



# **ANNUAL REPORT**

**2024-2025**

[www.maineadulted.org](http://www.maineadulted.org)

Dear Members of the Maine Adult Education Association,

As we reflect on the past year, I am incredibly proud of the progress we have made together in strengthening and advancing adult education in Maine. Through our collective efforts, MAEA has championed key initiatives that enhance the field, support our educators, and improve access for learners across the state.

One of our most significant achievements has been our ongoing work on subsidy, ensuring that adult education programs receive the funding they need to thrive. In addition, we took a major step forward by introducing a bill aimed at fully funding adult education in accordance with the law. Advocacy remains a cornerstone of our work, and we are committed to continuing these efforts to secure the resources necessary for the success of our programs and students.

Our annual MAEA conference was another highlight, bringing together educators, administrators, and stakeholders for meaningful professional development and networking opportunities. The event showcased the dedication and expertise within our community and reinforced our shared commitment to professionalizing the field. A key focus this year has been elevating adult education as a recognized and respected profession and advocating for increased resources. We have also made notable strides in strengthening our collaboration with the state team, working together to better support adult education programs across Maine.

In addition to these advancements, we have taken concrete steps to enhance our operations and technology infrastructure. We have begun the process of transitioning our course registration platform from CourseStorm to Active Network, a change that will ultimately save programs across the state money while improving efficiency. Our website has also undergone updates, ensuring that information and resources are more accessible to both educators and learners.

Another important focus this year has been updating the executive director's job description and launching a search for a candidate who shares our vision for the future of adult education in Maine. This process is critical in ensuring that MAEA remains strong and well-positioned to advocate for and support our field.

Looking ahead, I am excited for the continued growth of MAEA and the impact we will make together. Our work is far from finished, but with the dedication of our members and the strength of our partnerships, we are well-positioned to build on our successes and drive meaningful change for adult education in Maine.

Thank you for your commitment to this essential work. It was an honor serving as your president.

With gratitude,

Dr. Kayla Sikora  
President, Maine Adult Education Association

## **MAEA Board Members – 2024-2025 (Term Expires)**

President: Kayla Sikora, Augusta Adult Education (2026)  
22 Armory Street, North Wing, Buker Community Center  
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[Kayla.sikora@augustaschools.org](mailto:Kayla.sikora@augustaschools.org)

Past President : Lisa Robertson, Director, York Adult Education (2025)  
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Treasurer: Jeremy Lehan, Director, MSAD 54 Adult Education (2025)  
RSU 54/MSAD 54 Adult & Community Education  
61 Academy Circle  
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Tel: (207) 474-7553  
[jlehan@msad54.org](mailto:jlehan@msad54.org)

President Elect: Josh McNaughton, Director, PVAEC (2027)  
55 High Street  
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Secretary: Executive Director may fill the function of Board Secretary.

2024-2025 Elected Board Members:

Hub One: Ander Thebaud, Director, RSU 24 Adult Education (2026)  
1888 US Highway 1  
Sullivan, ME 04664  
(207) 422-4794  
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Hub Two: Shara Page, MSAD 1 Adult Education (2026)  
79 Blake Street  
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Hub Three: Suzanne Nowinski, RSU 19 Adult Education (2026)  
266 Williams Road  
Newport, ME 04953  
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Hub Four: Courtney Michaud, RSU 73 Spruce Mountain Adult Education (2025)  
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Hub Five: Kenlyn Clark, Augusta Adult Education (2025)  
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Hub Six: Razell Ward, Lewiston and Auburn Adult Education (2025)  
156 East Ave.  
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Hub Seven: Dawn Wheeler, Merrymeeting Adult Education (2025 – Resigned)  
35 Republic Ave.  
Topsham, ME 04086  
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Hub Eight: Linda Winton, Bonny Eagle Adult Education (2026)  
290 Parker Farm Road  
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Hub Nine: Eleanor Chow, Massabesic Adult Education (2026)  
84 West Road  
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(207) 247-2022  
[eleanorchow@rsu57.org](mailto:eleanorchow@rsu57.org)

#### Appointed Board Members

Tom Nash, Windham Raymond Adult Education (2025)

Mike Emery, Lake Region and Fryeburg Area Adult Education (2025)

Shelli Pride, RSU 16 Adult Education (2025)

Staff

Shirley Wright, Executive Director

841 North Road, Dover Foxcroft, ME 04426

(207) 343-2157

[swright345@gmail.com](mailto:swright345@gmail.com) or [info@maineadulted.org](mailto:info@maineadulted.org)

Ex Officio

Megan Dichter, State Director of Adult Education

State House Station

Augusta, ME 04333

[Megan.dichter@maine.gov](mailto:Megan.dichter@maine.gov)

## **ACTION TEAM REPORTS**

### **Awards**

Award forms will be sent out in May and then returned in early September. Awards will be presented at the MAEA Conference in October.

