



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
323 State Street, Augusta, ME 04330-7131  
(207) 629-4000 | Fax (207) 629-4048 | mccs.me.edu

TO: Senator Breen, Representative Gattine and  
Members of the Joint Standing Committee On Appropriations and Financial Affairs  
FROM: David Daigler, President  
RE: Supporting Documents for 06.30.2020 AFA Committee meeting  
DATE: June 30, 2020

---

When COVID-19 reached Maine in early March, we made an immediate decision: Maine’s community colleges would prioritize the health and safety of our faculty, staff and students, and we would continue to teach and train our students to the best of our ability.

This commitment continues to guide our decisions today.

When the pandemic forced us to remote work and instruction, faculty and staff plunged into the massively disruptive situation and emerged with creative, effective solutions. Faculty collaborated and discovered new and effective ways to teach, and administrators freed up resources to provide staff and students with new tech tools, such as new simulation software. An all-hands-on-deck ethos fueled an intense student support campaign that included calling every student regularly to make sure they had what they needed to continue learning.

Even as we worked on our own internal needs, Maine’s community colleges immediately reached out to local partners and the state to offer help. Our colleges tapped into their inventories and donated ventilators, personal protective equipment, food, housing and even “take out” boxes for food pantries. Our employees repurposed equipment – primarily 3D printers – to make PPE and one professor developed a prototype device that could, if approved by the FDA, allow hospitals to put multiple patients on a single ventilator.

Critically, we kept our people employed, even when job duties shifted due to the pandemic. Students didn’t lose work/study opportunities, and employees kept working without furloughs or layoffs. It worked: Our students completed the academic year with lower drop rates than in past years.

At the same time, we were adjusting our workforce training to match the times – particularly as the pandemic forced the closure of so many businesses in Maine. As you adjourned in March, you approved \$2.5 million to Maine Quality Centers to sustain the workforce training we all accurately predicted would be needed more than ever.

Within weeks, MQC identified job gaps in the healthcare industry and added dozens of new free, online training programs for in-demand jobs such as medical records technician, pharmacy technician, medical lab worker, and medical insurance specialist. Of the 44 free online healthcare training programs launched since then, over 850 people have enrolled and 25 of those programs have been completely filled. We are also supporting the expansion of COVID-19 testing in Pittsfield.

In a separate workforce training initiative, we partnered with HospitalityMaine to create a COVID safety training badging program, so workers know exactly how to re-open the state's restaurant and lodging establishments safely. In the last month, more than 2,000 people have completed the training, and restaurants and lodging have been posting the badges in their windows.

We are also currently working with DHHS and the Greater Portland Council of Governments on a "Health Ambassadors" training program to support tourism while keeping Maine healthy. The goal is to expand this program to other parts of the state.

We will soon be announcing our fall plans, which reflect our guiding principles of keeping faculty, staff and students safe, continuing teaching and learning, and remaining financially prudent. We will be adopting on-campus health and safety protocols that align with the governor's executive order and the guidance of health officials. Our scheduling will limit the number of faculty, staff and students on campus, while still delivering essential hands-on instruction in person. We are ready to welcome students to the community colleges this fall.

At the same time, we will continue our partnerships with the state and our local communities and businesses to meet their evolving needs. Maine's community colleges play a unique and important role in the health and economic well-being of the entire state, and we can't let that be sidetracked by the pandemic.

That work – much of it new and unexpected - has a significant financial impact, but it's a challenge we are meeting with our longstanding commitment to fiscal discipline. Maine's community colleges are proud of a track record of balanced budgets, being responsive to changing circumstances and a deep respect for how taxpayer money is spent.

Given the impact of COVID-related costs (see attached), our trustees recently approved a plan to balance the System's budget over a two-year window. The budget allows the colleges to maintain a stable teaching environment and ongoing support for our students and employees.

But there are looming costs, and factors such as the state appropriation will play a significant role in our ability to continue our work serving the people of Maine. In the absence of additional resources, we are left with very few tools other than to consider layoffs or reduced programming.

The committee's support here can help avoid cuts in services that Mainers so desperately need in this pandemic.

Our deepest commitment is to providing opportunities and skills to Maine people. Our workforce of roughly 1,600 people support the education and training of more than 27,000 people each year through degree programs, customized training, and credit and non-credit offerings.

Maine's community colleges are the most direct, affordable, and effective investment for meaningfully advancing Maine's economy. We have the lowest tuition and fees in New England, generous aid and offer nearly 300 degree and certificate options in over 140 occupational fields. More than 75 percent of those offerings are the only ones of their kind in the state.

It's critical that we continue providing those opportunities to our fullest ability.

With your support, we can.

# Summary of Maine Community College System COVID-related Finances

## *Framing principles and core values that guide the MCCS Framework:*

- 1. Safety of faculty, staff and students;*
- 2. Continue teaching and learning; and*
- 3. Remain financially prudent.*

## **CARES Act provided MCCS with \$9.3 million to be used for student aid and COVID-related expenses through DATE 2021**

- \$4.4 million dedicated to student emergency aid
- \$4.9 million in institutional aid
  - \$4.4, (Sec. 18004, a 1) plus
  - \$400,000 in Strengthening Institutions (Sec. 18004, a 2) and
  - \$100,000 in Fund to Improve of Post-Secondary Education (Sec. 18004, a 3)

## **Balanced FY 20 Budget and prepared for FY 21**

- CARES Act student aid:
  - \$1.5 million in FY20
  - \$2.9 million carried into FY21
- Institutional CARES Funds
  - \$3.1 million in FY20
    - \$2.0 million in room & board losses due to refunds for spring semester
    - \$1.1 million in payroll, technology, housing for homeless students.
  - \$1.8 million carried into FY21

## **FY21 Anticipated costs due to COVID are expected to exceed \$10.0 million**

- \$5.8 million lost revenue Room & Board and \$1.5 in added cost
- \$2.1 million added costs and revenues loss associated with distancing
- \$1.0 million in Personal Protective Equipment
- \$100,000 for Health Screening (app based)

## **Unknown variables that may affect MCCS budget**

- Enrollments
- State Appropriations/State CARES (CFR) Funding
- HEROES Act
- Cost, availability, and benefit of testing some portion of population
- Outbreak on campus or in host community that warrants shut down