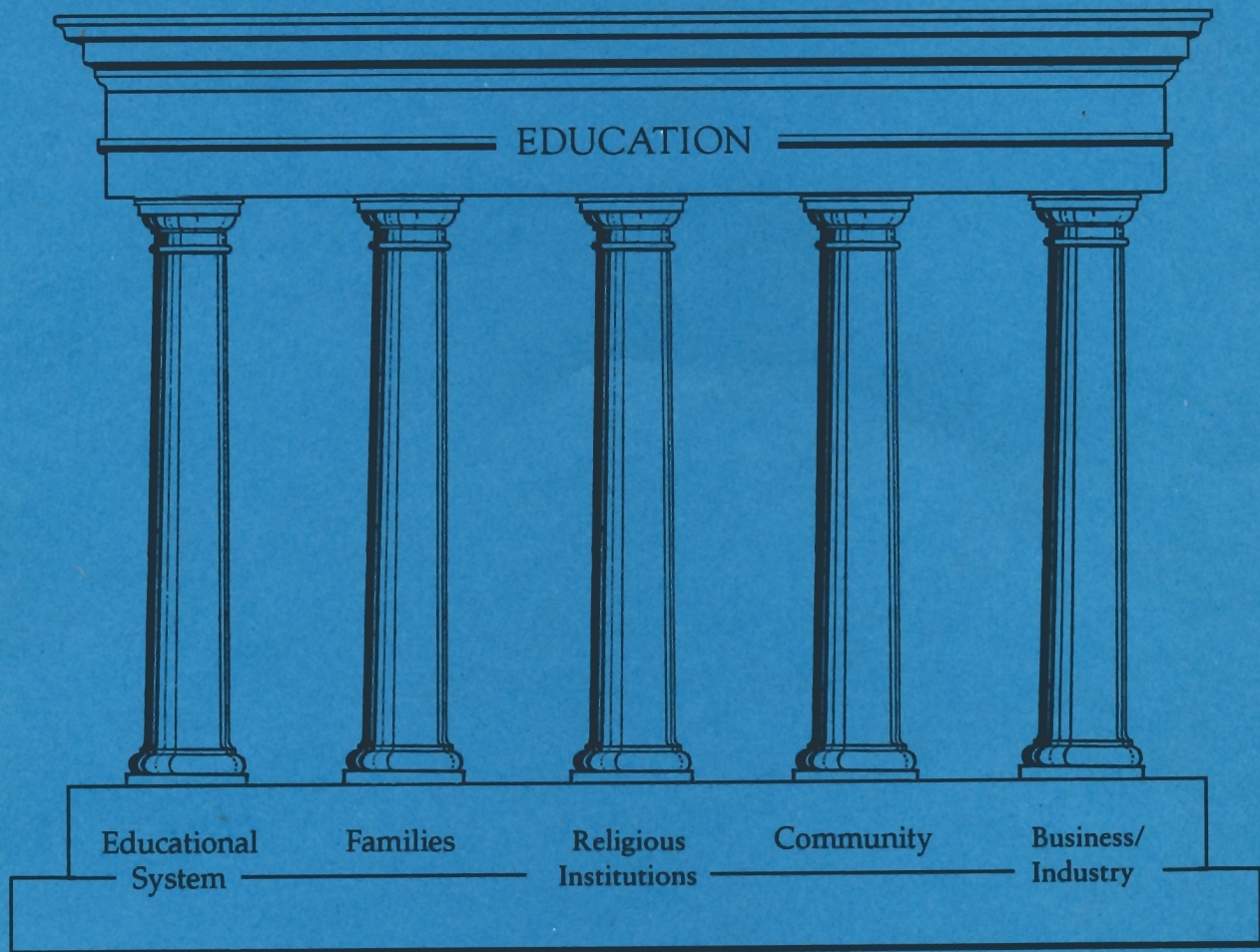


A Reaffirmation of Faith in Maine's Public Schools



There are four traditional pillars of support necessary for the educational success of every child. The pillars are the educational system, families, religious institutions, and the community. Recently, a fifth pillar has emerged, business and industry. Each must accept its responsibility and be a part of an integrated, focused whole.

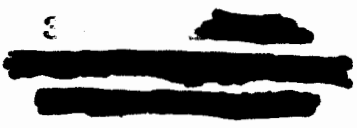


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter of Transmittal i

Introduction

PART I: WHY WE MUST CHANGE..... 1

Overview

PART II: WHAT IS SYSTEMIC CHANGE? 3

Linkages and Shared Responsibilities

PART III: A VISION OF SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES..... 8

**A. THE LINKAGE BETWEEN MAINE STATE GOVERNMENT,
THE MAINE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, AND THE
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION: INTERCONNECTED
RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIONS**

B. A FAMILY'S RESPONSIBILITY

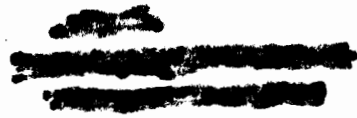
C. A RELIGIOUS INSTITUTION'S RESPONSIBILITY

D. THE COMMUNITY'S RESPONSIBILITY

E. BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY'S RESPONSIBILITY

PART IV: A SPECIFIC EXAMPLE..... 19

**Appendix: Current Efforts Toward Systemic Change in Maine
Public School Education.. 25**



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Governor

Leo G. Martin
Commissioner

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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7/10/00
7/10/00
Dear Reader:

Education is too important to leave to one entity alone. It needs all of us, working together in concert, to bring about educated, skillful individuals and success for our communities, state, and nation.

This document identifies the five traditional pillars of accountability for the education of all children -- schools, communities, religious institutions, families, and business/industry. It asks that each reaffirms its faith in Maine public schools by, once again, taking full responsibility for its accountability, but also by identifying and providing meaningful programs to help all of our children in these times of great challenge.

As Commissioner of Education in Maine, I have been privileged to meet and to talk with diverse groups of citizens who are interested and invested in educational quality and who have shared with me their suggestions and their plans for improving education in Maine. This document incorporates the many ideas that were generated through those discussions. I am extremely grateful for the input and mindful of its value to this document.

I sincerely hope that this report will be the foundation for the five traditional pillars as they join to support the superstructure of education that is so vital to the children of Maine.

Sincerely,

Leo G. Martin
Commissioner

LGM:cs

PART I: WHY WE MUST CHANGE

**It is not because systems of education have failed
that we must change: we must change
because the world has changed."**

Frank Newman

The world has changed, and as it has, so too have the traditional roles played by our communities, religious institutions, families, and schools. Increasing societal concern about our young people's health and well being, with respect to basic human needs for nurturance and physical safety, has prompted direct discussions of values in schools, such as AIDS prevention and drug and alcohol abuse prevention programs. Such discussions, historically, took place more often within families or religious institutions. In addition, increased attention to the adaptations required in order that students come to school physically and mentally challenged has contributed to the increased responsibility that schools have come to assume for human services. Once considered the domain of families and the larger community, human services, more broadly considered, is now an important consideration within the school community as well. School costs reflect these expanded services. A considerable amount of the significant rise in the cost of education during the last two decades is due to supporting social needs and demands that are essentially non-academic, but which must be addressed if academic learning is to occur.

