

**JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON MAINE'S WORKFORCE
AND ECONOMIC FUTURE**

Recommendation Lists Key

1. *Immediately actionable*
2. *Letters to policy committees etc.*
3. *Additional study items*
4. *Parking Lot*
5. *Marketing/Promotion*

QC= Quality Centers

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS TO MWEF THROUGH 3/7/13

A. Adult Education/ Incumbent Worker Training

1. Support proposed increase of \$550,000 per year in each year of the biennial budget for Maine College Transitions program. (2)
2. Provide leadership to make sure that the Tri-Agency Initiative keeps moving forward (agencies – DOE HHS and DOL – working together to “develop an integrated, efficient and effective approach to help bridge the gap from dependency on public assistance to self-support through employment.) (2/3)
3. Help provide adequate resources for the training and re-training of incumbent workers (QC)
4. Look at some of the state-run programs (not specified) that might be revised to create processes and channels for incumbent worker training (QC)
5. Address stranded investment of the approximately 200,000 Maine residents who have some post-secondary education but have not earned a degree (UMS’s ABCDE Steering Committee); study committee looking at; preliminary goal of 5,000 new students from this population engaged in completing degree by 2015—initial goal to get started while waiting for more info from study group (Next Step Maine, Maine Employer’s Initiative, Maine Adult Education to help execute) (1)
6. Adequately support organizations that provide effective workforce training, including soft skills, that offer multiple pathways to post-secondary education and skills training, and that address barriers individuals across the span of life (Goals?)

B. Apprenticeship/Trade Skills/Internships

1. Look at the model being used in apprenticeship program in the Greater Bangor area; Restore funding in 2014-15 biennial budget to Maine Apprenticeship Program; Provide additional revenues to Apprenticeship Program; would allow better outreach to employers and promotion of program as well as increase capacity to deliver programs (1)
2. Consider license holder and certification apprenticeships (4)
3. Recruit additional business partners to use apprenticeship program (3)

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4. Get career centers and community colleges to promote apprenticeship as a career pathway (5) (Goals?)
5. Develop a more flexible delivery of skills from state colleges and business partners QC
6. Consider tax credit to provide employers an incentive to participate in apprenticeship program (other states) (1)
7. Place greater emphasis on apprenticeship, trade schools, veterans, community colleges (5)
8. Expand model of in-house training by businesses and recognize skills acquired by employees that would be valuable to other businesses (Government-Private Sector-Education partnership – Maine Skills Academy?); stackable credentials; prior learning assessment (1)
9. Establish a skill trade facility – one physical location where best practices in industry training can be leveraged and with capacity so it did not have to turn students away (1)
10. Create mobile outreach capacity: ability to move a training program where it needs to be (QC)
11. Develop more job-sharing opportunities to accommodate aging workforce (4)
12. Establish a statewide internship program (e.g., use existing www.internhelpme.com platform and grow it through a dollar to dollar matched investment with State Chamber's members) (1)
13. Work with 27 existing career and technical high schools to expand their program offerings (1, 2, 3)
14. Allow adult workers to access higher education systems at any point so that they can get to where they need to be in terms of program completion that is aligned with future employment opportunities (3)

Set aside for later discussion/review

C. Collaboration/Communication

1. Better collaboration is critical
2. Communications gaps among departments/programs/initiatives must be eliminated
3. Barriers to coordination and collaboration identified and removed; better coordination among existing service delivery systems
4. Work on capacity, efficiency and management of workforce development system in Maine (“get below six inches deep”; create third party to take bird’s eye level and identify the redundancies and inefficiencies; C. Larrabee to provide written rec)
5. Encourage alliance between workforce and economic development groups
6. Have comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) for workforce
7. Support regional efforts to maximize regional economic potential

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8. Focus resources on scholarships and support systems for students to retain them and reduce dropout rate, particularly in the scientific-computer fields
9. Ask private colleges to help address workforce training concerns
10. Establish the Maine Workforce Roundtable: an informal group of human resource professionals, recruiters and companies that brainstorms about trends, challenges and solutions related to experienced job seekers and entrepreneurs. (AARP Maine rec)

D. Community Colleges

1. Solve credit transfer issues **(1)**
2. Increase enrollment at Maine's community colleges. For every \$1 million invested, the colleges can serve an additional 250 students **(1)**
3. Expand the Bring College to ME program to deliver four new degree programs to rural Maine each year in high skill/high wage occupations at a cost of \$320,000 annual (\$80,000 per program), allowing 60-75 students to enroll each year **(1)**
4. Expand the Accelerate ME program to all seven of Maine's community colleges at an annual cost of \$1.1 million to cover tuition and staffing costs. This would result in an additional 350 to 400 students completing a degree each year. **(1)**
5. MCCS will recommend to its BOT that it commit 10% to 15% (approx. \$250K) of Maine Quality Center's biennial budget to a pilot program aimed at providing customized training for incumbent workers. Emphasis on providing businesses with <100 employees free training; business with >100 employees would pay half the cost of training. No new jobs, but improves the skills of Maine's existing workforce and helps promote job security and pay advancement for individual workers **(1)**
6. Leverage existing technology space to expand **(Goals?)**
7. Promote advanced credit and non-credit continuing education opportunities for specially-designed businesses in the region **(QC)**
8. Look at the capacity within the community colleges to do just-in-time training **(QC)**