### **Advocacy, Communication, and Legislative:**

New members from around the state joined the Advocacy Committee this year. We are working closely with our lobbyist, Clara McConnell from Maine Street Solutions, to seek, propose, support, and testify for new adult education-related legislation. The committee is also responsible for the Legislative Connections Breakfast.

Representative Holly Sargent from York proposed a bill to fully fund adult education subsidy. The ED and MAEA President presented to the Legislature's Education Committee mid-January to inform them about adult education and our funding needs. MAEA provided testimony neither for nor against another bill, LD 471, regarding services for ELL learners within the University of Maine System. The bill was tabled.

Projected subsidy amounts have been released for the 2025-2026 school year and reflect an increase of \$1.5 million dollars to the total state subsidy for the second year of the biennial budget. MAEA continues to work on subsidy equity in the upcoming year with hopes to get to a point where the state fully funds adult education with no proration. There has also been work on funding for workforce navigators and college and career success coordinators. The Legislative Connections Breakfast in March had fewer attendees than expected due to poor weather and unexpected schedule changes at the Legislature. The student speakers told heartwarming, compelling stories of their positive connections with adult education. The committee also urged local directors to contact and invite their local legislators to visit their programs.

On a national level, many adult educators advocated eliminating the Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset. These provisions reduced or eliminated the Social Security benefits of over 3.2 million people who receive a pension based on work that was not covered by Social Security (a "non-covered pension") because they did not pay Social Security taxes. This law increases Social Security benefits for certain workers, including teachers. (\*This legislation did pass and these provisions were eliminated. Many will receive social security benefits that had been denied as a result of this work in Maine and nationally.)

WIOA reauthorization at the national level has stalled even though it had received very strong bipartisan support in 2024.

### **Conference 2025:**

A successful conference was attended by over 200 MAEA members at Sunday River in Bethel, Maine in October of 2024. Sessions were packed with learning and discourse.

Planning for the 2025 MAEA Conference is fully underway! The conference will be held at the Cross Center in Bangor on October 16 and 17.

### **Corrections:**

MAEA's Corrections committee focused several meetings on discussing and brainstorming strategies to provide equitable digital literacy programs across Maine's county jails. There are several challenges to overcome in this arena, not the least of which is that county jails are administered by county selectman and sheriffs. Regionally, there are different models, funding, technology access, and support for corrections education. One of the committee's goals is to generate a list of recommendations that include increasing (protected and firewalled) internet access for educational purposes. Digital Literacy is a critical entrance on a path to reduce recidivism by providing justice involved individuals the tools and skills to access education and

workforce training in our highly technology-based communities. Committee members worked with the Island Institute and MEDOE's Adult Education team to contribute to their Digital Opportunity Network grant application proposals. Our year ended on a high note with Phil Wormuth sharing the book "Inside Out: Corrections Art and Poetry". With a grant from the Maine Humanities Council, Wormuth collected and curated work from Hancock County Jail inmates involved in adult education programs incorporating writing and art. At the end of the book, Wormuth included lesson plans for several writing and art activities that encourage participants to improve their writing practice and provide opportunities to visually express their creativity. Plans are in the works to highlight the book in a workshop at the MAEA Conference Fall 2025. Ander Thebaud, Committee Chair

### **Elections:**

MAEA members in Hubs 4, 5, 6 and 7 will be elected in June of 2025. The ballot will be sent to all MAEA members and the deadline to vote is June 10<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m.

### **Finance:**

MAEA's conference in October of 2024 was a financial success. MAEA continues to responsibly invest money when possible and expend frugally each year. As of this writing, our total assets are \$264,000, an increase of approximately \$28,000 from last year, and income has outpaced expenses by about \$56,000. At this time, the financial state of MAEA is very good and initiatives will continue as planned. Jeremy Lehan, Treasurer

### **Marketing:**

The Marketing Committee has been busy this year!

MAEA received a \$10,000 grant from the Davis Foundation with the purpose of optimizing our landing page. The primary focus of the committee is to make adult education a system with consistency across the state. We worked with Cary Weston to produce content for high school completion/diploma pathways and healthcare pathways in order to add new and updated content to our landing page. In addition to the work on our current landing page, MAEA also contracted Cary Weston to do a complete overhaul of our landing page and program sites. Our committee continued producing our newsletter with distribution to the field and this year, it is included in DOE-Adult Education's ICYMI monthly newsletter. Our committee managed a "Best picture" photo contest at our MAEA Conference with 2 winners receiving \$25 Amazon gift cards each. Shelli Pride, Committee Co-Chair

### **Scholarship:**

As of the printing of this report, scholarship applications have gone out and will be scored in May of 2025. Winners will be selected for one MAEA Scholarship of \$500, the Pat A. Hughes Memorial Scholarship of \$350 and the MAEA Teacher Scholarship of \$750. Winners will be announced in June.