The school day and year are no longer than they were before America's Civil War, yet the demands on our day and year have exploded. As important to us as increasing the length of the school day and year is the question of how we can use teacher and student time more efficiently in the pursuit of academics, while continuing to address the social responsibilities that present themselves to us in ever increasing numbers.

The work place, too, has changed. When World War II ended, America had the factories and labor necessary to provide a devastated world with consumer goods. America itself, because of the massive war effort, had produced little or no consumer goods over a five year period for its own people. We were unchallenged. We produced, sold, and became more affluent than any nation in the history of the world. Not so today. We face brutal world-wide competition. We must graduate all our students with saleable skills and with an individual plan that puts each of them onto the road of life-long learning, whether that be through an apprenticeship,

a technical school, a community college, or college and graduate school, so that they will be able to shift with the changes in the marketplace and compete successfully for ever-shifting employment opportunities. Each individual's plan for life-long learning is precious; our schools must play a significant role in helping individuals articulate that plan so that it may be sustained long after graduation.

School people are acutely aware of the social implications of academic excellence and of the need to articulate academic excellence in terms of modern social and economic needs. Yet, we are challenged to prevent these two seemingly divergent forces, societal and academic, from racing to a head-on collision, interceding each other within our schools. How can we provide for both? Where are the resources? Who must be accountable for what?

This reaffirmation of faith in Maine's public schools offers a vision which begins with an acknowledgement that we must replace a sincere but fractured effort with a focused and integrated plan to address both societal and academic needs. We must replace outstanding but isolated efforts with a systemic program that involves the shared responsibility of all constituents of the broader community: schools, family, religious institutions, business and industry, and social service agencies, all pillars of the broader community. We must, together, support a strategy for implementation in which each of us holds ourselves accountable for the responsibility that each of us can, and must, assume in the preparation of young people for the future and the long term security of our nation's economic and social well-being. It is an awesome, but not unattainable task, if we approach it from the perspective of a contract undertaken collaboratively by all pillars of the community.



PART II: WHAT IS SYSTEMIC CHANGE?

The Maine State Department of Education's definition of systemic change incorporates components of systemic change contained in a paper developed in Washington, D.C. in March of 1993 by the Education Commission of the States, an educational policy-making group that functions at the national level.

The Maine State Department of Education shares with the Education Commission of the States two overarching concepts which provide the framework within which the specifications of systemic change may be enumerated. These are:

As per the Education Commission of the States

1. "Those who would restructure must assume that students must be challenged to learn at significantly higher levels; that they be active participants in higher order learning; that the overall system of education, not just schools, must change; that significant changes are difficult and require extraordinary leadership; that a coherent strategy must be developed; and, that progress in systemic change requires a change in the attitude of, and the full support of, the American people."
2. "The states must create a coherent strategy if effective, statewide restructuring of schools is to take place. A climate that encourages all schools to change and provides the necessary support for change must be established. Having a coherent strategy will help ensure that all proposed changes, as they develop incrementally, provide a maximum, positive impact. Each incremental change must be interrelated and integrated into a common whole."

Key elements of systemic change, as delineated by the Education Commission of the States, and with which the Maine State Department of Education is in agreement, are:

1. the decentralization of authority;
2. reshaping school financing;
3. engaging professionals at all levels within education, as well as parents, the general public, and those segments in society most concerned with improving learning as participants in systemic change;
4. interagency collaboration;
5. setting high expectations by and for all constituents within schooling;
6. transforming the professional development of administrators and teachers; and finally
7. holding schools, districts, the State and the policy-making community accountable for the educational outcomes they deem appropriate.

Joke?

Various facets, described by the Education Commission of the States, characterize each of the key components as follows:

- 1. Decentralizing authority, in order to encourage flexibility and initiative at the local school level. Authority includes:**
 - **enabling administrative structures to emphasize facilitation and deemphasize regulation;**
 - **creating incentives, support, and political protection for schools and districts entering restructuring;**
 - **creating new forms of flexibility within the public school system that encourage more effective schools, i.e., magnet themes, charter schools, alternative methods of teacher certification, teacher development, etc.;**
 - **orienting the collective bargaining process toward reform;**
 - **creating within districts policies that clearly spell out the role of the district in making fundamental change. Districts should:**
 - **develop clear expectations for higher order learning;**
 - **encourage schools to use diverse learning styles in order to meet individual student needs;**
 - **advocate strongly for children and learning;**
 - **assist local schools in understanding systemic change and the restructuring effort;**
 - **provide schools incentives to make critical decisions;**
 - **bring high visibility to innovative changes that are working;**
 - **assist schools in using research and successful pilot programs on which to build their changes;**
 - **provide adequate resources for efficient operation of schools and for sustained staff development.**
- 2. Reshaping school finance to support both equity and improved performance includes:**

- focusing funding on the needs of students, not the maintenance of organizations;
 - allowing more budget authority at the individual school level;
 - including student outcomes as measures of equity;
 - providing fiscal incentives such as competitive grants, for school change.
3. **Engaging professionals at all levels within education, as well as parents, the general public and those segments of society most concerned with improved learning as participants in systemic change includes:**
- encouraging parental involvement in schools, i.e., "parents as teachers;"
 - encouraging the mentoring of students most at risk;
 - strengthening and consolidating programs that improve children's readiness to learn;
 - expanding the opportunities for preschool programs;
 - helping parents address readiness problems for their own children, including health issues;
 - creating schools/college partnerships to involve universities and colleges as full participants in the systemic change effort;
 - developing college admission requirements that will provide incentives for students to take challenging courses and develop higher order learning skills, at the high school level;
 - changing undergraduate education in order that students become active participants in their own learning;
 - preparing beginning teachers to be active participants in public school restructuring;
 - creating business/public coalitions at the local and state levels, i.e., Maine's Coalition for Excellence in Education, Maine Aspirations Foundation's local aspirations partnerships.

