

Strategic Issues:

- In 1997, lawmakers granted each university within the University of Maine system their own Board of Visitors to monitor the needs of the institution.
- Since the state wanted to increase the number of high school graduates enrolling in college, the method by which public institutions received state assistance was modified. Starting in 1998, the level of state appropriations depended on the corresponding student enrollment that year.
- Unlike other states, Maine had no community colleges throughout the 1990s, although the issue of establishing a two-year system in the state was introduced by the president of the Maine Technical College System, John Fitzsimmons in 2002.

Summary

- *Challenge:* While Maine's high school graduation rates were substantially higher than national averages (about ten percentage points higher in several years) during the 1990s, college enrollment rates for high school graduates were consistently below national averages.
- *System Issue:* Maine had lower than average poverty rates, and average incomes were substantially lower than national averages. In addition, public college tuitions were typically more than \$1,000 higher than national averages. Both need-based and non-need grants were below national averages. The state had lower percentages of students in two-year colleges than national averages.
- *Opportunity:* Had the state of Maine coordinated need-based grants with tuition and funded state grants at the equity standard during the decade, an estimated additional 4000 students would have graduated from high school and an additional 13,000 students would have had the opportunity to enroll as freshmen.

Access Indicators*High School Graduation Rates* (Table 19.1)

Public high school graduation rates have generally decreased throughout the decade. The rate dropped from 81% in 1992 to 72% in 1996, but rebounded in 1998 to 79%. However, the rate fell again in 2000 to 77%. Despite the declining rates, Maine graduated higher percentages of high school students than the national averages. In 2000, the state graduation rate was nearly ten percentage points higher than the national average.

College Enrollment Rates (Table 19.1)

While high school graduation rates decreased, college enrollment rates increased from 49% in 1992 to 55% in 1998. Although the rate decreased in 2000, it only dropped one percentage point to 54%. Despite these increases, the state still lagged behind national averages throughout the decade. In 2000, the state was two percentage points behind the national average.

State Demographics*State Demographics* (Table 19.2)

Poverty rates in Maine decreased substantially throughout the decade from 14% in 1992 to 8% in 2000. Throughout the decade, Maine poverty rates remained below national averages. In 2000, the state poverty rate was two percentage points below the national average. There were few minorities in Maine. The category of Other Minorities, which includes Asian-Americans and

Native Americans, is the largest minority group in the state at 1% in 2000. In 2000, nearly one out of five Maine residents possessed at least a bachelor's degree. Although fewer Maine residents possessed bachelor's degrees that did the nation as a whole at each time period, the differential decreased across the decade, and the 2000 figure is less than one percentage point below the national average.

Financial Indicators

System Composition (Table 19.3)

A majority of Maine students, 56% in 2000, attended public four-year institutions. Another third of the state's students chose private institutions, and the remaining 11% attended public two-year institutions. Throughout the entire decade, the percentages of institutional usage fluctuated slightly. Enrollment in public four-year institutions ranged from 10–14 percentage points above national averages across the decade.

Financial Capacity (Table 19.4)

Although tax rates decreased slightly from 1992 to 1994, they rose for the remainder of the decade. In 2000, the tax rate reached its highest level at 8%, which was two percentage points above the national average. State and local governments increased their expenditures per student in K–12 education. In 1992, governmental sources appropriated \$4,249 per K–12 student; and by 2000, the appropriation increased to \$5,127. During the 1990s, Maine boosted their K–12 expenditures from \$278 below the national average in 1992 to more than \$900 above the national average in 2000.

Educational Revenue (Table 19.5)

Although state and local government appropriations fluctuated up and down over the decade, the amount of funding in 2000 was more than \$600 higher than it was in 1992. Even with these increases, differentials between Maine's appropriations and national averages increased over the decade. By 2000, state and local appropriations in Maine were \$596 below the national average.

Tuition and Fees (Table 19.6)

Overall, state public institutions increased tuition and fees throughout the decade for a net increase of approximately \$700. In 1992, institutions charged students \$3,273 in tuition and fees, but by 1998, the amount increased to \$4,048. In 2000, tuition and fees were reduced slightly to \$3,966. Despite the slight reduction in 2000, Maine students paid substantially more than the average in other states for public tuition and fees. In 2000, they paid \$1,237 more than the national average.

Need-based grants (Table 19.6)

Maine awarded larger need-based grants as the decade progressed. In 1992, the eligible Maine student received an average of \$196 in need-based grants. However, by 2000 this amount increased to \$315. Although Maine need-based grants remains below the national average, the deviation between the state and national average declined from a high of \$172 in 1994 to a low of \$51 in 2000.

Non-need Grants (Table 19.6)

There were no non-need based grants in Maine.

Projections

Coordinated System of Grants (Table 19.7)

Had Louisiana increased its need-based grant aid, given tuition charges, 400 more students would have graduated from high school, an increase of two percentage points. Of the state's high school graduates, 1,300 more students would have attended postsecondary institutions in the state.

Federal Grant Program Prospectus (Table 19.7)

In addition, had the federal government provided incentives for Maine to provide adequate grant aid equaling one-quarter of the tuition on top of current state aid, 500 more high school students would have graduated, an increase of three percentage points. An additional 1,800 high school graduates would have enrolled in postsecondary institutions, an increase of 11 percentage points from the current college continuation rate.