

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the  
**LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY**  
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library  
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from scanned originals with text recognition applied  
(searchable text may contain some errors and/or omissions)

# **Final Report of the Task Force on Adult Learners**

**February 1, 2014**

Task Force on Adult Learners  
PL 2013, Chapter 368

January 31, 2014

Senator Linda M. Valentino, Chair  
Representative Seth A. Berry, Chair  
Joint Select Committee on Maine's Workforce and Economic Future  
100 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0115

Dear Senator Valentino, Representative Berry and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Task Force on Adult Learners, we are pleased to present you with our final report as required by PL 2013, ch. 368, Part GGGGG. We look forward to discussing our findings and recommendations with you in the near future.

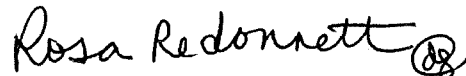
We are providing you with 20 printed copies of the report. In addition, we have also included 2 printed copies of the 49 page compilation of all our meeting summaries. Electronic versions of both of these documents are available from either of us.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions that you may have.

Sincerely,



Gail Senese, Co-Chair of the Task Force  
Director, Division of Adult Education  
& Family Literacy  
Maine Department of Education  
23 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333  
Ph: 624-6755  
e-mail: [gail.senese@maine.gov](mailto:gail.senese@maine.gov)



Rosa Redonnett, Co-Chair of the Task Force  
Chief Student Affairs Officer  
University of Maine System  
16 Central St.  
Bangor, ME 04401  
ph: 949-3233  
e-mail: [rosar@maine.edu](mailto:rosar@maine.edu)

c.c. Members of the Task Force on Adult Learners

## Introduction

The Task Force on Adult Learners was created by the 1<sup>st</sup> Regular Session of the 126<sup>th</sup> Maine State Legislature in Part GGGGG of PL 2013, Ch. 368 (See Appendix 1). Part GGGGG originated from LD 90, "An Act To Strengthen Maine's Workforce and Economic Future" which was developed by the Joint Select Committee on Maine's Workforce and Economic Future. The Task Force on Adult Learners (TFAL) was one of several groups established to further investigate and review aspects of the current and future needs of Maine's workforce. Specifically, the TFAL was tasked with the following responsibilities:

- Study the issues surrounding the more than 200,000 adults in Maine who have received some amount of postsecondary education and training but have not yet obtained a postsecondary degree or professional certification;
- Develop a multisector statewide strategic plan to increase the rates of completion for adult learners; and
- Develop legislation to implement strategies to significantly increase the number of adult learners who have completed postsecondary degrees or achieved a particular professional certification.

The 13 members of the TFAL were appointed by December of 2013 and were required by law to submit a final report to the Joint Select Committee on Maine's Workforce and Economic Future by February 1, 2014. The TFAL was composed of the following members:

- Gary Crocker, Maine Community College System;
- Scott Cuddy representing local workforce investment boards;
- Maggie Drummond-Bahl, Maine Development Foundation ;
- Sandy Goodman, World Education;
- Christine Greenleaf, Maine AFL-CIO;
- Jessica Laliberte, Maine State Chamber of Commerce;
- Lisa Martin, Manufacturer's Association of Maine;
- Peter Pare, State Workforce Investment Board;
- Rosa Redonnett, University of Maine System;
- Gail Senese, Division of Adult Education, Maine Department of Education;
- Garret Oswald, Maine Department of Labor; and
- Harry Hellyar-Brook, Maine Department of Economic & Community Development

To accomplish its mission, the TFAL elected Gail Senese and Rosa Redonnett as Co-Chairs and met seven times in Augusta on the following dates:

1. December 18, 2013
2. January 3, 2014
3. January 6, 2014
4. January 10, 2014
5. January 13, 2014
6. January 17, 2014
7. January 24, 2014

(Copies of the complete 49 page compilation of TFAL meeting summaries have been provided to the Chairs of the Joint Select Committee on Maine's Workforce & Economic Future and are available in electronic form from staff person Lock Kiermaier; e-mail: [kier.consulting@gmail.com](mailto:kier.consulting@gmail.com))

## Task Force Activities

### Review of Pertinent Reports

To accomplish its significant statutory duties in a relatively short amount of time, the TFAL reviewed a number of different reports pertaining to the topic of adult learners and workforce readiness. These reports included the following:

