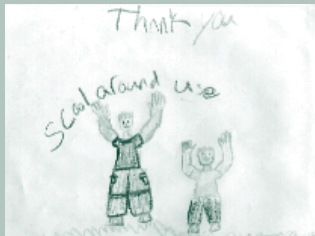


Believe!

Volume 5 • Back to School Issue

Maine Children's Scholarship Fund



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Maine Children's Scholarship Fund

27 State Street, Suite 64A
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www.mecsf.org

Kari Picard
Director



One Family's Story

Dear Sirs and Madams:

Anthony is a bright young boy who, as a result of an unfortunate diagnosis, spent the first few years of his grammar school life feeling like he wasn't as smart as the other kids. Anthony's schoolwork was 'scaled back to fit his special learning needs' via the Title 1 program. A doctor diagnosed Anthony with A.D.D. and it was the worst thing that could have ever been done to him, because from that point on he was prescribed drugs that sedated him, he was pulled from his class and put in the 'resource room'. He quickly lost self esteem and confidence. By the fourth grade, Anthony's grades plummeted to all failing marks and Anthony woke every morning not wanting to go to school. He never wanted to go back, he wanted to quit school in the fourth grade. The other kids call him names like stupid, fag, dummy, retard and others that Anthony wouldn't repeat.

At this point we began to see if there was anything we could do to change the course of Anthony's education. We knew Anthony could do much better in school than he did. We knew that our only option was private school, but we were having a very difficult time just paying the bills.

After talking to other parents, we learned about the Maine Children's Scholarship Fund. Applying was quick and easy and, only by the grace of God, all of our children's names were drawn for scholarship awards. Our prayers were answered. After talking with the school staff we all decided that it would be in Anthony's best interest to repeat fourth grade.

Instead of having his work 'scaled back' and being told it was OK if he couldn't do the work, he did the same work as all his classmates. We knew all Anthony needed was a firmly structured classroom and an equally firm and committed teacher and he would succeed. We told Anthony 'You can do anything you put heart and mind into, all you need to do is keep trying.' The school supported that type of thinking, and as a result, Anthony passed with excellent marks!

No pills, no scaled back work, no being separated from his classmates and going off to a special education room, no embarrassment as a result of feeling incapable of doing what his classmates could do and no demeaning name calling. His confidence is back and he's looking forward to the next school year.

We owe all of this scholastic good fortune to the school and teachers who gave so much of themselves to our children's education, and we owe the ability to make all these things happen to all the wonderful people of the Maine Children's Scholarship Fund.

Sincerely,
The Parent Family
Jim, Shani, Anthony, Jessi & Kyla



Applications for the 2004-2005 will be accepted from January 1, 2004-April 30, 2005

For more information please visit our website at www.mecsf.org or call 207-945-6893

From the Director



Dear Friends,

In this fall's newsletter we introduce you two of our scholarship students. With Maine's reputation for good schools, we don't expect to hear such sad stories. These students had to bring down barriers to learning by changing schools. We think of Maine schools as meeting the needs of our students, but these students fell between the cracks, and that is unacceptable in a caring state like Maine. That is why we are here.

The generous contributors to the Maine Children's Scholarship Fund recognize that no school can be all things to all people and that families know what is best for their children. We are very pleased to tell you the happy ending of our two students profiled.

The Maine Children's Scholarship Fund is proud to help relieve some of the pressure on public school funding as our scholarships free up monies for those who remain behind. In fact this year we will save the taxpayers of Maine over half a million dollars!

Parental choice initiatives around the state moved forward in the last year, with the progress of the Maine Charter School Association's fine work in promoting more diverse public school options. The Institute for Justice is representing parents who have brought suit against the State of Maine to give Maine parents the educational rights afforded them under a recent U. S. Supreme Court decision.

Unfortunately, even though we awarded thirty percent more scholarships this year, our waiting list grows. This list is full of many sad stories of students and families struggling as their child's school tries to put a round peg in a square hole. It is heartbreaking that over 800 students are still waiting to bring down the barriers to learning. With your generous help, we will offer more scholarships next year to give more students a helping hand.

Kari Picard
Program Director

Maine School Reform Update

Charter School Progress

Enabling legislation for public charter schools in Maine was considered by the Joint Legislative Committee for Education, in April. Although the Committee voted against the bill 8-5, it requested the State Board of Education to study charter school models in other states and report back with recommendations by January 2004.

The web site of the Maine Association for Charter Schools has information on the committee members, and the dates and locations of the meetings, which are open to the public. See www.mainecharterschools.org or call 763-3576.

