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January 15, 2024

Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
c/o Elena Roig
Office of Policy and Legal Analysis
13 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs:

The Maine Community College System is pleased to provide this data in accordance with [Title 20-A §10015](#). The data was collected from each college and encompasses information from 7/1/23 to 1/1/24. The report contents are outlined in the statute (below) and our data tables follow this letter.

Beginning January 15, 2023 and annually thereafter, each 2-year postsecondary educational institution and 4-year postsecondary educational institution in this State shall submit a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters on requests for the release of transcripts and diplomas. The report must include:

A. The number of transcripts and diplomas released, disaggregated by those released to a student who owes a debt of:

- (1) Five hundred dollars or more at a 2-year postsecondary educational institution; and*
- (2) Twenty-five hundred dollars or more at a 4-year postsecondary educational institution;*

B. The number of accounts in a repayment plan and the amounts still outstanding and status of the repayment plan; and

C. The total number of requests for transcripts and diplomas disaggregated by the reason for the request, demographic information of students who request a transcript or diploma, if known, and the nature and age of the debt owed.

The report may include a recommendation on the amount of debt pursuant to subsection 2 over which a 2-year postsecondary educational institution or 4-year postsecondary educational institution may require a student to agree to a repayment plan.

It is important to note that with our current resources and data collection tools, this report required a substantial investment of time from our college's business offices and financial aid staff as well as our very limited institutional research staff. It is our recommendation that the usefulness of this report be re-evaluated by your committee. Our understanding of the bill sponsor's original intent was to affect the policies and procedures of Maine's institutions of higher education regarding withholding transcripts and diplomas from those who have incurred debts and not repaid. Partially in response to LD 1838, most MCCS colleges have suspended the practice of withholding diplomas and transcripts for financial debt. In fact, all of our colleges have suspended the practice of withholding diplomas for financial reasons and less than 2.5% of those who requested transcripts had their documentation withheld at the time of request.

In addition, new federal regulations on withholding of transcripts further complicates withholding transcripts due to non-payment and the MCCS Board of Trustees will be evaluating our policies to assure we are in compliance with all state and federal requirements.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the Maine Community College System

Sincerely,

Becky Smith
Director of Government and Community Relations



Summary:

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| The number of diplomas requested: | 2,085 |
| The number of diplomas released related to a student who owes \$500 or more | N/A |
| The number of transcripts requested | 16,504 |
| The number of transcripts released related to a student who owes \$500 or more | 278 |
| The number of accounts in a repayment plan | 21 |
| The amounts still outstanding | \$29,527.85 |
| Repayment plan status: 19 of 21 accounts are delinquent representing 90% of balance | (\$26,624.65) |
| Total student debt owed to MCCS as of 12/31/2023 | \$5,003,470 |

The total number of requests for diplomas disaggregated by the reason for the request:

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Program Completion (Graduation) | 2,085 (2,026 individuals) |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|

The total number of requests for transcripts disaggregated by the reason for the request:

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Admission | 8,857 |
| Certification/Licensure | 754 |
| Employment | 984 |
| Grad./Law/Medical admissions | 325 |
| Scholarship | 195 |
| Self | 575 |
| Transfer | 2,715 |
| Undergraduate Admissions | 667 |
| Registrar | 292 |
| Other | 1,009 |
| Unknown | 131 |
| Total | 16,504 (12,095 individuals) |

Demographic information of students who request a diploma and the nature and age of the debt owed:

| Reason for Diploma | Total | # With Financial Holds \$500+ |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------|
| Program Completion (Graduation) | 2,085 | 0 (0%) |

| Diploma Recipient Metrics | |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Distinct Individuals | 2,026 |
| Total Holds | 0 |
| * Hold: Residential Life | 0 |
| * Hold: Tuition and Fees | 0 |
| ** Hold: Repayment Plan | 0 |

| Age of Holds | |
|--------------|---|
| < 1 Year | 0 |
| < 5 Years | 0 |
| 5+ Years | 0 |



Demographics of Diploma Recipients

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| | | |
| Male | 902 | 44.5% |
| Female | 1,115 | 55.0% |
| Other | 9 | 0.4% |
| American Indian or Alaskan Native | 14 | 0.7% |
| Asian | 41 | 2.0% |
| Black or African American | 87 | 4.3% |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 4 | 0.2% |
| Race and ethnicity unknown | 71 | 3.5% |
| White | 1,809 | 89.3% |

Purpose information of students who request a transcript, if known, and the nature and age of the debt owed

| Reason for Transcript | With Holds | No Hold | Grand Total |
|-----------------------------|------------|---------------|---------------|
| Admissions | 178 | 8,679 | 8,857 |
| Certification/Licensure | 8 | 746 | 754 |
| Employment | 25 | 959 | 984 |
| Graduate School/Law/Medical | 2 | 323 | 325 |
| Scholarship | 4 | 191 | 195 |
| Self | 17 | 558 | 575 |
| Undergraduate Admissions | 24 | 643 | 667 |
| Transfer | 102 | 2,613 | 2715 |
| Registrar | 10 | 282 | 292 |
| Other | 33 | 976 | 1,009 |
| Unknown | 6 | 125 | 131 |
| Grand Total: | 409 | 16,095 | 16,504 |

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| Distinct Students | 12,095 |
| Total Holds | 296 |
| Residential Life | 18 |
| Tuition/Fees | 278 |
| Payment Plan | 44 |
| No Payment Plan | 234 |
| Age of Holds | |
| < 1 Year | 6 |
| < 5 years | 2.7 |
| <1 Year | 244 |
| <5 Year | 33 |
| 5+ Years | 5 |



Demographic information of students who request a transcript, if known

| Gender | Count | Percentage |
|---------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Female | 7,821 | 64.7% |
| Male | 4,193 | 34.7% |
| Other | 82 | 0.7% |
| Total | 12,095 | 100% |

| Race/Ethnicity | Count | Percentage |
|---|--------------|-------------------|
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 93 | 0.8% |
| Asian | 180 | 1.5% |
| Black or African American | 583 | 4.8% |
| Hispanics of any race | 351 | 2.9% |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 16 | 0.1% |
| Nonresident Alien | 86 | 0.7% |
| Race and Ethnicity unknown | 1,152 | 9.5% |
| Two or more races | 279 | 2.3% |
| White | 9,355 | 77.3% |