- Adult Baccalaureate Completion/Distance Education Report; University of Maine System, June 2013- This recent report, commonly referred to as the “ABCDE Report”, identified a number of unique barriers that exist for adult learners in the UMS and concluded that a carefully tailored approach to meet the particular needs of adult learners should be implemented. The specific recommendations included the development of an outreach plan, instituting a “concierge” or single point contact model for adult learners on each campus, developing a series of steps to implement an online approach for registration and course offerings for adult learners and the development of programs designed to meet the specific needs of adult learners.
- Going the Distance in Adult College Completion: Lessons from the Non-traditional No More Project; Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), June 2012- This report had two main objectives: first, to identify adult learners and second, to create pathways for success by which adult learners could more readily complete a postsecondary degree. Adult learners were identified as former students who had completed at least half the credits necessary for a degree. Like the ABCDE report, the WICHE report identified the need to customize the educational environment to meet the needs of adult learners. In addition, the WICHE report recommended the elimination of perceived institutional barriers to adult learners and the development of accurate data about who adult learners are, what their academic needs are and what the particular needs of employers are.
- Making Maine Work: Growing Maine’s Workforce; Maine State Chamber of Commerce & Maine Development Foundation, October 2013- This joint report from the Maine State Chamber of Commerce and the Maine Development Foundation established two goals and the strategies by which they could be achieved: first, to increase participation in the Maine workforce among the existing populations of people with disabilities, senior citizens 65 year or older, disengaged youth and veterans; second, by attracting more workers from out of state including young people and foreign workers.
- IS COLLEGE WORTH IT FOR ME? How Adults Without Degrees Think About Going (Back) to School; Public Agenda, November 2013- This report concluded that most adult learners do not have accurate information about the existing opportunities in postsecondary education and like many of the reports reviewed by the TFAL, recommends that considerable efforts be made to tailor academic environment, course offerings and programs to the specific needs of adult learners.
- Maine’s Industry Partnership/Sector Strategy; Manufacturers Association of Maine (MAME), December 2011- This report, presented by TFAL member Lisa G. Martin, details the initiative undertaken by the MAME to develop “a comprehensive workforce strategy that builds and sustains a highly skilled pool of workers” through the ongoing involvement of different sectors of Maine’s manufacturing businesses with a wide range of local and state educational providers, consultants and trainers. This strategy is highly dependent on the constant updating of relevant data and the actual employment needs of Maine’s manufacturers. The Sector Strategy is applicable to any industry.
- Indicators of Higher Education in Maine: College as a Right and Responsibility for All Maine People; Maine Compact for Higher Education, August 2009- This report identifies a number of indicators regarding higher education attainment in Maine and concludes that the number of people in Maine with college degrees has increased significantly in recent years, that a significant majority of Maine people place a high value on college degrees, that more Maine citizens are adequately prepared to attain a postsecondary degree and that more Maine people are enrolling in postsecondary degree programs.
- Adult Workforce Readiness in Maine; Report to the Joint Select Committee on Maine’s Workforce and Economic Future; Submitted by the Working Group on Adult Workforce Readiness, January 1, 2014- This report endorses the concept of sector partnerships as described earlier in the 2011 report from

MAME as a means of providing a suitable workforce for the ongoing needs of Maine's employers. The report recommends that the development of sector partnerships should include providing the necessary commitment and support, establishing a statewide vision, aligning necessary resources and incentives, using appropriate data and research and creating high quality and ongoing partnerships.

- Education Indicators for Maine 2013; Educate Maine, 2013- This report identifies a number of trends and indicators for all phases of Maine's educational system. Of particular interest to the TFAL were the conclusions regarding postsecondary education which included: the in-state demand for college educated workers is rapidly increasing, the number of jobs requiring a postsecondary degree is also increasing at a rapid rate, many high school graduates are not adequately prepared for high-skilled jobs, and that the rates of on-time college graduation in Maine are the lowest in New England for 4 year degrees and the highest for 2 year degrees.
- Broadband: The Road to Maine's Future; Report of the Governor's Broadband Capacity Building Task Force, December 2013 – This report makes many findings about the increasing importance of broadband use in all sectors of Maine's economy, health system and education. With regards to the TFAL's particular interests, this report concludes that the availability and easy access to broadband promotes individualized, interactive, and affordable education by providing access to the best teachers for all students, making quality diagnostic information available to all teachers and providing individualized learning programs for students of all ages.

### Presentations

In addition to the review of relevant reports, the TFAL also made extensive use of a wide variety of presentations- both from members of the TFAL and from professionals working in various fields pertaining to adult learners:

