

Believe!

Maine Children's Scholarship Fund

Invest in THE FUTURE OF a child!

We would like to thank some of our generous contributors this past year:

- JGQ Property Management
- Loiselle, Goodwin & Hinds
- Anonymous
- Anonymous
- Cheryl Russell
- Children First America

Support Maine Children's Scholarship Fund today and help secure a better future for a child tomorrow.

Enclosed is my tax deductible gift to Maine Children's Scholarship Fund

- \$1,700 for a student for 1 year \$170 for a student for 1 month
 \$850 for a student for 5 months Other _____

Please make checks payable to Maine Children's Scholarship Fund.

Contact us for information or to contribute gifts of securities.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Email _____

Please mail to: Maine Children's Scholarship Fund
27 State Street Suite 64A
Bangor ME 04401

Applications have been received by the following communities for school year 2002-03

Arundel 2	Canaan 2	Gray 2	Limerick 5	Orrington 1	Standish 3
Ashland 2	Carmel 1	Guilford 1	Limestone 1	Otisfield 1	Steep Falls 3
Augusta 2	Cary 2	Hampden 4	Lincoln 1	Palmyra 1	Steuben 15
Auburn 6	Casco 1	Harrington 4	Lisbon 5	Paris 11	Stillwater 3
Bangor 29	Castine 2	Hartland 6	Machias 1	Parsonfield 6	Topsham 4
Bar Harbor 4	Chelsea 1	Hebron 1	Madison 2	Passadumkeag 2	Turner 2
Bar Mills 2	Cherryfield 10	Hermon 1	Mariaville 4	Penobscot 4	Union 5
Bath 1	China 1	Hollis Center 2	Mars Hill 5	Pittsfield 3	Unity 3
Belmont 1	Clifton 1	Houlton 9	Mattawamkeag 2	Plymouth 2	Van Buren 1
Biddeford 1	Columbia Falls 1	Hudson 2	Monticello 5	Porter 1	Waldoboro 2
Blue Hill 10	Cornish 1	Kenduskeag 3	Montville 4	Portland 28	Waterboro 4
Bowdoinham 1	Cutler 3	Kingman 1	Naples 1	Rome 1	Westbrook 3
Brewer 9	Ellsworth 5	Kittery 1	Newburgh 2	Sabattus 6	Windham 1
Berwick 19	Etna 2	Knox 1	Nobleboro 2	Saco 5	Windsor 3
Brunswick 4	Exeter 3	La grange 3	Norway 3	Sanford 5	Winslow 2
Bryant Pond 1	Freeport 2	Levant 1	Oakland 3	Sidney 1	
Burnham 1	Glenburn 4	Lewiston 12	Old Town 1	Springvale 2	
Buxton 2	Gorham 4	Liberty 3	Orono 5	St. Albans 2	

Believe!

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Maine Children's Scholarship Fund

From the Director

"The foundation of every state is the education of its youth."

— Diogenes, Allen



Kari Picard

The Maine Children's Scholarship Fund received 400 applications this year from 106 towns and awarded 31 new scholarships. We now have a total of 75 scholarship students attending seventeen schools across the state!

We are half way through our annual fund campaign and have already raised 80 percent of our \$170,000 goal! Each year we add new contributors. Thank you! We still need to raise the additional \$27,500 to qualify for the matching grant from Children First America. Please consider a generous contribution for the educational excellence of a Maine child.

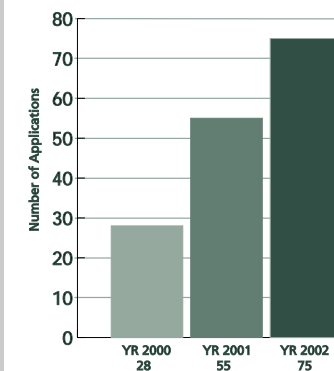
Help us Celebrate Education Freedom Week

October 6-12, 2002

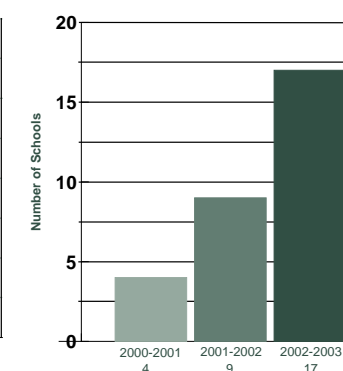
Visit our booth at the Bangor Mall!

Watch Us Grow!