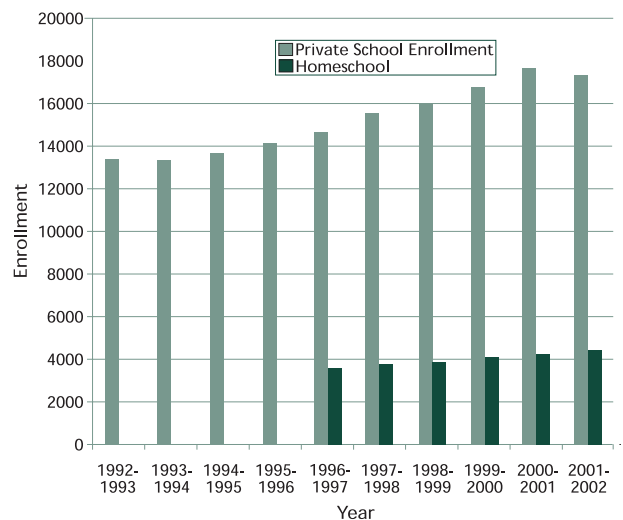
Litigation Update

The Institute for Justice is challenging a 1981 Maine law that erroneously banned religious schools from the state's 100-year-old school choice program. The case is the first in the Institute's nationwide school choice counter-offensive following the U.S. Supreme Court victory for choice, a decision that gives ammunition to Maine parents fighting for the right to send their children to religious schools through the state's "tuitioning," or rural school choice program.

The Institute represents six families from three small towns in Maine—Durham, Minot and Raymond—where the local school districts offer high school tuition for students to attend the schools of their choice in lieu of maintaining public schools. For most of its existence, the system permitted the selection of religious schools.

Institute for Justice argues that the U.S. Supreme Court clearly gave a green light to including religious options in a school choice program such as Maine's. Furthermore, to bar parents from a religious school option violates a well-established line of U.S. Supreme Court precedents. www.ij.org

Private School and Homeschool Enrollment in Maine: 1992-2002



One Student's Story

Hello,

I am a 16 year old girl who is excited and touched that I have been given the chance to attend a Christian School. My past two years in a public high school have not been easy; in fact they have been the most difficult trial that I have faced so far in my short life.

People say that high school is supposed to be the best years of a person's life and yet for me they have been the worst. Attending a public high school has been more than a challenge for me; I have faced constant torment and harassment from my school mates. I never realized that people are mean just to be mean, call me naive or whatever but I honestly did not believe that people would hate me for just being me.

However, after two years of having food and other substance smeared on my locker, after having soda bottles and coins thrown at my head in the hall, and after being spit on, I realized that people can be just plain mean.

All the things that I had to endure at the public high school did not hurt as much as when I would go to the principal's office and they would tell me that there was nothing that they could do to help me. The sheer fact of knowing that there was nothing my school was doing to protect me, made my mind up to try to find something else for me.

A friend told my family about the Maine Children's Scholarship Fund, and I was so excited to find out that there may be a way for me to escape. We sent away the application and I waited for the response. After a while, I had my mom call the organization because I had not received word about my scholarship. She broke the news to me that same day that I had not received a scholarship and I was completely broken and devastated. Then one day, out of the blue, we received the telephone call saying that I was going to be able to get a scholarship. I remember that my father gave me the news through tearful eyes and I was so excited. All I can say is that I am so grateful for the generosity that has been bestowed upon me and I can barely express how much it means to me. I can ensure you that I will not let you down, thank you very much.

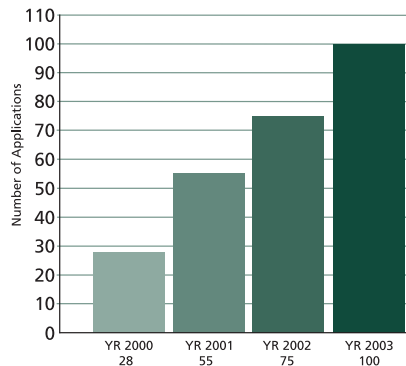
With much gratitude,
Scholarship Student

TUITION FACTS

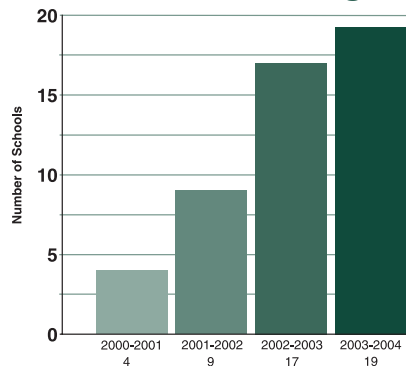
Of the nineteen schools in our program, tuition ranges from a low of \$438 to a high of \$5,500 per year. Our scholarship is 75% of tuition up to \$1700 and our average scholarship is less than \$1400.