- Steve Pound, Associate Director Cianbro Institute- Workforce Development at the Cianbro Corporation made a presentation to the TFAL titled "Investing in our Adults – Educating a World Class Workforce, What's Possible?" In his presentation, Mr. Pound described the process used by Cianbro at its Brewer facility to address a critical shortage of highly skilled workers for a particular project. To come up with the training necessary to provide the required workforce, Cianbro collaborated with a number of entities including the Maine Community College System, career and technical Schools, the Town of Wilton, in-house capabilities, the Job Corps , Adult Education and the Maine Career Centers. This collaborative effort was accomplished through in-house funding and some grant money and brought into the workforce a number of previously underutilized groups including veterans, displaced/dislocated workers, migrant workers, non-traditional workers, unemployed, and underemployed workers and the involvement of various non-profit organizations such as Women Unlimited and Women, Work & Community. In touting the success of this collaborative effort, Mr. Pound emphasized the high degree of cooperation between the various silos of educational providers, job training and employers.
- Gloria Payne, Program Specialist for the Maine Apprenticeship Program at the Department of Labor made a presentation about the Apprenticeship Program. Ms. Payne described the program as one that represents a high rate-of-return for each dollar of General Fund money invested in it for a \$1 to \$112 ratio. The Apprenticeship Program features a high degree of employer commitment towards the goal of training and educating employees for highly skilled jobs across the state. The Apprenticeship Program also requires at least 2,000 hours of on-the-job training combined with extensive classroom work. In 2013, the Apprenticeship Program oversaw 180 Apprenticeship programs across the state which ultimately graduated workers who earned a starting hourly wage of over \$23 per hour.
- As mentioned in the previous section about reports that the TFAL had reviewed, Lisa Martin, Executive Director of the Manufacturers Association of Maine (MAME) made a presentation regarding MAME's development and use of the Industry Partnership/Sector Strategy (IPSS). The IPSS is characterized by a highly collaborative effort between manufacturers in Maine to develop and share relevant data with the goal of responding to the immediate training and employment needs of the various sectors of Maine's manufacturing businesses.
- The TFAL also received a presentation via conference call from Patrick Lane and Demi Michelau from the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE). In their remarks to the TFAL, Mr.

Lane and Ms. Michelau described the desired characteristics of a well functioning education and training effort for adult learners as one that includes a highly collaborative effort between educational providers, trainers and employers that features an ongoing convening body with a clearly established statewide vision for adult learning completion and achievement. They also emphasized the need for well conceived and purposeful data collection and an academic environment which seeks to eliminate barriers for adult learners and is tailored to their particular needs.

- In addition, the TFAL had the benefit of a conference call presentation from Scott Voisine, Dean of Community Education at UMFK and Peter Caron, Director of Adult Community Education at MSAD 27 who discussed the recent development and implementation of the Holistic Integrated Relevant Education (HIRE) program. The HIRE program is notable for its high degree of collaboration between secondary Adult Education programs and those offered on the postsecondary level. The collaborative effort represented by the HIRE Program has resulted in the establishment of a career pathway for adult learners to access postsecondary education programming and obtain postsecondary degrees and professional certification necessary for employment in highly skilled jobs in a relatively rural area of the state.
- Finally, the TFAL had the opportunity to learn about other programs that offer services to adult learners from organizations represented on the Task Force itself:
  - Gary Crocker of the Maine Community College System (MCCS) explained that students at MCCS have an average age of 27, 57% of the students attend on a part-time basis and that 33% of new students in 2013 had some prior college- all of these factors being characteristic of adult learners. On its seven campuses located throughout the state, MCCS offers Student Success Centers whose services include: child care options, counselors for academic, career and personal issues, placement testing, developmental courses, tutoring, peer mentoring, first-year experience courses and workshops.
  - In representing Local Workforce Investment Boards, Scott Cuddy explained that there are 4 such boards within the state that are broken down by geography, adult, youth and dislocated worked funding streams. The programs offered by the boards are available for certain adults over the age of 18 and further eligibility is based on family income, barrier to employment and meeting other qualifications for assistance. The programs offered by the local boards are only allowed to invest in high wage, high growth industries and 14% of the population served has had some post secondary education. In general, program participants are lacking in academic skills, and access to transportation is an issue for many. Finally, Prior Learning Assessments (PLA) have proven to be a major tool in helping adult learners in these programs achieve success.
  - Maggie Drummond-Bahl from the Maine Development Foundation (MDF) informed the Task Force about several MDF programs that directly pertain to adult learners:
    - The Maine Employers' Initiative (MEI) was begun in 2007 in partnership with the Compact for Higher Education and the Maine Community Foundation with start-up funding provided by the Lumina Foundation. The program goal of the MEI is to increase opportunities for adult learners through engagement with their employers. Employers can join the program for free by filling out an on-line needs assessment survey and can participate by taking "one more step" to assist adult learners.
    - The Next Step Maine program evolved out of previous work on MEI and is intended to provide an easily accessible platform by which relevant information can be provided about suitable course offerings and programs that are designed to meet the needs of adult learners. A total of 15 schools are currently participating in the Next Step Maine program with listings of over 700 programs.
    - The Next Step Scholarships Program began in 2013 and has resulted in 17 scholarships ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,500 that have been awarded to adult learners nominated by their employers.

