

# Maine Governor's Children's Cabinet

## History and Development:

- Established in 1995 and formalized by an executive order by Governor Angus King in 1996
- Adopted in statute in 2000
- Charged with improving services, identifying barriers to services, and working across systems to improve them
- Legislative mandate expanded focus to include interagency coordination and pooling funds to maximize resources

## Membership:

- Commissioners of the Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Public Safety, Corrections and Labor
- At least one senior policy advisor to the Governor  
**Chair:** First Lady of Maine

## Advisory and Workgroups:

- Citizen and stakeholder advisory groups including a youth council serve in an advisory role (E.g. Task Force on Early Childhood)
  - Cabinet staff attend meetings regularly
  - Cabinet provides annual updates to the Youth Council on child and youth priorities
- Cabinet agency staff are divided into an executive team and a senior team to manage the following tasks
  - Review issues relating to local and regional stakeholders, policies that address systems gaps and emerging needs, and cross system policies to organize communication with commissioners
  - Serve as a resource and review needed action from the executive and cabinet meetings, provide research, develop recommendations for systems change for Cabinet consideration.

## Administrative Home:

- Administratively housed in the Department of Corrections and Public Safety
  - Office space and equipment provided by the departments as in-kind contributions

## Staffing:

- Two full-time staff and one staff member that commits quarter of their time to the Cabinet
  - Department of Education assumes fiscal responsibility for two full-time staff people and the Department of Health and Human Services supports the third staff person

Resources for support staff and cross-cutting initiatives garnered through pooled state agency resources (See funding below)

## Results Framework:

- Comprehensive set of twelve outcomes to guide the work of the Cabinet
  - Children and youth respected, children ready to enter school and schools ready for children, children and youth succeeding in school, and schools succeeding for children, youth succeeding in higher education, youth prepared to enter the workforce, families having opportunities to work and play, families recognizing the rewards and responsibilities of raising children, families living safe and healthy lives, communities capable of meeting the needs of children and families in all of their diversity, communities creating collaborative partnerships, communities promoting and modeling clear standards of behavior, and communities keeping children and families at the heart of all decisions

- Also adopted 30 primary measures called Maine Marks under the twelve outcome areas under which fall various sub-indicators
  - Indicators include youth feeling valued in school and community, opportunities for expanded-day kindergarten, high school completions, bachelor's degree attainment, youth in apprenticeships/internships, youth 16-19 not in school and not working, new-family stability, children insured, prenatal care, and access to child care, youth substance, prescription, and alcohol use, reduced juvenile recidivism or relapse, suicide ideation, youth transitioning from residential facilities back to community/school, harassment based on sexual orientation, race, gender, etc.

## Initiatives:

- Thirteen cross-cutting initiatives under three priority areas of early childhood, youth in transition, and adverse childhood experiences
  - Early Childhood goal: create coordinated and humane systems and policies at the state and local level and to ensure quality early childhood services to all young people
  - Youth in Transition goal: Connecting youth (14-24) to permanent home, family and community through collaborative wrap-around planning partnerships
  - Adverse Childhood Experience goal: prevent childhood trauma, minimize impact of traumatic experiences and events, and strengthen family resiliency of children, families and communities with trauma

## Strategies:

### Aligning Policies and Programs

- Cabinet's cross-cutting initiatives connected to at least one Maine Marks indicator and their related outcomes
  - Used to measure progress in priority areas
- Integrated Case Management Program
  - A team convenes providers, families, and other supports together to create a safety-based comprehensive plan to address needs of all family members
  - Helps families in numerous systems navigate services and have access to targeted case management

### Improving Systems and Services

- Keeping Maine Children Connected
- High fidelity wraparound programs
  - Cabinet staff involved in working with regional and local collaboratives to train them to proactively seek high needs youth and provide wrap around assistance with high quality supports

### Engaging Youth and Families

- Communities for Children and Youth
  - Statewide network assists community coalitions engage youth leaders
  - Receive some financial support and technical assistance from the Cabinet
- Annual regional forum and network meetings

### Building Demand/Public Support

- Greater engagement by the Governor and three senior advisors
- Present two to three cross-initiatives to the Governor's full cabinet
- Seeking help to enhance to the messaging of the work of the cabinet to legislatures, policy partners and the public

### **Funding:**

- Cabinet is supported by pooled agency resources primarily from private and federal grant administrative fees
  - Each regional collaborative receives \$70,000 annually to improve systems, strengthen and fill gaps for families with children most in need
  - Seeks out private funding for special initiatives and programs that state is unable to support

### **Local Connections:**

- Three parallel structures at the regional level
- Sixteen local case resolution committees under each regional body
  - Resolution committees provide services for unique needs that cannot be met by any funding stream or system
- Cabinet works closely with regional structures and distributes funding to support coordination efforts at regional and local level
- Undertaking efforts to coordinate and organize high fidelity wraparound collaboratives with regional cabinets and resolution committees

### **Accomplishments:**

- Ability to solve systems challenges and barriers to effective services
- Maximizing and consolidating resources
- State plan to create humane systems for families and parents of young children
- Engaged more youth and families in decision-making and policy-development

### **Contact for Information:**

Lauren Sterling

207-287-4349

[Lauren.Sterling@maine.gov](mailto:Lauren.Sterling@maine.gov)

Maine Governor's Children's Cabinet