**Maine Adult Educators Association (1965-1967)**

**Maine Association for Public School Adult Education (1967-1990)**

**Maine Adult Education Association (1990-present)**

<b>Years of Service</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>
1965-1967	Dick Mayo	Bangor
1967-1969	Jim Flanagan	Portland
1969-1970	Bob Curran	Camden
1970-1971	Gerry Levasseur	Van Buren
1971-1972	Len McGinnis	Waterville
1972-1973	Duke Martin	Presque Isle
1973-1974	John Simpson	Biddeford
1974-1975	Clayton Blood	Searsport
1975-1976	Jack Webb	Sanford
1976-1979	Doug McGowan	Presque Isle
1979-1981	Gaille Heseltine	Portland
1981-1982	Ray Bussiere	Bangor
1982-1983	Ervin MacDonald Loren Richie	Houlton Sherman Station
1983-1984	Paul Dulac (resigned)	Gardiner



	Patrick O'Reagan	Augusta
1984-1985	Dick Madore	Bangor
1985-1986	Sharon Martin	Westbrook
1986-1987	Dick Madore	Bangor
1987-1988	Don Berry	Belfast and DECS
1988-1989	Cathy Newell	Bethel
1989-1990	Anne Niemiec	Lewiston
1990-1991	Conrad Walton	Caribou
1991-1992	Andy McMahan	Fairfield
1992-1993	John Forester	Augusta
1993-1994	Larinda Meade	Portland
1994-1995	Janet Kalman	Sanford
1995-1996	Lin Hallowell	Waterville
1996-1997	Becky Dyer	Biddeford
1997-1998	Anne Kemper	Lewiston
1998-1999	Diann Bailey	Gardiner
1999-2000	Diana McCain	Bath
2000-2001	Tom Nash	Sanford
2001-2002	Judy Green	South Paris

2002-2003	Rob Wood	Portland
2003-2004	Barbara Goodwin	Waterboro
2004-2005	Gail Senese	Portland
2005-2006	Patte Bowman	Skowhegan
2006-2007	Otis Smith	Houlton
2007-2008	Kathi Metcalf	Sanford
2008-2009	Suzanne Rojas	Newport
2009-2010	Zane Clement	Bridgton
2010-2011	Rob Wood	Portland
2011-2012	Carrie Castonguay	Bridgton
2012-2013	Tim Dresser	Camden
2013-2014	Bill Grant	Auburn
2014-2015	Thelma Regan	PVAEC
2015-2016	Razell Ward	RSU 52
2016-2017	Nancy Allen	Region 9
2017-2018	Lorraine Robida	Kittery and Marshwood
2018-2019	Anne Sargent	Ellsworth
2019-2020	Suzanne Nowinski	RSU 19, Newport
2020-2021	Allen Lampert	Merrymeeting

2021-2022	Josh Farr	Gardiner and Winthrop
2022-2023	Jeremy Lehan	RUS 54
2023-2024	Lisa Robertson	York
2024-2025	Dr. Kayla Sikora	Augusta

## MAEA Member Programs

<b>Auburn</b>	<b>Augusta</b>	<b>Bangor</b>	<b>Belfast</b>
<b>Bllddeford</b>	<b>Bonny Eagle</b>	<b>Boothbay</b>	<b>Central Lincoln County</b>
<b>Deer Isle</b>	<b>Eastern Aroostook</b>	<b>Ellsworth</b>	<b>Five Towns</b>
<b>Franklin County</b>	<b>Freeport</b>	<b>Gorham</b>	<b>Gray/New Gloucester</b>
<b>Greenville</b>	<b>Houlton</b>	<b>Kittery</b>	<b>Lake Region</b>
<b>Lawrence</b>	<b>Lewiston</b>	<b>Lisbon</b>	<b>Marshwood</b>
	<b>Dept. of Education AE</b>	<b>Maranacook</b>	<b>Massabesic</b>
<b>Merrymeeting</b>	<b>Mid Coast</b>	<b>Mid Maine</b>	<b>Midcoast School of Applied Tech Region 8</b>
<b>MSAD 1</b>	<b>Kennebec Neighbors</b>	<b>MSAD 37</b>	<b>MSAD 53</b>
<b>Mt. Desert</b>	<b>Noble</b>	<b>Oak Hill</b>	<b>Old Orchard/Saco</b>
<b>Oxford Hills/Nezinscot</b>	<b>Piscataquis Valley PVAEC</b>	<b>Portland</b>	<b>Region 4 - UTC Bangor</b>
<b>Region 2</b>	<b>Region 9</b>	<b>Riverside</b>	<b>Rockland</b>
<b>RSU 3</b>	<b>RSU 16</b>	<b>RSU 19</b>	<b>RSU 25</b>
<b>RSU 52</b>	<b>RSU 54</b>	<b>RSU 67</b>	<b>Sacopee Valley</b>

<b>Sanford</b>	<b>Scarborough</b>	<b>South Portland</b>	<b>Spruce Mountain</b>
<b>Telstar</b>	<b>Valley Unified</b>	<b>Washington County</b>	<b>Wells</b>
<b>Westbrook</b>	<b>Windham Raymond</b>	<b>York</b>	