

MAINE COMPACT FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
Board of Directors Meeting November 3, 2005 FAME office in Augusta

Minutes

Board members present: Wendy Ault, Yellow Light Breen, Mary Cathcart, John Diamond, Joseph Foley, Laura Fortman, Susan Gendron, Daniel Hart, Joyce Hedlund, Greg Howat, Donna Loring, Ron Milliken, Susan Percy, Derek Pierce, Lynn Ploof-Davis, Colleen Quint, Christopher Rector, Peggy Rotundo, Henry Schmelzer, Susan Tuthill, and John Witherspoon.

Guests and staff present: Henry Bourgeois, Peggy Crawford, Dianne Heino, Kathy Kimball, Scott MacDonald and Kevin Thurston.

Compact Strategies Update. Mr. Foley opened the meeting at 9:30 a.m. He asked Mr. Bourgeois to briefly update the members on the Compact's strategies, a summary of which follows.

Maine Compact for Higher Education: Strategy Summary

Strategy	Goal	Program	Status
Early College Mitchell Institute	In ten years, every Maine high school will offer an early college program, Now, 18% of students do college-level work in high school; our goal is 70%.	Build the statewide infrastructure to insure that each high school has an early college program, allowing students to experience academic success at the collegiate level in high school. Identify alternative local models.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Lumina Foundation grant, secured by MCF, supports this initiative, which included a major best practice conference and surveys of high school guidance counselors. There are now five early college sites operating around the state. • The Legislature added \$25,000 to the early college program's budget. • Work continues on policy changes to expand EC opportunities. • Maine just received a \$500,000 grant to support early college.
College Transition State Dept. of Education	Over the next decade, 7,000 to 10,000 Maine adults who have not completed high school or are not prepared academically, will transition to college and earn a degree.	Provide accessible pathways to postsecondary education for adults, through local adult education programs, by building on the experiences of seven demonstration sites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Lumina Foundation grant, secured by MCF, has enabled a consultant to negotiate articulation agreements, organize, raise awareness, and establish curriculum that meets college requirements. • The plan is to secure state government financing to launch 6 sites in 2007, and up to 30 sites statewide in 5 years.
Employer Initiative Maine Dev. Foundation	Over the next decade, 10,000 additional Maine workers will earn a college degree with assistance from their employers.	Encourage Maine's public and private employers to help their employees pursue and earn a college degree, by providing employers training, technical assistance, information and recognition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Ford Foundation grant, secured by MCF, will enable MDF to design this initiative; the goal is to launch a multi-year program by June, 2006. • Immediate steps are formation of an advisory committee, research best practices, and survey employers/ employees to identify barriers.
Campaign Compact	Change the values, expectations and behaviors of Maine citizens regarding higher education and inspire more of them to pursue and earn postsecondary degrees.	Work in communities to build and sustain leadership and organization capacity to change behaviors, inform and guide the decisions of policy makers, work with education stakeholder groups on a broad-based media campaign.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organized a local 'Compact' on a pilot basis in Androscoggin County. • Worked with DoE and other groups to organize a multi-year media and community leadership campaign to prepare all high school students for college, career and citizenship. DoE was awarded over \$600,000 to launch the Maine Readiness Campaign in January. • Promoted the importance of higher education through speaking engagements, our website, and advocating for effective public policies.
Maine's Promise Scholarship	Over the next decade, enable 6,300 Maine students from low-income families to earn a college degree, by providing them with access to affordable higher ed.	Ensure that the full cost of attending college in Maine is covered by financial aid sources, other than student loans, for four consecutive years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State financing was not pursued this year due to the state's budgetary difficulties.

<i>Other Projects</i>			
Indicators Report	Measure progress achieving the goal of 40,000 degrees by 2020.	Annual report tracking 20 indicators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First report will be published in December, 2005
Symposium	Showcase successes, identify barriers and future directions.	Annual one-day gathering of 150+ leaders in August.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First annual symposium held in August at Bates College for 145 leaders.
Directory	Identify effective approaches and encourage replication.	Annual directory of best practices in summer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First directory published in August.