- The MDF has also started a new program with a goal of increasing the use of Prior Learning Assessments (PLA) for adult learners. This program will be developing an online PLA guide for adult learners, employers and others.
  - Finally, the MDF is currently initiating an effort at statewide coalition planning with a goal of increasing adult degree completion.
- Gail Senese from the Division of Adult Education within the Maine Department of Education informed the Task Force that the Adult Education programs offered by local school districts across the state currently serve over 6000 learners each year and offer a viable career pathways system for many adult learners. Local adult education programs are not remedial but rather preparatory and employ certified teachers who follow the curriculum with articulation agreements made with certain postsecondary classes. Most recently, funds for adult education were expanded and now every adult education program is offering college preparatory classes. The Department of Education also offers a Maine College Transition Program which provides state funds to prepare adults to return to college through academic preparation, support services including financial aid, college applications, college success courses, and campus tours.
  - Rosa Redonnett from University of Maine System (UMS) described the current efforts made by UMS to address the needs of adult learners. The UMS currently serves 30,000 students; 51% of whom are female and 49% are male; 86% are undergraduate students and 14% are graduate students; 86% of all students are from instate, 11% are from out of state; and 5% are international students. The UMS consists of 7 universities spread from northern to southern Maine; two of these universities have multiple campuses. In addition, two of the UMS campuses have outreach centers and there are a total of 9 University College Outreach Centers located across the state. Each of the UMS campuses offer an expanding range of on line programs which range from nursing to business to behavioral and social sciences to the liberal arts, and are available at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. All the UMS campuses serve adult students but some much more than others. Many of the UMS campuses also have Professional Development/Continuing Education components which deliver on site training, professional development series, and other credentialing programming. The UMS is implementing the recommendations contained within its ABCDE report (referenced earlier in this document) which will expand its work with adult learners.

### Findings

Over the course of its seven meetings, the TFAL spent a great deal of time reviewing a number of relevant reports, sharing information about their own organizational efforts to meet the needs of adult learners and listening to presentations regarding the subject of adult learners. Throughout this effort to comprehend the status of adult learners in the state of Maine and to discern what actions will be most effective towards increasing the number of adult learners that complete a postsecondary degree or professional certification, the TFAL unanimously agreed upon the following Findings:

1. ***There are a significant number of adults in Maine that have previously enrolled in some sort of postsecondary program but not yet completed a postsecondary degree or a professional certification.***

The most immediate issue is that highly skilled and trained workers are needed now. The longer term issue is that there are many adult learners in Maine who are near completion of postsecondary degree or certification program and others who need greater level of foundational skill development and advising/navigation support to be ready for to enroll for the first time and succeed in postsecondary education. In addition, the TFAL found that there are a significant number of adults in Maine who have not yet entered a postsecondary program whose needs will be similar to those adult learners who have some postsecondary experience.



- 2. There is a clear need to establish an ongoing convening body to coordinate the existing organizational efforts to meet the needs of adult learners throughout the state.*

During the course of its review of the topic of adult learners in Maine, the TFAL found that there was no one coordinating organization to oversee the many separate efforts to provide services to adult learners. Indeed, it became obvious that the creation of the TFAL to examine the topic of adult learners provided a useful and needed model for an ongoing convening body.

- 3. An ongoing collaborative effort and working relationship needs to be established between educational providers and employers throughout the state.*

The TFAL concluded that the establishment of an ongoing convening body would provide the opportunity for public and private educational providers to develop an ongoing collaborative working relationship with employers of all types to provide a systematic effort to meet the needs of adult learners.

- 4. A commonly held vision and various goals need to be developed for adult learners in Maine.*

The TFAL noted that many of the reports and presentations emphasized the need for a commonly held and clearly articulated vision regarding the goals for providing a statewide effort to provide relevant, accessible and affordable educational programming that met the specific and ever changing needs of employers and finally culminating in highly skilled jobs that could be filled by appropriately trained and educated adult learners.

- 5. A significant effort needs to be made to determine what relevant data needs to be collected about learners on an ongoing basis and then to collect and share that data.*

The TFAL was also consistently struck by the need for consistent data that accurately identified who are the adult learners in Maine and how many of them are there. The TFAL found that the need to determine exactly what data should be gathered and how to collect it, are long term tasks that will take much more time to properly develop than was available to the TFAL. The TFAL also found that the data collection effort should be equally focused on determining what the current training and educational needs of employers are to maintain a highly skilled workforce.