4. Collaboration includes:

- **creating incentives for human services, health care, correction services, and other agencies to coordinate their activities with each other and with the schools.**

5. High expectations must be set by:

- **creating high, clearly shared goals that emphasize higher order learning. Maine's goals may be built on the National Goals but must be more specific in the terms of the knowledge, intellectual skills and abilities required by a rapidly changing society;**
- **presenting a clear picture of what restructured schools are like, i.e., empowered teachers, principals as educational leaders, different teaching styles for different learning styles, different rates of learning for different students, etc.;**
- **presenting a clear picture of what a better system should be like, i.e., encouraging a high level of student learning, initiatives by the school, accountability for performance, linkage with higher education, preschool education, etc.;**
- **developing systems of assessment that measure the knowledge and skills called for by higher expectations (as is currently being done by the Maine Educational Assessment test);**
- **creating curricular frameworks that match the goals developed and that support active learning and critical thinking, (such as the Maine Common Core of Learning and the work being developed by the Maine Coalition for Excellence in Education).**

6. Transforming the professional development of all administrators and teachers includes:

- **refocusing and concentrating professional development to cope with, and be compatible with, the demands of restructuring;**
- **reshaping teacher and administrator education and connecting it to school restructuring; also, ensuring that student teachers' clinical experience takes place in restructuring schools.**
- **aligning the process of teacher and administrative certification with restructuring.**

7. Holding schools, districts, the State, and the policy-making community accountable for results includes:

- **developing appropriate assessments and indicators of educational achievement;**
- **describing for parents, the general public and community members having a vested interest in students' learning the appropriateness and effectiveness of particular assessment tools;**
- **publicly reporting the results of appropriate assessments and other indicators of educational achievement;**
- **providing incentives for success and assistance for schools that have not been successful and penalties for persistent failure.**

PART III: A VISION OF SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

A. THE LINKAGE BETWEEN MAINE STATE GOVERNMENT, THE MAINE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, AND THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION: INTERCONNECTED RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIONS

Maine State Government, Maine State Department of Education and the State Board of Education, must play leading roles in the integration and focusing of educational efforts.

Maine State Government has the responsibility to assure adequate resources from both the State and local levels. Resources must not only meet pupil and taxpayer equity; they must be spent in an accountable manner and be targeted to a focused and integrated plan of excellence in education for the State of Maine. The amount of General Purpose Aid (GPA) that each local unit is to receive for each ensuing year should be known and guaranteed by March 1 of the previous year. This would enable local units to implement both short and long-range planning that is directly connected to a systemic, integrated, focused state plan for education. Additionally, state government must assure that a portion of state resources allocated to local units, through incentives and other means, is targeted to implement the overall state plan of fundamental change.

The Maine State Department of Education has three responsibilities. The Department of Education must first develop an integrated/focused state plan for education, and institute that plan as policy.

Second, the Department of Education has the responsibility of communicating what true systemic change is, and what systemic change means, so that the plan that is developed truly presents systemic change, and draws on support from each pillar of the broader community as each accepts its educational responsibilities. This reaffirmation of faith in Maine's public schools initiates that communication.

The Maine State Department of Education has as its third responsibility--in addition to giving direction and guidance to the development of the plan and setting goals for the process--facilitating the process, and promoting the collaboration of all involved.

In short, the Maine State Department of Education must shepherd present and future educational change within the State into a meaningful statewide effort to insure that educational changes become integrated and focused, and are systemic.

Actions to facilitate implementation of the plan depend on the Maine State Department of Education acting more as a facilitator and less as a regulator, thus assisting local units in integrating local restructuring efforts into a common state plan. These actions include:

- **providing forums--in collaboration among the Department of Education, the State Board of Education, and various organizations focusing on school restructuring, such as the Maine Coalition for Excellence in Education--by which each local unit can develop, through processing and team involvement, a "blueprint" for implementing school restructuring;**
- **developing--through the cooperation of the Maine Department of Education, the University System, the Technical College System, the private colleges, the State Board of Education, the Maine Coalition for Excellence in Education, the Maine Educators' Association, the Maine Superintendents' Association, the Maine Principals' Association, and the Maine School Boards' Association--an in-service education program for all Maine teachers to assist them in bringing about fundamental change in education in the State of Maine;**
- **use of the current Southern Maine, Western Maine, and Northern Maine Partnerships, and the emerging Eastern Maine Partnership, as vehicles to facilitate the development among educators of the skills needed to implement a state plan;**
- **providing--in collaboration with the State Board of Education's Task Force on Learning Results--appropriate standards for Maine students, details about how the achievement of those standards relate to the skills necessary for various job categories, and, through state assessment, the proficiency level each student achieves as measured by the standards;**
- **reviewing the practicality and desirability of consolidating local schools units within the State of Maine and providing incentives for consolidation that are appropriate to the efficient use of resources and the efficient development of educational change;**
- **developing and coordinating the use of high technology in both statewide and local systems, and providing the incentives and resources necessary for optimal use of high technology.**

The responsibilities and actions on behalf of the Department of Education are predicated on the Department's belief that our schools have a three-fold purpose: one, to graduate competent students who are productive, responsible citizens in a free society; two, to graduate students with saleable skills and the competency to

be lifelong learners; and three, to ensure that students understand that all citizens must be lifelong learners if they are to meet the personal and professional challenges of continuing change.

The State Board of Education, through its legislated role of establishing a task force to develop a vision, goals, standards, and a five-year strategic plan for our educational system, can serve as the vehicle whereby the integrated, focused state plan can be developed with, and by, the people of the State of Maine. It is important that people all over Maine have the opportunity to discuss, amend, discard, and add to the development of the overall educational plan. Ownership and full understanding of a plan and its implications comes about only through being involved in the process of the development of the plan. Only when we discuss, absorb, and mix ideas from our individual experiences will we be able to craft a meaningful plan that derives from shared common visions. Only then will we truly understand and become a part of the plan to be implemented by us all. The State Board of Education can facilitate these discussions at the level of individual communities, within local school administrative units.

The linkage between state government and systemic school change may be summarized as follows: the State Department of Education must develop an integrated/focused state plan for education, and institute the plan as policy; it should utilize the State Board of Education as the vehicle to develop vision, goals, standards and "grassroots" involvement for the integrated/focused systemic plan for education for the State of Maine; and, it must depend on State government to help with the fiscal implementation of the plan. All parties, Maine State Government, the Maine Department of Education, and the State Board of Education must be accountable for their responsibilities.

B. A FAMILY'S RESPONSIBILITY:

We believe that the family is the most fundamental group of society; it is central and key to all that happens to its members. As such, the family has as a primary responsibility the task of inculcating within its children the high value and great need of an education.



