



Maine Association for the Education of Young Children

Annual Report

2018

Right From the Start Coalition

This year the RFTS leadership team met in person or through phone calls at least once a month, but more often weekly. We had quarterly full coalition meetings: January 25th, June 18th, September 20th, and November 19th (also an Endorsing Partners policy meeting on December 18th). In early 2018, Tara visited and helped sign on new members of the coalition, Faith Linking-In-Action and the Maine Montessori Association.

We kicked off the second year of the 128th Legislative session with a Maine Children's Alliance reception for legislators where we introduced them to Right from the Start. Tara and Rita gave a presentation to HHS Committee with a general overview of early care and education in Maine. Our coalition supported the continuation of the Children's Caucus in the Maine legislature. MaineAEYC organized and led a panel presentation on early care and education in Maine on February 8th. The panel included Tara Williams, MaineAEYC,; Sonja Howard, MRTQ; Laura Larson, Family Focus; and Judy Reidt-Parker, the Ounce. Other Children's Caucus presentations took place on February 22nd, March 6th, and March 20th, and March 27th.

Tara represented MaineAEYC and FCCAM at several HHS and Ed Committee hearings and work sessions. Many of the early childhood bills had been carried over from 2017. The HHS committee worked 12 bills, including proposals on raising reimbursement rates for child care subsidies. The Ed committee worked on teacher certification and special education services proposals. MaineAEYC supported several educators who attended hearings and work sessions, as well as grassroots advocacy organizing educators around the state to contact their legislators on ECE issues and specific proposals.

RFTS work included meetings with legislators and taking them on program visits. Some examples are our meetings with Speaker Sara Gideon and Senator Nate Libby to discuss bills about early care and education during the legislative session. In preparation for the 129th legislative session, we met with Rep. Hymanson, Senator Breen, Senator Rebecca Millett, Rep. Sawin Millett, Senator Pouliot, Senator Dow, and others. We took several legislators on ECE program tours, including Rep. Perry, Senator Libby, Rep. Fecteau, and Rep. Claxton. We also met with Rep. Farnsworth and Rep. Talbot Ross about ECE bill with high school students



Maine Association for the Education of Young Children

A significant part of our RFTS work in 2018 included meetings with gubernatorial candidates during the primaries, including Mark Eves, Janet Mills, Mike Thibodeau, Adam Cote, Mary Mayhew, Shawn Moody, Mark Dion, Terry Hayes, Diane Russell, Betsy Sweet, and Alan Caron. We followed this up with a second set of gubernatorial meetings after the primaries and met with Terry Hayes again and policy staff from Mills, Moody, and Caron's campaigns. Prior to these meetings we wrote a white paper and an administrative actions paper. We presented our policy agenda in two parts (what can be done by legislative action and what can be done by administrative action).

RFTS partners also focused around earned media in 2018. The leadership team met with Bangor Daily News Editorial staff and presented the RFTS coalition and the poll done last year about ECE. We coordinated OpEds and echoed them with LTEs. Our ability to do this work, as well as outreach during the gubernatorial campaign was supported by a national grant from the Opportunity Alliance, which allowed us to hire two campaign coordinators, Riley Ploch and Dewey Meteer from August 2018 until January 2019.

Development and Fundraising

In 2018 MaineAEYC received \$45,000 from the early childhood funders group for our work leading the Right from the Start Coalition. This came through a \$30,000 grant from the Maine Community Foundation which was subgranted to us by the Maine Children's Alliance and \$15,000 from an Early Childhood Fund managed by the United Way of Greater Portland. In addition, we were awarded a \$7,500 discretionary grant from the Bingham Program for the first quarter of 2018 for our policy work. In 2019 we will receive \$45,000 again, through one or two grants, likely subgranted again through Maine Children's Alliance.