E. K-12 Education

1. Better allocate resources in K-12, including pre-K **(4)**
2. Include "entrepreneurial skills" or "self-employment skills training" as part of Maine Learning Results **(4)**
3. Have MDOE include or expand entrepreneurial skills training as part of the K-12 curriculum **(4)**
4. Increase flexibility of MDOE Fund for the Efficient Delivery of Educational Services grant program **(4)**
5. Expand MDOE "Bridge Year" grants **(1) with EDU (Sen. Langley bill)**

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6. Increase K-12 awareness of what careers are (5)
7. Create a funding mechanism for Career and Technical Education and those schools without the capacity to take more students; make these program affordable to students (3)
8. Work with industry to create a program for guidance counselors to keep them regularly informed of economic/employment opportunities (3, 5)
9. Support increase in JMG biennial budget (\$2.3 million to \$2.9 million over biennium); allow JMG to increase number of students served from 4,500 to 5,250 annually (1)

F. Regional Economic Development and Workforce Training

1. Support Many Flags' "Promise Neighborhood" work (4)
2. Support Mobilize Maine Initiative; developing on a regional level (4)
3. Look at Tri-County Workforce Investment Board's novel approach to workforce development and economic development (4)
4. Manage workforce training locally; keep current Tri-County Workforce Investment Board in place with current share of funding and local control (4)

G. Moved

H. Scholarships/Grant Programs/Subsidy

1. Invest in all Maine students: Fully fund the Maine Student Grant Program (1) (more info)
2. DECD initiative re: loan forgiveness by employers for workers (1)
3. Support the Competitive Skills Scholarship Fund (5)
4. Create a Re-employment Assurance Program; use unemployment benefit system to deliver job retraining and employment placement (4) **J. Dorrer**

I. Soft Skills Training

1. Centers for Maine Women, Work and Community: specific proposal (1)

J. Moved

K. University of Maine System

1. Make financial literacy and planning part of student orientation (2)
2. Look at how to generalize and expand Project Login; augment private investment with public support (5)

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Bonds

- Use state's bonding authority to invest in emerging and existing economic clusters (note R&D deficit compared to other states)
 - Support the proposal by the Mayors' Coalition on Jobs and Economic Development for a bond package that will include investments in higher education with a focus on economically important skills such as machinists training, research and development, transportation and water/wastewater infrastructure
 - Invest in R&D
 - Invest in the Communities for Maine's Future Program, which makes investments to improve downtowns in communities across the State
 - Find resources for new equipment for existing programs and or new programs
- Action: Track AFA schedule for bond proposals and weigh in as committee or individual members feel appropriate/necessary.*

Early Childhood Education

- Shift some resources to early childhood education (0-5)
 - Better allocate resources in K-12, including pre-K
- Action: Letters to AFA, EDU, HHS re: testimony MWEF heard about importance of early childhood education initiatives.*

Need follow up information

1. Look at economic homesteading idea (3) J. Dorrer
2. Assess employer needs and job performance requirements regularly (market research collaboration)
3. Evaluate if education and training programs are responsive to the market (program evaluation)
4. Monitor curriculum content to determine if learning objectives and skill requirements line up (curriculum reviews)
5. Audit the performance of recent graduates on the job
6. Require data gathering/reporting by gender from all workforce, education and training, business development and other economic development investments

Short-term Parking Lot (4):

1. Keep support system going for a year for welfare recipients so they can successfully transition back to workforce
2. Flexible work schedules, family and medical leave, support for child care: critical for all workers and families to make work pay
3. Aggressively promote the Opportunity Maine Program

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4. Expand re-fundability of Educational Opportunity Tax Credit beyond STEM degrees (based on original fiscal note that assumed all eligible for the EOTC would take full advantage of it, there would be little, if any, additional cost)
5. Fund WorkReady (for adults) in MDOE
6. Expand WorkReady (for high school students) program in 3 area high schools (Bangor, Brewer, Hampden) to other area high schools once evaluation of the current pilot project is complete
7. Develop the WorkReady program into one supported by all state agencies with a more secure funding base and a clear way to coordinate it with skill training that would make the program eligible for Workforce Investment Act funding. The 2014-15 state budget includes funding for the Coordinator position
8. 8,000 tribal members in Maine; ensure that workforce efforts are meaningful, relevant and accessible to them as well
9. Focus economic development policies around growing businesses, not just starting new ones
10. Raise the minimum wage, expand the Earned Income Tax Credit or some combination of the two