- 6. A systematic effort needs to be undertaken to identify, and then eliminate, common barriers that exist for adult learners in Maine.*

Throughout the course of its review, the TFAL discussed the existence of institutional and cultural barriers for adult learners in their reentry to postsecondary educational institutions. These unintentional barriers are the result of educational systems that are largely oriented to the needs of so-called traditional students entering college directly after graduation from high school and include:

- Academics: outdated and poor skills, inability to easily transfer courses, lack of relevant counseling and tutoring services, conflicts with family and work responsibilities.
- Financial: high cost of application and tuition, lack of information about financial aid, previous student loan defaults, and past due amounts from previous postsecondary enrollment.
- Life issues: childcare, family responsibilities, transportation and work
- Office hours for campus services: (admissions, career and academic advising, financial aid, tours, etc.) often do not align with adults' schedules.

- Fears: difficulty in fitting in with younger students, changes in technology, worries about being smart enough to succeed, lack of study skills, lack of knowledge about campus policies, budgeting and time management issues, lack of previous success, feeling unwanted.

7. *An ongoing marketing and outreach effort needs to be put into place to consistently inform adult learners about the services and programming that are being offered.*

The TFAL also found that there is an ongoing need for a coordinated and updated marketing effort which is designed to communicate what specific educational and training opportunities exist for adult learners in Maine and how these services can be easily accessed. The TFAL noted that while there are a variety of laudable organizational efforts that currently exist for adult learners, there is little or no consistent effort to effectively communicate the existence of these different opportunities on a consistent and statewide basis.

**Recommendations**

As the TFAL considered the most effective set of recommendations to improve the services provided to adult learners in Maine, it was recognized that due to the relatively short time in which it had to complete its work, the most effective approach would be to establish an ongoing framework to coordinate the services offered for adult learners. Importantly, the establishment of such an ongoing framework to coordinate services for adult learners would then provide the direction by which a specific vision could be developed and achieved. Therefore, the TFAL unanimously approved the following overarching statutory recommendation:

***Establish an ongoing Coordinating Council of Adult Learning (CCAL)***

In recommending that the CCAL be established on an ongoing basis in Maine State law, the TFAL has submitted a draft legislative proposal to accomplish this which is included as Appendix 2. The proposed legislation specifies that the CCAL:

- Will consist of 17 members representing:
  1. University of Maine System;
  2. Maine Community College System;
  3. Department of Economic and Community Development;
  4. Department of Labor;
  5. The office within the Department of Education concerned with adult education and family literacy;
  6. Department of Education;
  7. State Workforce Investment Board;
  8. Maine State Council of the Society for Human Resource Management
  9. a statewide membership organization advocating for business;
  10. a statewide organization representing small business owners;
  11. Maine Independent Collèges Association;
  12. a nonprofit organization dedicated to postsecondary degree attainment by nontraditional students;
  13. a statewide foundation dedicated to promoting sustainable economic growth for this State;
  14. a nonprofit philanthropic foundation;
  15. a board of a local workforce investment area designated pursuant to the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Public Law 105-220,
  16. a labor union in this State
  17. Maine Administrators of Career and Technical Education:

- Will be required to meet at least 4 times per year;
- Will be required to submit an annual report to the Joint Select Committee on Maine's Workforce and Economic Future or its successor and the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs or to a joint session of both committees;
- Will be authorized to develop a statewide vision and goals pertaining to adult learners; and
- Will also be authorized to accomplish the same duties and responsibilities of the current TFAL but on an ongoing basis.

To supplement the contents of the proposed legislation to create the CCAL, the TFAL has also developed a series of more detailed recommendations that it believes the CCAL should strive to accomplish:

1. Establish a clear statewide goal for improvement of adult post-secondary degree/credential completion
  - a. Establish a state vision for postsecondary completion and attainment based on input from multiple sectors and stakeholders.
  - b. Connect the postsecondary completion goal with the state's vision and strategies for economic development.
  - c. Refer to other related reports pertaining to adult workforce readiness and adult remediation which have relevance to adult postsecondary completion and incorporate as appropriate.
  - d. Explore the possibility of implementing recommendations to create and support a statewide goal and vision through proposed legislation.
  - e. Identify, examine and remove barriers to adult postsecondary completion.
  - f. Develop a focused messaging campaign that is statewide and reaches out to all segments of the population: adults in need of postsecondary completion, educational institutions, employers, incumbent workers, trades associations, government agencies, policy makers, etc. regarding the opportunities and need for degree/certification completion and services/supports available to make this possible.
  - g. Provide statewide training and awareness programs related to the issue of adult degree/credential completion and the role everyone can play in solving this.
  
2. Develop improved data systems for planning and decision making
  - a. Identify the population to be served (how much course work have they had, what type of preparation needed to return, what barriers to completion they have identified).
  - b. Create processes for the sharing of adult learner data across systems and agencies.
  - c. Share data generated by educational providers amongst postsecondary institutions.
  - d. Collect relevant and pertinent jobs data from employers and adult learners that can connect education to industry needs to result in adult self-sufficiency through employment.
  - e. Align metrics and data to address system barriers to adult postsecondary degree/credential completion.
  - f. Gather information on the best practices nationally and in Maine as well as identify gaps in services.
  