Mr. Foley asked the members to work in small groups to focus on one of three strategies – the Employer Initiative, the Maine’s Promise Scholarship program, and the Campaign. Members self-selected their group and worked for an hour to understand the issue and identify action steps. A summary of the group discussions follows:

Campaign. Mr. Bourgeois led this discussion, which focused on the work of the proposed Maine Readiness Campaign, which is a two-year, \$800,000+ media/leadership/community engagement program led by the State Dept. of Education, to be launched in a few months. The Compact is one of several groups that will be working together as a steering committee to engage consultants and deliver the program. Ms. Quint, Mr. Diamond, and Mr. Bourgeois are members of the Steering Committee. An outline of the Campaign, discussed by the group follows:

Maine Readiness Campaign Outline

Purpose

- a. Create a shared commitment that all high school students will graduate ready for college, career and citizenship.
- b. Support our high schools as they make the necessary changes to achieve this goal.

Goals

Increase the number of students, especially first generation and male students, who:

- a. Graduate from high school.
- b. Are ready for college, career and citizenship.
- c. Go to college, embark on a satisfying career, and become engaged citizens.

Principles

- a. Sense of urgency – focus on behavior change (social marketing approach) and action.
- b. Enhance the work of existing local and statewide organizations.
- c. Sustainable local projects.
- d. Recognize differences among communities; work with communities where they are.

Components and Audience

- a. Media campaign
 1. Primary audience: the 120,000 students in grades 6-12 and their parents, with a special focus on male students and on first generation students.
 2. Focus on stories of students, parents, educators, leaders and community organizations that make the case for change and inform and inspire action. Use to support and guide the other components.
 3. Media: TV, radio, newspapers, web.

- b. Leadership development
 - 1. Primary audience: current community leaders (positional and influential, such as selectmen, business people, school board members, and activists), and educators and policymakers.
 - 2. Provide leaders with information, best practices, skills and networking to enable them to take immediate action and lead change locally.
 - 3. Reach these leaders through their existing statewide and regional leadership institutions and related organizations; and, directly through regional workshops.
- c. Community engagement
 - 1. Primary audience: existing community organizations and their leaders who may or may not be currently engaged in education-related initiatives.
 - 2. Empower community organizations to act, and build and sustain organization capacity to support change, recognizing there will be many different organizations/approaches.
 - 3. Provide facilitative support to one or more 'lead' organizations in a community or region, and very modest financial help to stimulate action and/or launch a project.
- d. Stakeholder Organizations
 - 1. Work with statewide education and related organizations to cultivate their involvement, secure their commitment to the vision and goals, and empower them to take actions.

Employer Initiative. Mr. Thurston, with the Maine Development Foundation, led this discussion by reviewing the scope of work for the next six months. He reported that the Ford Foundation has just awarded a grant through the Maine Community Foundation to support this start-up work. Notes from this group discussion follow:

- 1. Members of the group explored employer-sponsored approaches to support workers' earning degrees:
 - a. State government policies are inconsistent among departments.
 - b. Some non-profits, e.g. Creative Work Systems, reimburse for any course; others, e.g. MDF, pay for the course before it is taken and offer flextime for workers.
 - c. Policies at larger firms vary. For example, some firms do not focus on degree-attainment but on skills training and earning certificates; flextime is offered, developmental courses are offered on-site, etc. In most cases, they benchmark their policies with other larger employers. Also, in many cases, incentive-based reimbursement for employees is based on performance.
- 2. Impediments to implementing programs were discussed:
 - a. There is an unclear connection for employers, especially smaller ones, as to concrete results for higher education investment.
 - b. Reaching smaller employers is a real challenge, given their scarce resources and limited ability to offer flextime.
- 3. Other observations:
 - a. We need to convince employers that degrees are important & valued; make the connection with productivity.
 - b. Measurement of the value of degree is key; concrete measurement for employers is critical – especially small ones.
- 4. Several names of potential advisory committee members were suggested.