Some of our grant applications were successful and some were not. We partnered with MRTQ and the Maine Children's Growth Council to apply for the Hope Grant through the Build Initiative (two year grant, building and improving our statewide early care and education system) and with Family Focus on a regional early childhood grant from the Maine Community Foundation, both of which were not funded. We were awarded a three year grant from the Bingham Program, \$15,000 in 2018, \$10,000 in 2019, and \$10,000 in 2020 for operating support. We partnered with the Maine Children's Alliance and Educare Central Maine around expanding the Parent Ambassador program to be statewide. We received a three year grant, in which MCA and MaineAEYC will partner to help train parents in the program create an Alumni PA Program in Maine. This begins with \$12,000 in 2019. Tara and the Board worked on grant proposal for NAEYC to build our advocacy around the Child Care Development Block Grant and we were awarded \$25,000 for this work in 2019.

In the same vein, not all sponsorship requests were fulfilled. Tara met with IDEXX, submitted a sponsorship proposal to WEX, and tried to get a meeting with LL Bean (none led to sponsorships).



Maine Association for the Education of Young Children

However, additional funds were brought in through other sponsorships and donations. We secured \$5,000 for our education conference from MRTQ PDN and \$1,300 in sponsorships for “No Small Matter” film screenings from Community Health Options, The Bingham Program, Sam L. Cohen, Educate Maine, Maine Community Foundation, Maine Women’s Policy Center, and Starting Strong. A retiring Board member made a one-time \$100 donation for membership scholarships. We used that donation towards five Entry Level scholarships for staff at a small child care center in central Maine. Another member started a \$5 recurring monthly donation in December 2018 during our end of year giving appeal. We also secured a MaineAEYC contract with United Way for Tara to work part time with Starting Strong in Portland from December 2018 until April 2019.

We began 2018 with the Membership Committee renamed as the Development Committee. During the year we found that there was a need for two separate working groups. Membership engagement and outreach is very important and takes a dedicated effort. The same goes for development and fundraising through grants, contracts, sponsorships, donations, and events. We ended 2018 going back to having a Membership and Outreach Committee and a Board member focused on Development.

Earned Media

- 1/17/18 Tara Williams OpEd in *Bangor Daily News* on 8 child care bills heard that week
- Tara Interview with Maine Public Radio, for Public PreK news story, aired last week in January
- 2/6/18 letter to the editor from MaineAEYC member Debby Adkins in *Portland Press Herald*
- 2/16/18 LTE from MaineAEYC member Katie Wright in *Bangor Daily News*
- 2/20/18 *Portland Press Herald* letter to the editor by MainAEYC member Karen Bruder, “Quality, not quantity, matters more in child care.”
- 2/27/18 *Lewiston Sun Journal* letter to the editor by MaineAEYC member Katherine Wright, “Safe childcare regulations necessary.”
- 3/1/18 *Bangor Daily News* letter to the editor by MaineAEYC member Selina Greene Warren, “Education Proposal Wrong”
- 3/7/18 *Portland Press Herald* letter to the editor by MaineAEYC member Katherine Wright, “Reducing Regulations Isn’t the Solution to the High Cost of Child Care.”
- 3/7/18 *Kennebec Journal* and *Morning Sentinel* letter to the editor by MaineAEYC member Heather Marden, “In Child Care Industry, Don’t Treat Kids Like Products.”
- 3/14/18 *Bangor Daily News* OpEd by MaineAEYC member Karen Bruder, “Maine needs affordable child care, but eroding safety standards is the wrong response.”
- Coverage of “Week of the Young Child” in the Daily Bulldog in Farmington and in the Seacoast Online
- 4/18/18 Tara interviewed during our ECE day at the State House, aired that evening Channel 13
- 7/16/18 Tara interviewed on Channel 8 news about LD 274 (fingerprinting)
- 12/30/18 *Kennebec Journal* and *Morning Sentinel* letter to the editor by MaineAEYC Board member Selina Greene Warren, “Serve all families with early education.”