SPECIFIC ACTIONS FAMILIES CAN TAKE TO MEET THIS RESPONSIBILITY:

At home:

- **Recognize that the primary responsibility for your children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs is that of the family; recognize that the family itself is an institution and, as such, brings children into the world and assumes the responsibility of nurturing them through childhood and into their adult years.**
- **Learn to know your children's needs well with respect to child development.**
- **Learn the parenting skills necessary in order to develop positive self-concept and positive, effective supervision and discipline within the home.**
- **Make a conscious effort for the family to spend effective time together on a daily basis.**
- **Work to develop a "happy" marriage, which usually results in a better parental/child relationship.**
- **Monitor carefully the activities and peer groups your child participates in. They sometimes expose children to violence and/or delinquent behavior which, in some aspects of our culture, is made to appear glamorous.**
- **Work with your religious institution to develop within your children the values necessary to become productive and responsible citizens in a free and open democracy.**

With respect to schooling:

- **Become full participants in, and fully committed to, your children's education; work hand in hand with the schools, helping the schools to achieve an A+ rating.**
- **Act as role models in the learning process by your own learning activities within the home.**
- **Develop within your children a desire to achieve, to work hard, and to experience the sweet satisfaction, indeed the joy, of work well done.**
- **Develop within each child the understanding of the importance of an education, not only to the child but also to whom all the child will affect.**

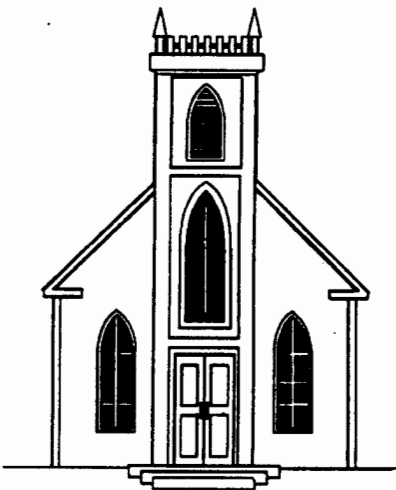
- **Instill within your children the concept that school is not just a place to have fun, to meet with friends and to pass time; rather, it has a more important function, that of providing them with a world class education, one that will make them outstanding citizens in a free and open democracy and successful competitors in a world-wide economy.**
- **Instill within each child the attitude that working hard enough and persevering long enough is the key to success; that each child has special abilities that will help create success.**
- **Demand more of children academically; encourage them to take more challenging courses and take additional courses instead of study periods.**
- **Encourage your children to take full advantage of everything your school has to offer, before school and after school, special programs, and those offered all through the day.**
- **Learn to know your child's needs well with respect to schooling; decide, along with your children's teachers, how many years your child should remain in high school. In some instances it is better to take fewer courses, persevere and master each subject, and remain a year or two longer in school. Success can come to each child with perseverance, time, and hard work.**
- **Provide a quiet, conducive space for study within the home, discuss your children's homework, and when completed review it with your children.**
- **Insure that the father, as well as the mother, makes a conscious effort to attend his children's school activities.**
- **Insure that fathers, as well as mothers, spend time alone with their children, making it a special event.**
- **Work with educators and elected school board members to maintain a quality school environment and education program.**
- **Develop and maintain vital communication with your child's teachers and with the educational process; assure your children's teachers that families want them to challenge children academically; develop goals and assess how well the goals are being achieved.**
- **Encourage your children's teachers to have high standards, to use the grade of A only when work is outstanding, and support them in their efforts to maintain high standards.**

- Advocate for and make use of courses for parents that teach the necessity of prenatal care and the importance of proper health services for all children. *
- Ask your adult education directors to develop programs for parents, i.e., "Positive Discipline," "Drug Abuse Prevention," "How to Prevent Gangs from Forming," "Sex Education," "AIDS Prevention Education," etc. *
- Work with your schools and community to develop easy means of communications with teachers, i.e., telephones in classrooms, computers and modems.
- Work with your schools to develop telephone "hotlines".
- Work in the schools; "contract" with your schools to provide library, homework, cultural, and "talk" time as a volunteer with your children and/or their classmates.

In the community:

- Aggressively pursue the means to establish before and after school programs in the community, religious institutions, and schools for understanding and coping with societal problems. *

C. A RELIGIOUS INSTITUTION'S RESPONSIBILITY:



We recognize that family values for many stem from religious roots, and that religious values are the standards by which many citizens in an open and free democracy abide. As such, we recognize the impact of religious values, and the importance of the spiritual dimension of life. Religious and spiritual institutions have the responsibility to articulate within their organizations the values they hope will guide their constituents' lives in a changing world that offers not only opportunity and beauty but also great danger, and in so doing have a complementary role to play as community participants in systemic school change.

SPECIFIC ACTIONS RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS CAN TAKE TO MEET THIS RESPONSIBILITY:

Religious and spiritual organizations should:

- Recognize that the founders and leaders of the world's great religions were also known as the world's greatest teachers; as such, the role of reaching

out, of teaching, is a natural responsibility of today's religious institution leaders.

- Bring religious leaders together through their statewide organizations and develop a common plan by which each religious institution will continually stress the teaching of values to its memberships and help each family to teach and reinforce values within the home.
- Develop specific plans, with timelines, of involving families within the institution in the total effort of understanding the need for values, and the means to continually reinforce values within the home.
- * ● Develop programs for families that teach drug and alcohol abuse prevention, sex education, AIDS prevention, and other programs needed because of the great societal changes our children are experiencing.
- Prepare and offer these same programs to children within the confines of the religious institution and within the parameters accepted by the individual institution.
- Develop before school, after school, and summer programs that can be used as an opportunity not only to teach values but also to provide needed care for those children who are alone because both parents are working, thus helping address children's social service and developmental needs.
- Develop with state and local councils, and through parental sessions, a series of incentives that will encourage all families to work closely with their religious institutions in developing appropriate values for the families of that institution.
- Raise the expectations of all children and families, of the institutions, challenging each to be everything that she/he can become; raise the aspirations of all.
- * ● Have religious leaders within each community come together and tailor a plan for celebrating each community's uniqueness and needs.
- Know that there are many values that are common to us all, regardless of religion, race, or nationality. Common values are "loyalty, responsibility, tolerance, justice and fairness, love and compassion, respect for life, truth, self and community, justice and mercy, and the value of short-term decisions as compared to long-term decision." (Rushworth M. Kidder, Institute for Global Ethics)

*funded by
Mott Foundation
"community ed"*

- Emphasize within each organization tolerance for the variety of moral perspectives represented in our increasingly pluralistic society.

The religious community can facilitate school reform by assuming a proactive posture in addressing the social needs of members and parishioners. Students whose families can draw on supportive programs offered by churches will be in a better position to take advantage of what schools have to offer.

D. THE COMMUNITY'S RESPONSIBILITY:

We believe that community means more than a neighborhood, village, town, or city, or particular vested interests within those units; it also means a community of common interests. What interest is more common to us all than our investment in our children? It is they whom we bring into this world and whom we seek to make both self-sufficient and concerned about the welfare of others; it is they whom we nurture and support, and it is they to whom we look for our nurturance and support as our individual strength diminishes with age. This is how community strength increases and becomes, with each child's success, ever more vibrant.



SPECIFIC ACTIONS COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS CAN TAKE TO MEET THESE RESPONSIBILITIES:

In addition to the family, religious institutions, and business and professional groups, other facets of "community," including social service agencies, recreation departments, and volunteer service organizations, should:

- Champion the belief that education is an investment in our children and our community.
- Recognize that achievement of America's National Education Goals will require a total commitment from the total community, that they will be achieved neighborhood by neighborhood, village by village, town by town, city by city, and state by state.
- Promote the knowledge that all children can learn; only that some need more time and support than others.
- Change public perception, i.e., all ; all kids can learn math just as they can, learn any and all other subjects. *yes, if you lower the standards.*

Oh, really? Cop-out.