Maine’s Promise Scholarship Program. Mr. Witherspoon and Mr. Milliken led this group; a summary of the group discussion prepared by Mr. Witherspoon follows:

1. There was a consensus that the Maine Promise Scholarship should have the following characteristics:
 - Need based (Student focused)
 - Be based on the assumption that Federal Student Loans should be included in the formula for determining unmet need.
 - Part – time student eligibility (50%)
 - Maine Resident
 - Maintain “Satisfactory Progress”
 - No more than 6 years in a degree program.
2. The group felt there should be a formula developed for determining a cap on the amount of the Scholarship (as opposed to the original proposal of meeting all unmet need).
3. In discussing funding of the Scholarship Program, Mr. Millikin suggested that the Compact should look beyond the state as a source of funds, and consider grant and other sources as a way to leverage state dollars.
4. It was suggested that the Scholarship be closely tied to other initiatives of the Compact and be thought of as a bundled package of services (i.e. brand) to enhance degree attainment rates in Maine.

Next steps for the group include:

1. Develop a formula to determine cap on scholarship.
2. Determine eligibility criteria – with limited resources do we want less money going to more students, or more money going to fewer students.
3. Develop alternate sources of funding

Compact Policy For Taking Positions on Issues. Mr. Foley asked the board to discuss whether or not the Compact should take positions on issues influencing our vision and goals, such as proposed legislation, and how it should make these decisions. A summary of board consensus follows:

- a. Most board members agreed with Mr. Breen’s suggestion that as a general policy we should take every opportunity we can to reinforce our message.
- b. Mr. Foley suggested that we would probably express our support at two different levels:
 - (1) At the broad, strategic level by expressing how an issue advances our vision and goals; in these cases, we should be passionate and use our vision and goals to create the context for our support.
 - (2) At the narrower, tactical level, by expressing how an issue advances one of our five strategies; in these cases, we should be more specific and more proactive in our support.
- c. Criteria for determining if we should take a position were discussed and the members agreed that the following should be considered:
 - (1) The extent to which taking a position and executing appropriate actions affects our non-profit status.

- (2) The extent to which the issue or policy impacts achievement of the Compact's vision and goals.
 - (3) The extent to which the policy directly impacts one or more of the Compact's five strategies.
 - (4) The Compact's resources and capacity to be effective.
 - (5) The positions of other stakeholders.
- d. Members agreed with Mr. Foley suggestion that the Executive Committee be empowered to examine issues and policies and determine how the Compact should respond, seeking input from the board members between meetings as appropriate.
- e. There was agreement with Ms. Rotundo's suggestion that the Compact be more proactive with the Congressional delegation regarding the impact of Federal policy on Maine students and institutions.

Compact's 2006 Budget. Mr. Foley asked Mr. Bourgeois to present and explain the proposed 2006 budget, noting that the Treasurer and Executive Committee had reviewed the document a few days ago and are recommending its approval. Mr. Foley noted the budget requires that \$50,000 be raised to support the program; he suggested that this was a positive aspect because the long-term sustainability of the Compact depends upon broadening its financial base. The recommended budget and notes are attached as appendix A. After a short discussion, the board:

Voted, on a motion by Mr. Breen, seconded by Mr. Witherspoon, to approve the 2006 budget as recommended. The vote was unanimous.

Election of Board Members. Mr. Foley indicated that two individuals have expressed an interest in serving on the board and have been recommended by board members. He explained that, according to the bylaws, the Board may elect new members from time to time, and the Executive Committee is recommending their election to the board.

Mr. Schmelzer nominated Mr. Shepard Harris, an executive with UBS Financial Services in Bangor. Ms. Hedlund and Ms. Ault nominated Ms. Patricia McNamara, a member of the MELMAC Education Foundation board of directors. The board:

Voted, on a motion by Mr. Schmelzer, seconded by Mr. Diamond, to elect Mr. Shepard Harris to a three-year term on the board of directors of the Maine Compact for Higher Education. The vote was unanimous.

Next, the board:

Voted, on a motion by Ms. Hedlund, seconded by Ms. Quint, to elect Ms. Patricia McNamara to a three-year term on the board of directors of the Maine Compact for Higher Education. The vote was unanimous.

Adjourn. Mr. Foley adjourned the meeting at noon.

Respectfully submitted by Henry Bourgeois, Compact Executive Director