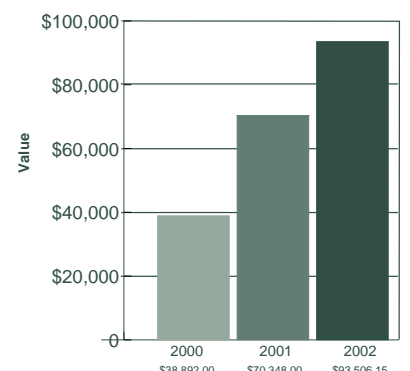
Scholarships Given Each Year



Schools Added to Program



Value of Total Scholarships



Maine Children's Scholarship Fund

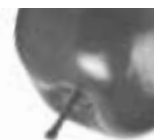
27 State Street, Suite 64A
Bangor ME 04401
Tel: 207-945-6893
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www.mecsf.org

Kari Picard
Director



Maine Children's Scholarship Fund



27 State Street, Suite 64A
Bangor, Maine

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Bangor Maine

Applications for the 2003-2004 will be accepted from January 1, 2003-April 30, 2003
For more information please visit our website at www.mecsf.org or call 207-945-6893

Children First America Conference

by Kari Picard



Betsy Chapman and I attended the Children First America Annual Conference in Denver, Colorado this year. I learned something new every time I turned around. Some of the topics discussed were fundraising, board development, media and parents organizations. We were particularly interested to see how tax credits have helped families in Arizona, Florida and Pennsylvania. We picked up many ideas.

Betsy and I are working on getting parent groups together, and in August we will have a board development meeting. We will celebrate Education Freedom week at the Bangor Mall, October 8-11.

Finally, I would like to thank Mike and Donna Watson and Ron Harris for hosting the CFA conference this year. We look forward to bringing all we've learned to benefit our Maine families.

BETSY P. CHAPMAN

Expand Maine's education options

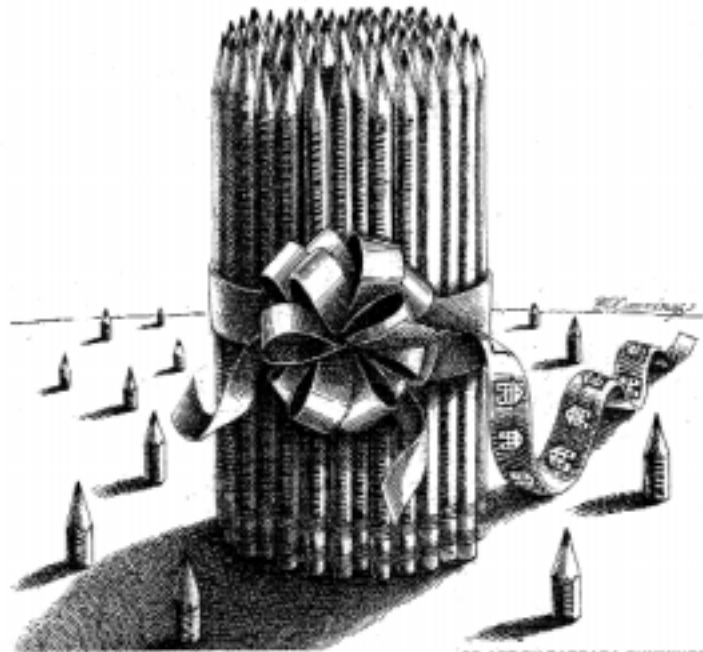
School choice is increasing competition around the country and showing that competition in education improves student performance and stretches the tax dollar. Interestingly, Maine is leading the nation in benefiting from education competition.

The U.S. Supreme Court recently approved the Cleveland school choice program, which pays partial tuition to private schools of the parents' choosing. This has enabled many parents to select an alternative to their local public school, and has increased the number of schools competing for students. The public voucher pays 90 percent of tuition, with the parents paying the balance. Other options in the Cleveland plan include transfer to a charter school, magnet school or after-school tutoring, and are free to parents.

The average Cleveland tax-funded school voucher for private schools is about \$1,600, leaving more than \$2,600 with their public schools to improve the program for remaining students. Florida's public voucher plan leaves \$2,738 for the students who chose to remain in public schools, while Milwaukee leaves \$2,016 behind. (The New York Times, June 28) This additional money left in public schools by these voucher plans is available to improve schools. It allows for smaller class sizes, resources to help all students succeed, the ability to address teacher quality and thus raises expectations for every child. Preliminary studies of these programs show improvements in students across the board.

Maine is benefiting from its own voucher program, as our unique solution in sparsely populated areas, in use for more than a hundred years. In Maine towns without a school the town pays tuition to another school, often of the parents' selection. Seventy-six percent of Maine high schools accept town tuition students and 30 percent of Maine towns pay tuition for some or all of their students to attend school.

A recent study by Dr. Christopher Hammons for the Milton and Rose D. Friedman Foundation has looked at



OP ART BY BARBARA CUMMINGS

the academic performance of Maine's students. Dr. Hammons asked the question, "Does competition improve student academic performance?" He found that the answer is yes.

Controlling for three factors — per pupil spending, poverty rates and population density — Dr. Hammons found that the only relevant factor was nearness to the town tutoring program. Hammons examined state test results and found "that high schools that are more exposed to the town tuition process tend to perform better than high schools with little involvement in the town tuitioning process." Some may suggest that this success stems from parents picking the best schools, rather than the schools improving as a result of competition. But Hammons found that, "It is the exposure to school choice that seems to matter, not school demographics, location or total spending."

