | Status | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| CMCC | Graduated | 85 | 25% | 120 | 26% | 79 | 28% | 44 | 26% |
| CMCC | Still Enrolled | 46 | 13% | 61 | 13% | 30 | 11% | 15 | 9% |
| CMCC | Transferred | 41 | 12% | 57 | 12% | 52 | 18% | 36 | 21% |
| CMCC | Not Attending | 173 | 50% | 222 | 48% | 123 | 43% | 74 | 44% |
| CMCC | Total | 345 | 100% | 460 | 100% | 284 | 100% | 169 | 100% |
| EMCC | Graduated | 44 | 22% | 72 | 23% | 69 | 25% | 41 | 25% |
| EMCC | Still Enrolled | 24 | 12% | 33 | 11% | 21 | 8% | 12 | 7% |
| EMCC | Transferred | 38 | 19% | 61 | 20% | 55 | 20% | 32 | 19% |
| EMCC | Not Attending | 92 | 46% | 146 | 47% | 134 | 48% | 80 | 48% |
| EMCC | Total | 198 | 100% | 312 | 100% | 279 | 100% | 165 | 100% |
| KVCC | Graduated | 70 | 38% | 94 | 35% | 79 | 38% | 55 | 46% |
| KVCC | Still Enrolled | 22 | 12% | 33 | 12% | 21 | 10% | 10 | 8% |
| KVCC | Transferred | 21 | 11% | 37 | 14% | 35 | 17% | 19 | 16% |
| KVCC | Not Attending | 72 | 39% | 108 | 40% | 72 | 35% | 36 | 30% |
| KVCC | Total | 185 | 100% | 272 | 100% | 207 | 100% | 120 | 100% |
| NMCC | Graduated | 44 | 45% | 61 | 46% | 44 | 48% | 27 | 47% |
| NMCC | Still Enrolled | 8 | 8% | 11 | 8% | 7 | 8% | 4 | 7% |
| NMCC | Transferred | 10 | 10% | 14 | 11% | 16 | 17% | 12 | 21% |
| NMCC | Not Attending | 36 | 37% | 47 | 35% | 25 | 27% | 14 | 25% |
| NMCC | Total | 98 | 100% | 133 | 100% | 92 | 100% | 57 | 100% |
| SMCC | Graduated | 130 | 16% | 188 | 18% | 167 | 20% | 109 | 18% |
| SMCC | Still Enrolled | 105 | 13% | 136 | 13% | 116 | 14% | 85 | 14% |
| SMCC | Transferred | 157 | 19% | 209 | 20% | 216 | 26% | 164 | 27% |
| SMCC | Not Attending | 439 | 53% | 532 | 50% | 339 | 40% | 246 | 41% |
| SMCC | Total | 831 | 100% | 1,065 | 100% | 838 | 100% | 604 | 100% |
| WCCC | Graduated | 36 | 52% | 43 | 49% | 18 | 49% | 11 | 58% |
| WCCC | Still Enrolled | 1 | 1% | 2 | 2% | 1 | 3% | 0 | 0% |
| WCCC | Transferred | 8 | 12% | 10 | 11% | 4 | 11% | 2 | 11% |
| WCCC | Not Attending | 24 | 35% | 32 | 37% | 14 | 38% | 6 | 32% |
| WCCC | Total | 69 | 100% | 87 | 100% | 37 | 100% | 19 | 100% |
| YCCC | Graduated | 48 | 23% | 67 | 22% | 50 | 20% | 31 | 22% |
| YCCC | Still Enrolled | 34 | 16% | 46 | 15% | 30 | 12% | 18 | 13% |
| YCCC | Transferred | 27 | 13% | 45 | 14% | 45 | 18% | 27 | 19% |
| YCCC | Not Attending | 101 | 48% | 153 | 49% | 119 | 49% | 67 | 47% |
| YCCC | Total | 210 | 100% | 311 | 100% | 244 | 100% | 143 | 100% |
| Grand Total | Total | 1,936 | 100% | 2,640 | 100% | 1,981 | 100% | 1,277 | 100% |

*Only first-time and transfer-in students with reported parental education levels are included in the table above.
Fall 2014 total entering students: 4,483
Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding error.

The source for data in the tables is the MCCS Data Mart. Only first-time and transfer-in students with reported parental education levels are included. Data about parents' levels of education are self-reported by applicants on the application for admission. The analysis presumes that applicants have accurate knowledge of their parents' educational achievements.