Maine Association for the Education of Young Children

Public Policy and Advocacy

State Policy Work and Grassroots Advocacy

During the 128th legislative session, the child care subsidy reimbursement rate was raised to the 75th percentile. Fingerprinting for early childhood educators was enacted. We supported those issues, as well as several others. At an HHS committee hearing on 12 bills 5 members came to testify in person and 25 members submitted written testimonies (since many wrote multiple testimonies, we submitted over 60 all together)

MaineAEYC testified at a Dept of Ed. hearing on proposed changes to certification, where we opposed to change in certification that would create a Preschool-Grade 8 endorsement (MEA amended their comments in response to ours). We also testified at a Dept. of Health and Human Services hearing on their draft CCDF State Child Care Plan for 2019-2021. In preparation for the revision of the child care center licensing rules, Tara helped organize a meeting at DHHS with leaders from licensing attended by Board Members Anne Adams and Heather Marden, and Lori from Catherine Morrill in Portland. We brought folders with information about MaineAEYC, outdoor play and learning, and results of a MaineAEYC member and friends survey.

During the Gubernatorial election, we wrote a Candidate Questionnaire. We receive responses from three of the four candidates and posted them on our website and social media. We also put up the Gubernatorial Candidate Questionnaire answers at 4 education conferences in October in Wells, Brunswick, Rockland, and Calais.

ECE Day at the State House and Week of the Young Child

Our first annual Early Childhood Day at the Statehouse was held in the Hall of Flags on Wednesday, April 18th from 8am-12pm. We had dozens of parents, children, and teachers visit as well as many legislators who came for the snacks, MaineAEYC items, and to learn about early ed at our learning centers around the Hall. A few even tried the obstacle course and puppet theater.

MaineAEYC sponsored Week of the Young Child family festivals in Portland, Kennebunk, Waterville, Farmington, and Bangor. We provided funds, marketing, legislator and media outreach, and volunteers at the events. In 2018 we had wonderful turnout from family of young children, great presence from elected officials, some media coverage, and very positive feedback on all events.

No Small Matter Film Screenings

MaineAEYC coordinated four "No Small Matter" film screenings in Portland, Bangor, Farmington, and Fairfield. We marketed each event, gave opening and closing remarks, provided snacks and beverages,



Maine Association for the Education of Young Children

and had tables of information about MaineAEYC, America for Early Ed, and early childhood education public policy. We did before and after surveys in Farmington and Fairfield and collaborated with the Kindling Group in preparation of the screenings and in planning for more in 2019.

Electoral Advocacy

In preparation for the NAEYC Policy Forum we are collected art work from children at NAEYC Accredited centers, stories from educators and leaders not attending the Forum, and shared the Child Care for Working Families Act petition. There were ten members of our Maine State Team who went to DC together: Kathy Colfer from KVCAP, Joni Sprague and Rhonda Kaiser from Educare, Parent Ambassadors Casey Henderson and Kristina Ronco, Elementary Special Education Teacher Megan Sigovich, Center-based Toddler Teacher Katherine Wright, MaineAEYC Board members Heather Marden and Kate Quinn Finlay, MaineAEYC Executive Director Tara Williams. While in DC we met with Senator Collins, Representative Pingree, and staff of Rep. Poliquin and Senator King.

MaineAEYC signed on to several letters with NAEYC and other state affiliates in 2018. In addition, MaineAEYC sent emails to Senators Collins and King, and Representatives Pingree and Poliquin concerning the MaineAEYC/NAEYC resolution on separation of immigrant families. In the fall MaineAEYC partnered with NAEYC and other affiliates to promote National Voter Registration Day. We used social media as a primary vehicle for get out the vote efforts. MaineAEYC joined Maine Together Coalition, a group that advocates for federal discretionary spending.

Presentations and Trainings

Tammy Dwyer and Tara Williams gave an education policy presentation at the NAEYC Professional Learning Institute. The workshop focused on our FCCAM and MaineAEYC partnership, especially the policy education and advocacy outreach work we have done together.

At all of our MaineAEYC events, including "No Small Matter" and all the education conferences we attended, we posted and handed out early childhood education policy information. At our fall conference we collected and sent to NAEYC 44 "I pledge to vote cards" with sign up information for America for Early Ed

Preparation for Policy Work in 2019

We began work with Sue Russell in order for Maine stakeholders to learn about the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program. Tara drafted an outdoor play center-based licensing bill and met with Rep. Farnsworth who agreed to sponsor and submit the proposal. Tara drafted an ECE workforce proposal that Rep. Fecteau and Rep. Denno agreed to sponsor and submit.