Dr. Hammons concluded that "when

parents choose where to spend their tuition dollars they seem to choose wisely." He found the "positive relationship between tuition money and test scores reveals that at a minimum parents are choosing those schools that can produce better scores with their tuition money rather than schools that produce lower scores or schools where the money makes no difference."

Many are concerned about Maine's disparity in school funding between Maine's wealthy and poor school districts. However, Dr. Hammons found that low-income students in "high competition" areas outperformed low-income students in "no competition" areas. In order to take advantage of the benefits competition brings to education, our Legislature and new governor should immediately take steps to eliminate the "no competition" areas, removing this impediment

for thousands of students.

Beyond finding that Maine's public voucher program improves a school's success, Dr. Hammons also found a significant cost saving. If a "school simply wanted to purchase that gain in test scores by increasing per pupil spending, it would require an additional \$909 per student." Maine would have to "increase current per pupil spending by 13 percent on average to create the same effect that competition already produces for free." This would total "roughly \$200 million." Competition is stretching our education dollar. (See www.friedmanfoundation.com)

In order for Maine to reap the benefits of competition, we must increase education options beyond our successful town tuitioning program and create some type of cost sharing between parents and taxpayers. This could be a partial tax refund for parents who take responsibility for educating their children, as Minnesota has for more than 20 years or, because not all parents can afford to pay for tuition, taxpayers and businesses could receive a tax credit to contribute to scholarship funds serving low-income students, like Arizona.

The children of Maine have the right to a good education. The time has come to expand Maine's education options now that the air has cleared on the constitutional status of public vouchers with the Cleveland decision. A starting point in Maine is to eliminate the "no competition" areas and with a variety of successful models nationally, we can select plans proven to increase competition. This is an important step to continuously improve Maine education and stop spending taxes inefficiently.

Betsy P. Chapman is president of the Maine Children's Scholarship Fund, a 503(b) charity based in Bangor. It offers scholarships to low-income students in kindergarten through 12th grade for tuition to public or private school, or toward home education expenses. It is supported by generous local and national contributors and has hundreds of students on its waiting list. Its Web site address is www.mecsf.org.

We Get Letters from Scholarship Families

"When it was time to enroll my oldest son, Joseph (now age 9), in school, I knew that he needed to be in a small class environment; he's never been one for crowds. Also at that time, the tragic shooting occurred in Columbine High School. So, like many other parents, I became even more concerned about my son's safety at the school he would attend (even though I realized that an event like Columbine could happen anywhere). Houlton and its surrounding communities do not offer many schooling options. Instead of public school, I turned to

the Greater Houlton Christian Academy. I toured the school, talked with parents and met with staff there. GHCA offers small class sizes, a safe, caring environment, a challenging curriculum, dedicated teachers and spirituality. My decision was made — the benefits of sending my sons to GHCA were tremendous.

As their mom, I look forward to hearing about their school days, helping with homework, volunteering in the classroom, baking for those bake sales, attending special events and so much more. I look forward to watching them grow into intelli-

gent, compassionate, happy young men.

GHCA's tuition continues to be low compared to that of other private schools in Maine. On my small income, I have wondered how I will get both boys through. Because of the generosity of the MeCSF contributors, the financial worry has been eased a bit. I am truly grateful to you; my boys are grateful to you. Again, thank you so very much for your generosity."

Sincerely,
Scholarship winner

"Thank you so much for the funds you have contributed to the Maine Children's Scholarship Fund. Not only do those funds help home schoolers to get a better quality education, but those funds also aid parents who otherwise could not send their children

to private schools. Not every parent is able to afford private school tuitions or spend the time teaching his own child. Those of us who live in northern Maine experience a very different economy than those in southern Maine and we do not always have money beyond the bills to pay for private school.

Your donations are helping to build youth strong in both character and academic achievement... Thank you so much for your help!"

Sincerely,
Scholarship winner



Listen to our Families:

These are quotes from families that are on our waiting list. Each child and parent had something to tell us and we would like to pass it on.

"Earning this scholarship would mean a lot to me. As mentioned before, I place a great importance on schooling. The funding would not only further my education and profit me; it could someday be used, through me, to benefit my community."
Hannah, 9th grade

"I have an older brother who goes to a public school and he says as you walk down the halls people are selling drugs. He also finds that because there are so many students and so few teachers, it is difficult

to get the help he needs in his subjects...My education means more to me than I can put into words. Any amount would help. I want nothing more than for this dream to come true."
Daisy, 10th grade

"One major challenge in having little income is the overall investment of the time and energy required to piece together a lively, effective home schooling program within a shoestring budget...In an attempt to meet these additional needs I use a



combination of strategies. For instance, I borrow resources, make extensive use of libraries, purchase used and discounted materials, produce teaching aids and worksheets by hand, have the boys share a single textbook, erase old workbook to use again, and photocopy extensively...Thank you for this fun opportunity to introduce my children to you, and share a few of the many reasons why financial assistance could benefit them tremendously."

Diane, parent