3. Address multiple factors necessary for adult postsecondary degree/credential completion through the establishment of high-quality partnerships
  - a. Engage employers in identifying their needs and in the creation of solutions.
  - b. Identify, examine and remove barriers and policies that hinder completion and make it difficult for institutions to collaborate and share.
  - c. Educational and training agencies and institutions such as the university system, community college system, adult education system, licensure, and labor and training agencies must work

together to identify their appropriate roles in addressing adult degree/certificate completion and then coordinate and collaborate to address the state goal.

- d. Develop a sector partnership approach that aligns education and training programs with industry needs and create multiple pathways for degree/credential completion..
- e. Adopt a career pathways approach that relies on coordination across education and training programs to offer a clear sequence of industry-relevant coursework and credentials.
- f. Create and implement strategies to create adult friendly learning environments. These strategies may be needed in the areas of scheduling, financial aid, intensive academic and career advisement, use of college and career navigators aware of statewide opportunities, use of technology to expand and facilitate access to learning and training opportunities, transportation.
- g. Maximize use of awarding credit/credentials for completed academic coursework or workplace learning (prior learning assessments, apprenticeship, internships, on the job trainings, etc.) , and to promote prior learning assessment policies and processes to help adult learners attain credit for skills and knowledge obtained at work or other areas of their lives. This effort includes ensuring that a system is in place for aligning industry recognized certifications and licensure to college credit.
- h. Education/training must be creative and flexible to address the changing employment needs of industry partners to offer adult completers degrees and credentials that will lead to employment now and in the future.
- i. Collaborate to create more on the job, internship and apprentice opportunities.

#### 4. Align use of incentives and resources

- a. Braid state, federal, private employer and foundational funding to maximize and leverage resources.
- b. Address financial barriers to degree/credential completion (cost of programs, loan forgiveness.
- c. Provide tax incentives for employers to support perspective and incumbent worker degree completion.
- d. Incentivize internships and tuition reimbursement through benefits to employers.
- e. Organize and publicize scholarship opportunities.

### Conclusion

The TFAL has worked diligently in a relatively short amount of time to accomplish a comprehensive review of the current landscape that exists for adult learners in the State of Maine. The TFAL has used this opportunity to avail itself of many existing resources and has found that there are many exemplary efforts currently taking place across the state to provide services for adult learners. However, these efforts are often independent of each other and have assumed the characteristic “silo” effect wherein there is little meaningful statewide cooperation, collaboration, sharing of data and information and a complete absence of a unifying, clearly articulated statewide vision and goals for adult learners.

Upon consideration of its responsibilities to assess the current status of adult learners and the services that are available for them, the TFAL has concluded that the model and motivation used to create the TFAL is one that should be continued on an ongoing basis through the creation of the Coordinating Council on Adult Learning. The CCAL will provide the necessary coordination for adult learner services and will have the opportunity over time to develop a meaningful vision, collect relevant and current data, eliminate institutional barriers and provide an effective marketing and outreach effort to benefit adult learners.

# **Appendix 1**

**PL 2013, Chapter 368**

**An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures  
of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds and Changing Certain  
Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State  
Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2013, June 30, 2014 and  
June 30, 2015**

**Part GGGGG**

**Task Force on Adult Learners**

Assistance Collaborative established in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 26, chapter 39 shall promote cooperation and coordination between the State and the energy industry sector to create an industry partnership to train workers in heating, ventilation, air conditioning and energy efficiency and conservation trades, which must be designed to promote partnerships among private sector industry organizations such as the Maine Energy Marketers Association Education Foundation and its Technical Education Center and various state agencies, including, but not limited to, the Finance Authority of Maine, the Maine State Housing Authority, the Maine Community College System and the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management.

## **PART GGGGG**

**Sec. GGGGG-1. Task Force on Adult Learners.** The Task Force on Adult Learners, referred to in this Part as "the task force," is established.

**1. Membership.** The task force consists of 13 members as follows:

- A. The Chancellor of the University of Maine System or the chancellor's designee;
- B. The President of the Maine Community College System or the president's designee;
- C. The Commissioner of Economic and Community Development or the commissioner's designee;
- D. The Commissioner of Labor or the commissioner's designee;
- E. The director of the office within the Department of Education concerned with adult education and family literacy or the director's designee;
- F. The Commissioner of Education or the commissioner's designee;
- G. The Chair of the State Workforce Investment Board or the chair's designee;
- H. One representative of a statewide membership organization advocating for business, appointed by the Governor;
- I. One representative from a statewide organization representing small business owners, appointed by the Governor;
- J. One representative of a nonprofit organization dedicated to postsecondary degree attainment by nontraditional students, appointed by the President of the Senate;
- K. One representative of a statewide foundation dedicated to promoting sustainable economic growth for this State, appointed by the President of the Senate;
- L. One representative of the board of a local workforce investment area designated pursuant to the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Public Law 105-220, appointed by the Speaker of the House; and
- M. One representative from a labor union in this State, appointed by the Speaker of the House.

