



MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE
Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations & Financial Affairs
Augusta, Maine 04333

July 18, 2025

David Daigler, President
Maine Community College System
323 State Street
Augusta, ME 04330

Dear President Daigler,

As part of our work on the Governor's Biennial Budget (LD 210) this past session, the Appropriations Committee studied the Governor's proposal to provide an ongoing appropriation to the MCCS Free Community College – 2 Enrollment Years program and codify the program in statute. As you know, the Committee elected to amend the Governor's proposal to provide a reduced amount for the current biennium only and to remove the related proposed language part. The Committee votes did not reflect a final decision on the value of the program so much as a desire for additional information and study of the relative costs and benefits of the program to the state and the participants.

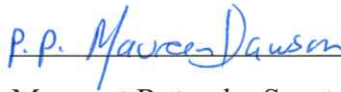
To aid in future deliberations on the program, the Committee voted to request the following additional information from the Maine Community College System.

1. Estimated program costs over current and following biennia if the parameters of the program do not change.
2. As a subset of the total costs requested above, the estimated costs of providing the benefits to students who did not graduate from a Maine High School or who were not a resident of Maine at the time they received their GED.
3. Any data you may have on graduation rates or progress toward graduation among program participants.
4. Any data you may have on the number of program participants who remain in Maine upon completion of their studies.
5. Does the Free Community College Program result in an economy of scale that helps address operational expenses for the overall community college system in a way that could achieve savings and that could reduce the state's allocation?
6. Any other information you have that you believe may help us determine the costs and benefits of the program.

We are hoping to have as much of the information requested as possible by the middle of December so that it may be considered in the context of any related Supplemental Budget proposals either by the Governor or by a member of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs or Education and Cultural Affairs Committee. You may respond to either of us directly or through Maureen Dawson, our Committee Analyst. We can be reached through the address shown above or through email. Ms. Dawson can be reached at 207-287-1635 or at maureen.dawson@legislature.maine.gov.

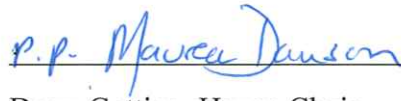
Thank you so much, in advance, for your time and for any information you can provide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "P.P. Maureen Dawson" is written over a horizontal line.

Margaret Rotundo, Senate Chair

Margaret.Rotundo@legislature.maine.gov

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "P.P. Maureen Dawson" is written over a horizontal line.

Drew Gattine, House Chair

Andrew.Gattine@legislature.maine.gov

cc: Members, Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
Maureen Dawson, Principal Analyst, Office of Fiscal and Program Review