



Maine Association for Charter Schools
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Disturbing Data: The Money – it’s already GONE! (Because the children already left school).

- Existing public schools now leak 1 of every 4 children down the drain.*
- Maine’s leaky “Educational Pipeline” is extremely costly, and needs emergency repair.*
- Public charter schools could help seal these dangerous leaks, by giving students who drop out new and affordable options to meet their individual academic needs!
- Public charter schools (if Maine had them) would not “drain” money from existing public schools, as opponents complain.

1. School Dropout Costs – Lost State Allocations to Local Schools

Last year in Maine 3,800 children dropped out of school – 1 out of every 4 – an average of 4 children for every hour school is in session.*

- When a child drops out of school, their school loses that child’s state allocation.
- If 3,800 students drop out, and their average per-pupil state allocation is \$8,000, then local schools lost \$30,400,000 last year.
- A child dropping out gets none of this money to explore other education options.
- The child and the money is lost to public schools in Maine.

2. School Dropout Costs – Lost Lifetime Earnings

Each class of 3,800 dropouts will earn \$1 billion less over their lifetimes than if they had graduated.* ... Each year we create thousands of struggling families and deliver another blow to our struggling economy.” *

- \$1 Billion in lost lifetime earnings for last year’s cohort of 3,800 Maine dropouts.*

“Maine can ill afford to neglect the potential of these (disconnected youth) to be productive members of the workforce...Efforts that target students who are at risk of dropping out of school are becoming more essential to Maine’s future economic success.”

*John Dorrer, Director, Division of Labor Market Information Services**

Charter schools are the quickest, strongest way to stem this costly crisis in education.

*Maine Coalition for Excellence in Education (MCEE), “Education is Job #1,
A call to action for Maine”, February 2010

3. School Dropout Costs –Social & Economic.

Of Maine children who do graduate high school, 30% still do not have the skills necessary for jobs and college and are generally unprepared for life.*

- What will these students' problems cost the state for social services - for pregnant teens, young families in poverty, welfare, crime, drug and alcohol abuse, etc.
- A high school dropout is 8 times more likely to end up in jail, and the cost of incarcerating one such adolescent is between \$110,000 and \$120,000 per year.

3. School Dropout Costs - College

Every student we lose in a two-year program will earn \$10,000 less per year, or \$400,000 each in a 40 year career.

Every student we lose in a four-year degree program will earn \$16,500 less, or \$660,000 each in a 40 year career. *

- Of Maine high school graduates who begin college, 33% drop out before their second year, unprepared by their local school. Many of them (and others who survive) have to pay tuition for remedial courses which earn them no credit.

Is this acceptable if Maine is to compete in the 21st century economy, with farming, fishing, forestry, and factory jobs increasingly unavailable as an option for our young people?

A young lady in northern Maine sent this email to MACS on a recent Saturday, just after midnight:

“Hello,

I'm not sure if i have the right email. but I am looking for a way to get into the Carleton Project. I live in XXXXXXXX, Maine and am having a lot of trouble in my school (XXXXXXXXXX). So, I was wondering if you could help me out. I really need a second option. Because I do want to finish school, I just can't do it where I live. So if you could help that would be great. Please get back to me as soon as you can.

Thank you.”

If there were charter schools in Maine, The Carlton Project would look very much like one. With a waiting list since it opened in Presque Isle in 1999, the school began an outreach program in Houlton in 2006 and Bangor in 2009. The Carlton Project successfully serves a need in these communities, addressing the educational needs of a population of young people who have not been successful in traditional settings.

- When a student drops out of a school, how can they afford alternative educational options by themselves?
- Shouldn't our society still support them in pursuit of their education?
- Shouldn't the student still benefit from the taxes paid for their education?

How many new charter schools, with 50 students each, would accommodate all 3,800 children who dropped out last year? (answer - 76)

Why should existing schools complain about these children enrolling elsewhere to pursue their education and chance for a quality life?