- Recognize that "problems in education today are a reflection of fundamental problems within our society ... students whose parents are divorced, students who return home to an empty house each afternoon, students who have been exposed to the abuses of drugs and alcohol, students with deep seated emotional problems, students who lack any respect for authority, students for whom the positive values of society have not been reinforced in their community or their homes. Many of these obstacles to learning must be addressed before our classroom teachers can begin to teach the lesson for the day." (Theresa Knecht Dozier)
- Provide community-wide incentives that will motivate all members of the community to ensure a safe and secure environment for all children, including access for parents to information about child development, and parenting techniques.
- Provide community-wide incentives that will motivate parents and children to achieve success.
- Promote high expectations for the total community; make individual community contributions highly visible models that children can emulate.
- * ● Consolidate human services and provide them, where needed, before and after the school day, thus holding the academic day free for academics.
- Provide community services before and after school (recreation, Y.M.C.A., religious groups, volunteer programs, league programs, junior firemen, police cadets, drug abuse prevention, etc.) in order to use children's time productively and to expose them to the many skills and understandings they need to have in order to succeed in an ever more complex world.
- Build total cooperative efforts among all municipal bodies in order to provide better services and reduced costs (town government, school government, recreation, after school programs, fire department, police, public health, communications, water district, sewer district, religious institutions, libraries, highway departments, solid waste, town planners, etc.).
- Form P.T.A.s that bring the community, families, and schools together to provide the resources, high expectations, incentives, and cooperation necessary to ensure success.
- Consider, within each organization, how to engage in local and regional education efforts. The Maine National Guard, for example, is prepared to cooperate with schools in programs that encourage students to do the very best they can in school, to develop leadership skills and character, to learn

social responsibility, and to learn of various life-long educational opportunities. What is your organization prepared to do?

E. BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY'S RESPONSIBILITY:

We believe that America must have the most highly motivated and best educated work force in the world; further, that the education each student receives must be appropriate to the student and assure that she/he shall enter the work force with the necessary skills and basic background to continually develop new skills necessary for a dynamic and ever-changing world of work. In order to be able to consistently rely on Maine's graduates as future workers and work leaders, Maine businesses and industries have a vested interest in Maine's educational system. They have a corresponding responsibility to protect that investment by allocating people, time, and resources in support of that system.



SPECIFIC ACTIONS BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY CAN TAKE TO MEET THIS RESPONSIBILITY: STW

- Work with local schools to integrate practical application with academics.
- Communicate to school people the changing needs of business and industry with respect to employee skills.
- Become more involved with schools as new curricula with "saleable" skills evolve, i.e., Maine Youth Apprenticeship Program, Tech Prep, applied academics, project oriented academics, and the new vocational programs.
- Before hiring a student, even for part-time work, review each student's work portfolio; the portfolio should contain vital information as to the student's school attendance record, achievement and assessment, sample writings, letters of recommendation, etc. This will provide a powerful incentive for each student to do well at school.
- Adjust student/employee work hours in accordance to how well she/he is doing academically in school and how consistent her/his attendance is at school.

- **Be aware of the various systemic school change efforts taking place throughout the state (see appendix). Identify possible points of connection between those efforts and individual business or industry concerns and goals. Develop partnership programs to further the goals identified as common to both schools and business and/or industry; for example:**
 - **contribute to and participate in the fulfillment of the fifteen goals of the Maine Coalition for Excellence in Education.**
 - **participate in local Maine Aspiration Foundation projects.**
 - **participate in projects deriving from the Maine State Systemic Math and Science Initiative.**

PART IV. A SPECIFIC EXAMPLE:

At the local level, every school employee and citizen should be encouraged to process, and thus comprehend, the role that each must play in order to develop and implement a local "blueprint" that will enable each local school unit to become an integral part of an overall integrated, focused, systemic state plan for educational change. As an example of how this might work, consider the following: A local educational unit could set as a goal, "to individualize the learning situation for all students" in order to meet the six National Educational Goals (see Appendix, p...). Though there are many more strategic changes that can be used to individualize the learning situation for all children, the following suggestions are examples of how a local unit, drawing on support from all of the other pillars of the community, could restructure itself to meet such a goal:

Students and Teachers:

1. **Non-graded Philosophy:** Students are grouped and regrouped within their classrooms in order to learn at their level of achievement. Some students, although assigned to a sixth-grade level, could benefit by learning together in an eighth-grade reading course, while others may learn better, together, in a fifth-grade mathematics course.
2. **Expectancy Grade Scores:** We have the ability to measure how well a student achieves in accordance to his or her ability. A student may be placed in the sixth grade and may be achieving in reading at the eighth grade level; however, he or she may have the ability to achieve at the tenth grade level. In such a case, the student is an underachiever. We need to regroup these students in order to challenge them to meet their ability levels while remaining with their social peers.
3. **Student Placement:** Place all students in accordance to their learning style and the teachers' teaching style, the students' personality and the teachers' personality, and within a peer group in which each student can best function.
4. **Gifted and Talented Programs:** Gifted and talented classes should be of great challenge. Partnerships should be formed with colleges and the University system within each school's region and a Pre-K - 16 program developed. This would involve colleges and universities in individual educational plans for gifted and talented students and in the provision of services.
5. **Special Education:** When practical, special education students would be fully included within the regular classroom and would receive appropriate assistance in accordance to their identified individual needs.

6. **Team Teaching:** Teaming uses individual teacher strengths, in a team, for a much greater number of students, thus meeting more individual student needs. It also promotes communication among teachers to help better understand individual student strengths and weaknesses.

7. **Staff Development and Curriculum Revision:**

- Provide strong professional staff in-service education programs that are focused on a local plan for restructuring.
- Involve students at all levels in restructuring by asking them to comment on, evaluate and critique their current courses of study, in light of school changes they would like to see; contact students after graduation for an analysis of needed changes from the students' perspectives.
- Have teachers at the local level develop a "blueprint" by which **Maine's Common Core of Learning** can be specifically implemented in each school; also, use the **Common Core** to develop local assessments and standards that coordinate with state assessments and standards.
- Assure that the local curriculum is challenging and requires higher level thinking and learning skills.
- Establish a reading recovery program in every school by having at least one first grade teacher intensely trained in the reading recovery method. This can prevent the cycle of failure before it begins.
- Have every student graduate from our public high schools with a written plan for continued learning.