**2. Appointments; convening of task force; chair.** All appointments must be made no later than 30 days following the effective date of this Part. The appointing authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the Legislative Council once all appointments have

been completed. After appointment of all members, the Executive Director of the Legislative Council shall call and convene the first meeting of the task force at which the chair of the task force must be elected from among its members. If 30 days or more after the effective date of this Part a majority of but not all appointments have been made, the executive director may request authority and the Legislative Council may grant authority for the task force to meet and conduct its business.

**3. Duties.** The task force shall study issues related to the more than 200,000 adults in the State who have obtained some postsecondary education but who have not earned an associate or baccalaureate degree or obtained a professional certificate. The task force shall develop a multisector statewide strategic plan to increase postsecondary degree completion rates among the adult population that includes both short-term and long-term strategies to increase degree completion rates by nontraditional students in the State and shall develop proposed legislation related to these strategies.

A. In conducting its study and formulating recommendations, the task force shall:

(1) Review available literature and best practices related to degree completion by nontraditional students, including any other task force reports related to degree attainment;

(2) Convene appropriate subcommittees to gather additional information and recommendations to ensure a broad-based view of degree attainment by nontraditional students in this State. These groups must include, but are not limited to, adult students currently enrolled in a college transitions program, the State Workforce Investment Board, the boards of the local workforce investment areas designated pursuant to the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Public Law 105-220, career and technical education centers and the Maine Centers for Women, Work and Community within the University of Maine System;

(3) Review available data and research on degree completion by nontraditional students in Maine and New England and nationally;

(4) Assess the current status of degree completion by nontraditional students in Maine, including available support services, academic programs, student funding options and adult learner initiatives in progress; and

(5) Identify barriers to degree completion by nontraditional students.

B. The task force shall make recommendations to:

(1) Develop a multisector statewide strategic plan to increase postsecondary degree completion rates among the adult population;

(2) Make the most effective use of local, state and federal resources, including leveraging private foundation investment;

(3) Align high school graduation, workforce training and adult education expectations to public postsecondary institution admission and placement requirements;

(4) Promote seamless transfer and expansion of credits granted through prior learning assessment, including credits for employer-based training programs;

- (5) Develop a statewide outreach and support campaign to reach the target population of adults with some postsecondary education but no degree or professional certification;
- (6) Create programs that accelerate certificate and associate and bachelor's degree attainment;
- (7) Identify financial resources that support degree completion by nontraditional students through grants or scholarships; and
- (8) Identify redundancies in programs and initiatives that serve adult learners and recommend program elimination or, when appropriate, consolidation and collaboration.

**4. Staff assistance.** The University of Maine System and the Maine Community College System jointly shall provide necessary staffing services to the task force.

**5. Report.** The task force shall submit its report, including the recommendations required by subsection 3, together with any necessary implementing legislation no later than February 1, 2014 to the Joint Select Committee on Maine's Workforce and Economic Future, which may report out a bill to the Second Regular Session of the 126th Legislature.

## **PART HHHHH**

**Sec. HHHHH-1. Working Group on Adult Workforce Readiness.** The director of the office within the Department of Education concerned with adult education and family literacy shall convene the Working Group on Adult Workforce Readiness, referred to in this Part as "the working group," to develop a statewide plan to address the work readiness needs of adult incumbent workers, unemployed adults and employers. The plan must include strategies that develop a coordinated system to meet the training needs of adult workers and the workforce needs of employers across the State and a plan to implement those strategies. The director shall invite the following to participate in the working group:

1. The executive director of the Maine Centers for Women, Work and Community within the University of Maine System or the executive director's designee;
2. The executive director of an association advocating for adult education in this State;
3. A representative of a statewide organization that provides employment and training services without charge;
4. A representative of the State Workforce Investment Board;
5. A representative of a board of a local workforce investment area designated pursuant to the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Public Law 105-220;
6. A human resource professional from a large private sector employer in this State;
7. A representative of the office within the Department of Health and Human Services concerned with family independence; and



## **Appendix 2**

### **Proposed Legislation Task Force on Adult Learners**

## **An Act to Establish the Coordinating Council on Adult Learning**

**Sec. \_\_\_\_.** **Coordinating Council on Adult Learning.** The Coordinating Council on Adult Learning, referred to in this Part as "the coordinating council," is established.