Maine Association for the Education of Young Children

Membership and Outreach

MaineAEYC emails went out to our members and network on a weekly basis in 2018 with information about education policy, professional learning workshops and conferences, events, and member engagement opportunities. Jen updated our contact list each month with new members. She sent monthly emails to welcome new members and thank those who renewed. Jen and Tara sent quarterly reminder emails to those whose memberships were about to expire and those who lapsed and never renewed.

We redid our website with Talley-O and designed and ordered new MaineAEYC flyers with the help of a template provided by NAEYC. Lauren Kaiser became a new volunteer with MaineAEYC, supporting our social media presence.

MaineAEYC 2018 Events and Outreach

- March 1st-2nd SkillsUSA Maine State Conference
- March 3rd, Buker Community Center, Augusta, SKCDC-Child Care Options
- March 24th, MEA Spring Conference (workshop session and table)
- March 29th, Thomas College, Waterville, Maine Literacy Connections Conference
- April 7th, Windham Child Care Conference
- April 18th ECE Day at the State House
- April 27th, WOYC Waterville
- April 28th, WOYC Portland, Kennebunk, Farmington, and Bangor
- April 28th, KVCC Alford Campus, Hinkley, Kennebec Valley Community College Second Annual Early Childhood Symposium
- September 29th, MCA Children's Convention
- October 13th, Washington County Early Childhood Conference
- October 18th, Portland "No Small Matter"
- October 20th, York County Early Childhood Conference
- October 20th, MEA Fall Conference
- October 27th, MaineAEYC Early Childhood Conference
- November 13th, Bangor "No Small Matter"
- December 6th, UMF "No Small Matter"
- December 7th, Educate Maine Symposium
- December 7th, Joyful Children's Day Portland
- December 10th, KVCC "No Small Matter"

Tara went on several school and program visits in 2018. Tara visited Marnee Harke, Montessori program director in Freeport and the Little Dolphin School in Scarborough. One weekend in the fall included five



Maine Association for the Education of Young Children

program visits in Washington County, including a family child care in Princeton, a Passamaquoddy ECE center in Perry, and a family child care, center, and elementary school in Calais.

Tara attended regular monthly or quarterly meetings with the Child Care Advisory Council, MaineSpark Strong Foundations, Maine Children's Growth Council, Professional Development Alignment Team, Maine Together, MRTQ PDN Advisory Council, and Maine Shared Services Alliance. She also had meetings with Starting Strong, the Portland Directors Group, another Portland area COP called Group Soup, the UMF ECE Club, a Higher ED ECE meeting hosted by Maine Roads to Quality, Grace Leavitt from the Maine Education Association, Meg Helming from the Maine YMCA Alliance, and Holly from the Maine Principals Association to build relationships and partnerships. Tara was on a panel with MCA and MRTQ at a UMF education policy event, and presented a breakout session at 2018 MPA fall conference for elementary school principals.

Professional Learning

This year we supported, planned, organized, and/or hosted a spring workshop and three fall conferences for early childhood educators. We offered online registration for the first time in 2018. "Making Sense of Aggression" was the spring training that we offered at Bowdoin College. MRTQ PDN partnered with us to put together our MaineAEYC fall conference on Brunswick. They presented the Marcia Lovell awards at the conference. Kat Kempe from NAEYC came to our conference and presented on Power to the Profession.

With staffing support of three fall conferences, Jen and Tara processed approximately 275 registrations and presenter/vendor contact information! Between 64-74% of registrations for each conference were completed online.

- Washington County (Calais) - 23 online and 8 checks
- York County (Wells) - 43 online and 15 checks
- Cumberland County (Brunswick) - 103 online, 58 checks/POs

NAEYC

We were actively involved with NAEYC and stayed connected to our network of state affiliates. In 2018 Tara and several Board members attended the NAEYC Policy Forum, Professional Learning Institute, HPIO Leadership Summit, and Annual Conference. Tara and Elizabeth joined monthly affiliate leadership webinars. Tara participated in Quarterly calls with Rhian and other webinars, such as those for affiliates with new leaders and nonprofit fundraising and financial management. In 2019 we will join in new webinars on leadership, member engagement, conferences, and more.