School Structure:

8. **Magnet Themes and Diversified Diplomas:** Magnet schools attract students who have strong interests and abilities in the theme of that school. If you have a high degree of interest and ability in a particular area, you will do well. Thus, magnet school students have achieved well, have a high attendance level, a low incidence of discipline problems, and general success. Maine, in addition to offering individual magnet schools, can offer magnet themes. Why do we insist on the same requirements for all students? Why not offer diversified diplomas for diversified requirements? Students may opt to receive a diploma in the humanities, or math and science, or in technology, all with some common and some different requirements. This would build on individual student strengths and interests and would further individualize the learning situation for all children.

9. **The Three to Seven Year High School:** What is so magical about a four year graduation requirement? If we truly believe that achievement comes through perseverance and hard work, then we must believe that it takes a different amount of time for each student to understand well. Some students should be graduated in three years, moving on to college, university, or other post-secondary professional training. Others should remain from four to seven years, depending upon their individual needs. They should take the number of courses that they can handle well, concentrating carefully on those courses, and scoring a high level of achievement in each course that they study. This, again, is a part of the learning situation for all children.

10. **Career Bound Students:** Our schools have traditionally focused on college bound students. General courses of studies have been used for students not going on to college. General studies courses have been graduating students with no saleable skills, something not acceptable in today's world. Each local school unit plan must include a means by which local units can implement a pathway for the career bound student by which that student can enter the world of work with exceedingly high, competitive work skills and an individualized plan by which that student shall become a lifelong learner. The plan should include, but not be limited to, such programs as:

- Youth Apprenticeship
- Tech Prep
- Project-Based Academics
- Applied Academics
- Applied programs from the vocational and technical centers that are correlated and adjunct to academic programs
- Two-year degree programs in regional Vocational/Technical Centers for public high school graduates.

Courses would be based on an assessment of the work needs of the region. The particular courses offered would "sunset" once the needs of the area were fulfilled and new courses for the associate degree would be offered to fulfill new assessed needs for the area. The associate degree would allow graduates to continue on for a full degree in an existing institution.

Partnership programs between schools and local business and industry can accelerate and enhance the offerings of such programs.

11. Technology I: Technology must be used to help individualize the learning situation. Each teacher should have a computer in the classroom. As such, she/he would become a model of computer use for all students and would be able to retrieve, immediately, data important to the learning of each individual student. For example, the reading level of each student, the student's achievement levels in all subject areas, the student's learning style, strategies that have worked best for the student in the past, student writing samples, past achievements, special needs, etc., would all be readily available to assist teachers in tailoring to a student's needs.



Technology II: Every school should have courses of study available to all citizens of the community through citizen-owned personal computers and modems. This would open our schools to a 24-hour day, 365-day year through technology. Accessed information would range from a menu of what is happening at the school during a designated period of time to individual courses, from advanced chemistry to remedial mathematics. Both parents and children could learn together at home via technological inexpensive access to the school, thus further individualizing a student's needs.

12. Alternative calendar: Schools and communities should seriously examine an alternative calendar for teaching and learning. An alternative calendar, which is a configuration of the current September to June, 175 - 180 day calendar, provides a framework for schooling in which the best educational experiences possible can be offered to all Maine's children and youth. Reexamination of this framework could provide new ways to designate blocks of instructional time and provide shortened but more frequent breaks from school. Extended summer vacation often makes subject matter retention more difficult. An alternative calendar could eliminate or lessen the need for re-teaching in the fall and "winding down time" in the spring of the year. And, all students would have new and expanded opportunities to focus on individual interests and skill areas, both during school and vacations, simply by being able to use their time differently. Enrichment, remedial or accelerated programs could be offered, as well as professional development time for teachers. Full immersion programs could be developed for the shortened break time, such as three weeks of foreign language, of personal hygiene, computer camp, outdoor biology, and intensive mathematics and science courses.

13. An Extended Day: An extended school day should also be considered. It could be self-supporting, yet no student would be deprived of the opportunity to attend. Volunteers, teachers, and community mentors could provide services. Services could include remediation, supervised study, additional special education needs, enhancement programs, hands-on programs, social service, and community recreation programs, all on the basis of voluntary attendance.

14. **Social Services:** The need for social services has dramatically changed what was known, in the 1950's, as guidance and counseling. It no longer involves only "career counseling" and guiding students into college and finding means of obtaining tuition monies. It also includes providing counseling and referral with respect to students' physical and mental developmental difficulties. "Guidance" is understaffed and does not meet today's needs. There needs to be a whole new paradigm of thinking by our guidance professionals. They need to be extensively retrained. The position of director of guidance needs to incorporate the skills of a senior manager who has the ability to coordinate all of the existing social services, and to deliver these services in an efficient, integrated, cost-saving manner to designated recipients. These services should include:

a. **Career and College Counseling:**

- facilitating a student's entrance into an appropriate college or university by having an implemented plan of action that includes being prepared to take the PSAT's, SAT's, state assessment tests, advanced placement tests, and by preparing portfolios for college, the "13th year", and work;
- facilitating a student's participation in the Maine Youth Apprenticeship program, Tech Prep programs, and other programs of applied academics and work experience;
- providing career information for the career bound student, just as college and university information is provided for the college bound student;
- promoting collaboration with industry that develop programs that offer practical application to theory;

b. **Addressing Students' Developmental Needs:**

- provide an overall plan, again through coordination and collaboration with human services, and other social and community agencies and organizations, for parent education, peer helper programs, sex education, drug-free programs, aspire programs, community service programs, the elimination of gender disparity programs, multicultural understanding, and intergenerational programs;
- provide individual counseling and/or referral for students who are at particular social, emotional or academic risk.

Achieving Systemic Change In Education

Achieving systemic change in education "will require a total societal commitment. Education must be viewed by all members of our society as not just important, but vital to our national defense and our economic prosperity. Government and business leaders, the community, teachers, parents, and students must all share responsibility for academic excellence if we are to achieve the world class standards we profess. This will not be easy. It will require some fundamental changes in our attitudes and in our approach to education."

Therese Knecht Dozier, PAIDEA, Winner, 1993



Appendix: Current Efforts Towards Systemic Change In Maine Public School Education

I. The National Education Goals

In 1991, President George Bush announced a national education strategy, AMERICA 2000, intended to promote real improvement in American Education. At the heart of AMERICA 2000 are six ambitious National Education Goals which were developed in collaboration with the nation's governors and have been adopted by AMERICA 2000 states and communities all across the country. In March 1994, President Clinton signed into law the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, adding two goals to the original six listed below: Teacher Education and Professional Development, and Parental Participation.