**1. Membership.** The coordinating council consists of 17 members as follows:

- A. The Chancellor of the University of Maine System or the chancellor's designee;
- B. The President of the Maine Community College System or the president's designee;
- C. The Commissioner of Economic and Community Development or the commissioner's designee;
- D. The Commissioner of Labor or the commissioner's designee;
- E. The director of the office within the Department of Education concerned with adult education and family literacy or the director's designee;
- F. The Commissioner of Education or the commissioner's designee;
- G. The Chair of the State Workforce Investment Board or the chair's designee;
- H. The Director of the Maine State Council of the Society for Human Resource Management or the director's designee
- I. One representative of a statewide membership organization advocating for business, appointed by the Governor;
- J. One representative from a statewide organization representing small business owners, appointed by the Governor;
- K. One representative of the Maine Independent Colleges Association appointed by the Governor;
- L. One representative of a nonprofit organization dedicated to postsecondary degree attainment by nontraditional students, appointed by the President of the Senate;
- M. One representative of a statewide foundation dedicated to promoting sustainable economic growth for this State, appointed by the President of the Senate;
- N. One representative of a nonprofit philanthropic foundation appointed by the President of the Senate;
- O. One representative of the board of a local workforce investment area designated pursuant to the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Public Law 105-220, appointed by the Speaker of the House; and
- P. One representative from a labor union in this State, appointed by the Speaker of the House.
- Q. One representative of the Maine Administrators of Career and Technical Education, appointed by the Speaker of the House.

**2. Appointments; convening of coordinating council; chair.** All appointments must be made no later than 30 days following the effective date of this Part. The appointing authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the Legislative Council once all appointments have been completed. After appointment of all members, the Executive Director of the Legislative Council shall call and convene the first meeting of the coordinating council at which the chair of the coordinating council must be elected from among its members. If 30 days or more after the effective date of this Part a majority of but not all appointments have been made, the executive director may request authority and the Legislative Council may grant authority for the coordinating council to meet and conduct its business.

**3. Meetings.** The coordinating council shall meet at least 4 times each year.

**4. Duties.** The coordinating council shall study issues related to the more than 200,000 adults in the State who have obtained some postsecondary education but who have not earned an associate or baccalaureate degree or obtained a professional certificate. The coordinating council shall develop a multisector statewide strategic plan to increase postsecondary degree completion rates among the adult population that includes both short-term and long-term strategies to increase degree completion rates by nontraditional students in the State and may develop proposed legislation related to these strategies.

A. In conducting its work and formulating necessary recommendations, the coordinating council may:

- (1) Develop a statewide vision and appropriate goals for nontraditional adult students;
- (2) Review available literature and best practices related to degree completion by nontraditional students, including any other coordinating council reports related to degree attainment;
- (3) Convene appropriate subcommittees to gather additional information and recommendations to ensure a broad-based view of degree attainment by nontraditional students in this State. These groups must include, but are not limited to, adult students currently enrolled in a college transitions program, the State Workforce Investment Board, the boards of the local workforce investment areas designated pursuant to the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Public Law 105-220, career and technical education centers and the Maine Centers for Women, Work and Community within the University of Maine System;
- (4) Review available data and research on degree completion by nontraditional students in Maine and New England and nationally;
- (5) Assess the current status of degree completion by nontraditional students in Maine, including available support services, academic programs, student funding options and adult learner initiatives in progress; and
- (6) Identify barriers to degree completion by nontraditional students.

B. The coordinating council may make recommendations to:

- (1) Develop a multisector statewide strategic plan to increase postsecondary degree completion rates among the adult population;

- (2) Make the most effective use of local, state and federal resources, including leveraging private foundation investment;
- (3) Align high school graduation, workforce training and adult education expectations to public postsecondary institution admission and placement requirements;
- (4) Work with the appropriate higher education institutions to promote seamless transfer and expansion of credits granted through prior learning assessment, including credits for employer-based training programs;
- (5) Develop a statewide outreach and support campaign to reach the target population of adults with some postsecondary education but no degree or professional certification;
- (6) Work with the appropriate higher education institutions to create programs that accelerate certificate and associate and bachelor's degree attainment;
- (7) Identify financial resources that support degree completion by nontraditional students through grants or scholarships; and
- (8) Identify redundancies in programs and initiatives that serve adult learners and recommend program elimination or, when appropriate, consolidation and collaboration.

**5. Staff assistance.** Member organizations of the coordinating council shall provide necessary staffing services.

**6. Annual Report.** The coordinating council shall submit an annual report by January 15<sup>th</sup> of each year with any necessary implementing legislation to the Joint Select Committee on Maine's Workforce and Economic Future or its successor and the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs or to a joint session of both committees.