



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Tuesday, October 27, 2015

Media contact: Ed Cervone  
Cell: 207-713-4034

## **EDUCATE MAINE RELEASES 2015 “EDUCATION INDICATORS FOR MAINE” REPORT**

*The comprehensive review of Maine’s education pipeline finds a widening achievement gap based on family income*

PORTLAND, ME – Educate Maine, a business-led education advocacy organization, released its third statewide snapshot of Maine’s education pipeline - early childhood through postsecondary - at a press conference at the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce on Tuesday. "Education Indicators for Maine 2015" reports where Maine students stand within ten education indicators, compares them to students throughout New England, and connects benchmarks to each indicator. This year’s report finds both progress in some areas and a widening achievement gap among students from lower-income families.

The ten indicators in the report follow the path of Maine children as they grow and learn, looking at: participation in early childhood education programs, because those experiences lay the foundation for future success; performance from first grade through high school, because of the importance of demonstrating proficiency at one level in order to be ready to achieve at the next level; and postsecondary outcomes because, ultimately, it is educational attainment and skill acquisition that will fuel the economy and sustain vibrant Maine communities.

“We are pleased to release the ‘Education Indicators for Maine 2015’ findings to help identify where we are today and where we strive to be with Maine’s education system tomorrow,” said Educate Maine Board Chair, Ron Bancroft. “As in previous years, this report is intended to inform, promote discussion, and serve as a call to action. It is a valuable tool that will help us ensure that Maine students are ready for college and career and that they have the opportunities to succeed in all of their endeavors.”

“This year’s ‘Education Indicators for Maine’ report shows progress in some key areas, such as more Maine adults with college degrees and increased access to early education programs for Maine’s youngest students. It also raises some real concerns, namely the growing achievement gap faced by students from lower-income families,” said Educate Maine Executive Director, Ed Cervone. “We see a real difference in the outcomes for low-income kids and their higher income peers. This gap starts early in life and follows kids throughout their education experience. If Maine is to prosper we need to make sure that all Maine kids have the opportunity to follow their dreams and succeed in life.”

The report also finds that while the high school graduation rate is up and a standout nationally, only half of Maine’s high school graduates are proficient in reading and math when they move on to college or the workforce.

For the youngest kids, Maine law will provide for voluntary public preschool in all of the state's school districts in the coming years and the state is getting closer to having all school districts offer full-day kindergarten. These gains won't mean much without adequate funding and support for these essential programs.

### **TEN “EDUCATION INDICATORS” FOR MAINE**

The ten “Education Indicators for Maine” are: Preschool Participation; Preschool Access; Full-day Kindergarten; Fourth Grade Achievement; Eighth Grade Achievement; High School Achievement; College-Going; College Completion; College Cost and Student Debt; and Mainers with College Degrees.

### **ABOUT EDUCATE MAINE**

Educate Maine is a business-led education advocacy organization whose mission is to champion college and career readiness and increased education attainment. With the goal to help every Maine student graduate high school prepared for success in postsecondary education and the workplace, Educate Maine believes in the importance of educational efforts that span early childhood through adult learning. For more information, as well as the full 2015 “Education Indicators for Maine” report, please visit [www.educatemaine.org](http://www.educatemaine.org).

# # #