By the Year 2000

- 1. All American children will start school ready to learn.*
- 2. At least 90% of our students will graduate from high school.*
- 3. Our students will demonstrate competency in challenging subject matter and will learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment.*
- 4. American students will be first in the world in science and mathematics achievement.*
- 5. Every adult will be literate and have knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a world economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.*
- 6. Every school will be safe and drug-free, and offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.*

II. Maine's Education Goals

In support of AMERICA 2000, the Maine Department of Education organized six goal committees to assess current local efforts to realize each of the National Education Goals and provide annual reports on Maine's progress toward the year 2000 target. The following are the six goals of MAINE 2000 as adapted by the Maine Department of Education:

By the year 2000:

1. *All Maine families, communities and schools will support children in their learning.*
2. *Maine's graduation rate will increase to at least 90%.*
3. *Every school in Maine will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our modern economy; and to this end, Maine students will leave grades four, eight and twelve having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter, including essential knowledge in English, mathematics, science, history, geography, foreign language, and fine arts.*
4. *Maine students will demonstrate world class achievement in mathematics and science.*
5. *All Maine adults will be literate and well prepared for lifelong learning responsible citizenship, and productive employment.*
6. *All Maine's schools will be free of drugs and violence and offer a safe and orderly environment conducive to learning.*

The State of Maine is currently developing a state plan to meet the requirements of the new federal legislation.

III. Maine's Common Core of Learning

Maine's Common Core of Learning is the product of a Commission which included individuals from all walks of life who convened in 1989 to explore and articulate the knowledge, skills and attitudes Maine students need by the time they graduate from high school. The Common Core of Learning "is a non-disciplinary organization of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, an integrated approach to teaching and learning. It is not an arrangement of skills into four new courses (Communication I, The Human Record II). The essential concepts gleaned from the currently



taught subject areas are organized in the areas of Personal and Global Stewardship, Communication, Reasoning and Problem Solving, and the Human Record (Common Core, p. 18)." The report challenges Maine residents to reconsider how the curriculum is organized and how schools are structured, and has the potential to revolutionize the way Maine students are educated. For many schools, Maine's Common Core of Learning provides a framework within which the particulars of local restructuring efforts are articulated.

IV. Maine's Coalition for Excellence in Education

The Maine Coalition For Excellence in Education is a statewide partnership of business, education, and community leaders committed to improving Maine's public education system in fundamental ways. The Coalition's aim is that education develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of each child so that children will become not only good citizens, employees, and taxpayers, but also have the capability to guide government and manage their own lives. The Coalition advocates building on Maine's Common Core of Learning to define what we want children to know and be able to do at each stage of their learning experience.

THE FIFTEEN GOALS OF THE MAINE COALITION FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION:

(1) "By the year 1994, Maine will adopt a core of learning outcomes, derived from Maine's Common Core of Learning, which prepares all students for lifelong learning and for success in family life, the community, and the workplace.

(2) "By the year 1998, a Certificate of Initial Mastery will be awarded to students who demonstrate high performance of the state's core learning outcomes.

(3) "By the year 1998, all students who have earned a Certificate of Initial Mastery may choose from a selection of additional learning experiences that they can easily move within and between. Students will advance their mastery of common learning outcomes within their chosen learning experience while also developing knowledge and skills that match their prospective academic and career pursuits.

(4) "By the year 1997, every school will be measured on the following outcomes:

- Schools will achieve gender, race, and socioeconomic equity in every measure of student achievement. (equity)
- Schools will prepare all students to achieve required standards on an integrated system of state and local assessments. (quality)

- **Schools will provide all students with a learning environment with which they can earn a Certificate of Initial Mastery of the core learning outcomes. (mastery)**
- **Schools will be responsible for preparing all students for acceptance into programs for continued learning or for successful transition directly into the workplace and community. (transition)**

(5) "By the year 1996, each school will be evaluated through an integrated system of school site assessment and state administered assessment on the goals of equity, quality, mastery, and transition.

(6) "By the year 2000, every school will either meet performance standards or will meet specified standards of improvement.

(7) "By the year 1993, educators will have the authority, training, and resources to create schools with the following characteristics:

- **A shared vision**
- **Collaboration**
- **Educational and administrative leadership**
- **A focus on student learning and community expectations**
- **School personnel with sufficient knowledge to create a learning environment that meets all student needs and capabilities.**
- **A culture that supports continuous learning by all its members.**

(8) "By the year 1998, Maine's newest educators will demonstrate a high level of scholarship in their areas of study and will have developed and demonstrated expertise as educators through a field based professional development system integrated within the state's primary and secondary schools.

(9) "By the year 1994, Maine's education work force will have access to resources to develop the new professional skills and knowledge demanded by Maine's goals for schools and students.

(10) "By the year 1998, every student, teacher, administrator will be aided by technology in achieving the learning outcomes and the standards for school success.

(11) "By the year 1998, child and family services will be delivered through a system with the following characteristics:

- **In each community, children's readiness to learn will be assessed by research based standards of emotional, social, and physical well being.**
- **Communities will be accountable through their school boards for improving the emotional, social, and physical well being of their children through the coordinated uses of local, state, and federal resources.**
- **Services and financial resources for children and families will be coordinated by the school board at or near the school site to enhance flexibility and effectiveness.**

(12) "By the year 1994, resources will be available to give parents the support and training they need to support their child's learning or, where circumstances require, an able and committed school official, teacher, or qualified professional advocate will be identified to support a child's education.

(13) "By the year 1995, parents will have the opportunity to select the learning environment within their child's school, at another public school within the community, or another district's school which best assures the child's achievement of Maine's core learning outcomes.

(14) "By the year 1993, communities will have access to training and resources to prepare to collaborate with the teachers, administrators, and the students in setting school and community education policies.

(15) "By the year 1995, Maine public and private employers will share in the training and continued improvement of the state's present and future work force; will provide greater support for families and schools; and will exercise their responsibility to identify the skills and knowledge required to succeed in the workplace."

V. Maine Re:Learning

In 1992, Maine became part of the Re:Learning Network, a national partnership involving the Coalition of Essential Schools, the Education Commission of the States, and sites working to unite school structuring and state policy. The Nine Common Principles of the Coalition of Essential Schools provide the base for restructuring within Re:Learning.

VI. Innovation in Education Grants

The Maine Department of Education supports restructuring through the Innovative Education Grants Program. The focus of this program is to provide local schools with funding and technical assistance for school change. All grant recipients work within the context of Maine's Common Core of Learning. In 1994, the grant program has targeted curriculum development within four funding categories:

- 1. Anchor Sites:** continued funding for four laboratory sites within the mission of translating Maine's Common Core of Learning into challenging curricula.
- 2. Re:Learning Network:** Maine is in the second of a five year commitment as a Re:Learning state. Grants were awarded to 12 schools or districts that are utilizing the Coalition of Essential Schools' Nine Common Principles and Maine's Common Core of Learning as their framework for restructuring.
- 3. Exploring Sites:** Grants were awarded to 7 schools which have created a climate for change and are ready to focus on developing student outcomes with Maine's Common Core of Learning.
- 4. Reflective Practice Grants:** Classroom based grants will fund proposals from groups of teachers and other school staff who will investigate questions about teaching and learning and the need for change, with a focus on Maine's Common Core of Learning.