Watch Us Grow!

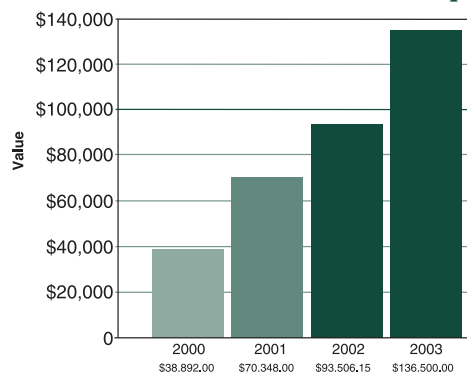
Scholarships Given Each Year



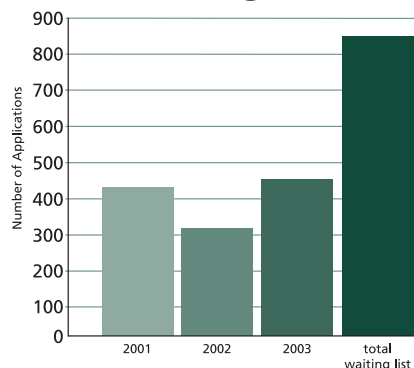
Schools Added to Program



Value of Total Scholarships



Waiting List



Invest in THE FUTURE OF a child!

*We would like
to thank our
generous contributors*

JGQ Property
Management
Betsy Chapman
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Anonymous
Anonymous
Dr. & Mrs. David Hart
Cheryl Russell
Sen. Tom Sawyer
Unity Foundation
Children First America

**Yes, please use my contribution to help
a student on the waiting list.**

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

\$50 *Believer*

\$1000 *Leader's Circle*

\$100 *Supporter*

Other _____

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

Contact us for information about gifting of appreciated 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

We received applications from the following communities for school year 2003-04

Abbot	2	Buxton	1	Gouldboro	2	Lisbon	4	Palmyra	4	Steep Falls	4
Argyle Twp.	2	Camden	1	Grand Isle	2	Lisbon Falls	4	Parsonsfield	4	Stetson	5
Arundel	2	Cape Neddick	1	Greenville	1	Littleton	3	Passadumkeag	2	Steuben	4
Auburn	19	Carmel	3	Guilford	1	Lubec	1	Penobscot	4	Swanville	2
Augusta	13	Cary	2	Hampden	6	Machias	13	Pittsfield	3	Thomaston	2
Bangor	49	Casco	1	Hartland	6	Mars Hill	8	Plymouth	2	Topsham	4
Bar Harbor	5	Charleston	3	Hermon	5	Mechanic Falls	1	Poland	3	Trenton	1
Bar Mills	3	Chelsea	1	Hiram	1	Milford	6	Porter	1	Turner	2
Bass Harbor	3	Cherryfield	3	Hodgdon	1	Monroe	1	Portland	1	Union	2
Belfast	1	Clifton	2	Hollis Center	2	Monticello	3	Randolph	1	Vassalboro	2
Berwick	2	Corinna	2	Hope	2	N. Berwick	5	Raymond	2	W. Baldwin	2
Biddeford	3	Corinth	1	Houlton	7	Naples	1	Rockland	2	Waldoboro	1
Blaine	2	Dixmont	1	Hudson	2	New Gloucester	1	Rockport	3	Waterville	7
Blue Hill	2	E. Baldwin	1	Kenduskeag	2	New Limerick	11	S. China	2	Wells	1
Bowdoin	3	E. Blue Hill	1	LaGrange	3	Newburgh	1	S. Paris	13	Whiting	4
Bowdoinham	1	E. Machias	7	Lamoine	1	Newport	2	S. Portland	1	Windham	2
Brewer	15	Eddington	5	Levant	2	Nobleboro	2	Saco	4	Winslow	2
Bridgewater	3	Ellsworth	6	Lewiston	21	Norway	3	Sanford	2	Winterport	3
Bridgton	3	Freeport	2	Liberty	1	Oakfield	1	Sherman Mills	1	Yarmouth	2
Brunswick	1	Friendship	1	Limerick	2	Oakland	1	Showhegan	1		
Buckfield	1	Gardiner	2	Limestone	1	Orono	1	Sidney	1		
Bucksport	3	Glenburn	7	Limington	4	Orrington	12	St. Albans	2		
Burnham	1	Gorham	3	Lincoln	2	Orrs Island	1	Standish	9		

Bangor, Maine

27 State Street, Suite 64A

Maine Children's
Scholarship Fund



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