

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, September 27, 2016

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MAINE STATE CHAMBER AND EDUCATE MAINE RELEASE POLICY BRIEF ON STRATEGIES TO ENSURE COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

*Ensuring college and career readiness for all Maine students will improve
their future opportunities and strengthen Maine's economy*

AUGUSTA, ME – The Maine State Chamber of Commerce and Educate Maine released a policy brief today outlining seven strategies (including 15 actions) to ensure college and career readiness for all Maine students beginning in early childhood. The “College and Career Readiness for Maine” brief is the second in a series of policy briefs designed to achieve the goals laid out in Educate Maine’s “Education Indicators for Maine 2015” report.

The goal of the seven strategies and fifteen actions in “College and Career Readiness for Maine” is to ensure all Maine students are in a strong position to succeed throughout the education pipeline, better enabling them to graduate from high school on time, with proficiency in key subject areas, so they are well-prepared for postsecondary education and the workforce. This particularly pertains to Maine students from low-income families, who are less likely than their higher-income peers to be proficient in math and reading, and are also less likely to graduate from high school or go on to college.

“The targeted and smart investments we recommend, which aim to support all of Maine’s schoolkids, are among the most promising ways to secure Maine’s economic future,” said Maine State Chamber of Commerce President Dana Connors. “We are confident the strategies and actions outlined in this policy brief will serve to better prepare our youth for success, thus improving not only their future work opportunities, but helping to grow and strengthen Maine’s businesses and economy.”

“Full, statewide implementation of the college and career readiness strategies outlined in our policy brief will improve outcomes for all of Maine’s learners -- beginning in early childhood, and continuing through the highest levels of education and beyond,” said Ed Cervone, executive director of Educate Maine. “These strategies and actions will lead to a stronger Maine workforce and economy, and our state’s employers will be in a better position to meet the economic demands of the future.”

The seven strategies identified in the report are 1) investing in early childhood education, 2) adopting student-centered learning practices, 3) raising aspirations to pursue some form of postsecondary education, 4) providing summer and after-school programs, 5) completing the implementation of proficiency system-wide, 6) reducing absenteeism, and 7) funding targeted needs. The 15 actions under those strategies are a focused list of best practices that will help achieve these goals.

The “College and Career Readiness for Maine” policy brief can be found online at www.maine.statechamber.org/College&CareerReadiness.

For more information on Educate Maine’s “Education Indicators for Maine 2015” report, please go to www.educatemaine.org.

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About the Maine State Chamber of Commerce ...

As the state’s most influential business advocate, the Maine State Chamber of Commerce works to ensure a business climate in which Maine State Chamber members, large and small, can compete successfully in the local, regional, national, and world marketplaces. As *The Voice of Maine Business*, the Maine State Chamber of Commerce proudly represents a network of 5,000 businesses of all sectors, sizes, and regions. It advocates on their behalf daily before the Legislature, state departments, and various levels of state government.

About Educate Maine ...

Educate Maine is a business-led education advocacy organization whose mission is to champion college and career readiness and to increase the education attainment of all Maine people. All Maine students should graduate from high school prepared to succeed in postsecondary education and in the workplace and the number of Maine people with a college degree, a postsecondary certificate, or a professional credential must increase to meet the demands of the economy.