VII. The Restructuring Support Project

The Restructuring Support Project is a partnership between the Department of Education, the University of Maine System and the Center for Educational Services in Auburn. The goals of the project are to:

- 1. build a climate of collaborative decision making about school change initiatives within the three organizations;**
- 2. make better use of limited public and private funds to support school change initiatives in the state;**
- 3. connect the components of school change support under one umbrella, designed to meet the needs of the three organizations and the schools committed to systemic change;**
- 4. combine school activities undertaken by each organization into jointly sponsored and developed activities in the support of school change.**

VIII. The Maine Mathematics and Science Alliance

In May of 1992, Maine was awarded a \$10 million grant under the Math and Science Systemic Initiative Program of the National Science Foundation to help improve the quality of math and science education in our schools. The Maine Mathematics and Science Alliance was formed as a non-profit corporation to administer the grant. Several standing committees are actively involved in the statewide Systemic Initiative: Systemic Planning and Evaluation; Professional Preparation and Development; Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment; Community Integration; Equity Task Force; and Beacon Colleges. There are seven Beacon School sites, each facilitated by one mathematics and one science specialist.

IX. Champlon Paper/University of Maine Common Core of Learning

In the winter of 1992, Champion Paper awarded the University of Maine at Farmington a \$300,000 grant to create a Common Core of Learning Institute on campus. The project selected two school districts to receive grants to create Common Core of Learning Curricula. The project's goal is to foster change in both the schools and in the University faculty involved with teachers from the two school districts. By working directly with teachers from the two school districts, faculty will learn more about school change and the Common Core of Learning and will develop inter-disciplinary projects of their own as part of their teacher preparation responsibilities.

X. Maine Serve-America Grant Program

As part of the National and Community Service Act of 1991, Maine receives \$80,000 from the Commission on National and Community Service. The program supports schools which integrate student service learning (student community service for academic credit) into the school experiences of a broad segment of the student population. The grant also links student services directly to the outcomes in the Common Core of Learning. Schools are required to assess student progress towards achievement of selected outcomes from the "Personal and Global Stewardship" section of the Common Core.

XI. Student Assistance Team Program

The Student Assistance Team Program is designed to provide training and technical assistance to K - 12 educators working with children at risk of school failure. Educators are trained in a team approach for the identification and referral of children at risk for school failure. The program is coordinated with the Divisions of Compensatory Education, Special Education, and Alcohol and Drug Services.

XII. The New Standards Project

The New Standards Project is a voluntary association for the joint development of standards and exams, reflecting a commitment to an education system that is both excellent and equitable. Working with the Learning Research and Development Center at the University of Pittsburgh, the National Center on Education and the Economy, and other partners, The Maine Department of Education is committing time and resources to the realization of the New Standards Project. In 1992-1993, selected lead teachers participated in teacher training groups representing grades 4, 8, and 10 in 36 schools. Trial testing in math and literacy took place in the spring of 1993. Lead teachers will train others in the participating 36 schools.

XIII. Maine Educational Assessment Overview

The Maine Educational Assessment (MEA) assesses annually the academic achievement of all students in grades four, eight, and eleven. The MEA design emphasizes higher level thinking skills and problem solving in assessing reading, writing, mathematics, science, social studies and humanities. Currently, a health assessment will be added at grade four with the intent to expand to grades eight and eleven over the next several years. The MEA reports at the school level provide a basis for program evaluation and planning. Results at the state level have provided Maine with a view of program improvement over time. Scores, particularly in the past several years, have made significant gains in all six subject areas. Math and writing have demonstrated the greatest gains.

XIV. Outcome-Based Teacher Certification

The Maine Board of Education, The Maine Department of Education, and the University of Maine System, with assistance from the Maine LEADership Consortium, have joined together toward creating an outcome-based model for teacher certification in Maine. In recognition of the critical importance of including teachers, administrators, teacher educators, parents and other community members in developing high and rigorous standards, a new system will be built that is intended to tie a certification system for beginning teachers directly to Maine's Common Core of Learning.

XV. Year Round Education Task Force

An examination of Year Round Education has been undertaken by the State Board of Education and the Department of Education. Year Round Education is the reorganization or reconfiguration of the existing school calendar into instructional blocks and vacations distributed across the calendar so that learning is continuous throughout the year. Maine's Task Force on Year Round Education, representing many groups connected both directly and indirectly to education in Maine,

produced a report intended to assist those schools with an interest in adopting a year round education calendar.

XVI. Magnet Schools

Currently, several districts and vocational centers throughout Maine are exploring the magnet school concept. In general, a magnet school is one that develops a program or programs that will be attractive and unique to a district's particular area. Magnet schools ultimately utilize team teaching, self-pacing, motivational techniques that concentrate on the individual learner, variable program entrance and exit points, and instruction that focuses on the individual learner rather than on classes.

XVII. Jobs for Maine's Graduates (JMG) Program

JMG is a school-to-work transition program. Its basic goal is to assist at-risk students to complete high school and make a successful entry into the world of work. The JMG model combats youth unemployment and underemployment by extending to at-risk students all the traditional benefits of vocational and applied technology education except for specific skill training:

- vocational assessment and career counseling
- career exploration and decision making
- preemployment competency building and basic skills training
- developmental math and communication skills, as necessary
- motivational career association and student leadership activities
- individualized job development and job placement assistance, and
- systematic follow up for 18 months.

The goal is to extend the program to every high school in the state. Up to fifty sites are anticipated for the 1993-1994 school year.

XVIII. Maine Youth Apprenticeship Program

Youth apprenticeship programs represent a partnership between an employer, a technical college, an applied technology center, and a local school administrative unit. Programs in Maine involve three years of alternating modules of full-time work and full-time study, beginning in grade 11. Participants can successfully complete technical college program requirements, certificates of Skill Mastery and the option of continuing for an additional year of full-time study to earn an associate degree. Over the next two years, Maine plans statewide implementation of programs being developed at test sites.

XIX. Tech Prep

Tech Prep (technical preparation) creates a bridge between secondary level occupational or career preparation and postsecondary technical education. Analogous to College Prep programs based on the liberal arts curriculum, which prepare students for enrollment in a four-year baccalaureate degree program, and thence to a career in a professional occupation, Tech Prep programs are based on the practical arts curriculum and prepare high school juniors and seniors for entry into two-year associate degree programs, and thence to a career in a technical occupation. Five regional Tech Prep projects are underway. Every high school and applied technology center in the state is included within the geographic scope of one of the five projects.

XX. Other Initiatives

There are a number of other organized efforts to support educational reform. These include: The Maine Aspirations Foundation; The Center for Educational Services; The Southern, Western and newly formed Northern Maine Partnerships; Maine LEADership Consortium. In addition, several Maine schools have received funding as a part of other national reform strategies.

All efforts are based on the shared vision of public education represented by Maine's Common Core of Learning.

For more information about any particular initiative, contact:

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