

Newsletter for March 2024

March 1, 2024 Meeting Recap

Our next to last in person meeting for the 2023-2024 year was held at the Mid-Coast School of Technology in Rockland. The facility is beautiful, the culinary students are very talented and our presenters, Competitive Energy Services, RHR Smith and MDOE, were outstanding. Check out these fun cakes, created by the culinary arts students:



Many thanks to our breakfast sponsor, Competitive Energy Services; the presentation by Lauren Grey and Charlie Agnew is available on our website, "Member Center >Meeting Archives".

We were also fortunate to be joined by three additional vendor members, with outstanding displays. Thank you to Devivo Bus, Gorham Savings Bank, and RHR Smith.



And thank you to Mid-Coast Graphic Arts student, Christy Christensen, for these photos.

Upcoming Meetings and Professional Development Opportunities

Our final in-person meeting for 2023-2024 will be Friday, April 26 at United Technology Center in Bangor. This meeting will be our Association's annual meeting at which Board members will be voted into office, and the slate of officers presented for the 2024-2025 year. This meeting will also feature a presentation from David Bridgham of MDOE regarding the facility inventory project that he has led this year, a presentation from MeASBO's Legislative Committee regarding newly enacted legislation, and, an afternoon stress management workshop provided as part of the StrengthenME program at Northern Light – perfect for coping with budget season!

Also, at our April 26 meeting, we will be presenting the Dave Holden Award for Outstanding School Business Official of the Year to one of our members, as nominated by his/her peers. Nomination criteria are:

- ✓ Consistent attendance at meetings;
- ✓ Consistently assuming an active role during the meeting – asking questions, sharing information;
- ✓ Demonstrates enthusiastic support of the organization;
- ✓ Other relevant contributions to the education community.

Please nominate one of your peers for this award by sending the individual's name and a brief narrative which touches on the criteria above to [Joanne](#) by April 12, 2024.

A reminder that the next Lunch N' Learn is coming up on Tuesday, March 26 at noon featuring Scott Brown of MDOE. Scott will overview the Major Capital Construction Program and answer any questions you may have. The event announcement, including the Zoom link, was emailed to members on Tuesday, March 12. If you need a resend, please reach out to [Joanne](#).

We are working to schedule a "Year End Process" Lunch N' Learn member panel discussion to focus on year end processes in ERP, Profund, APTAFund, and MUNIS. If you would like to participate as a panel member or have questions for the panel, please reach out to [Joanne](#). Our final Lunch N' Learn for the 2023-2024 year will be June 4. The Maine Department of Labor Paid Family and Medical Leave team will join us so, keep abreast of new developments on this topic via their [webpage](#) and have your questions ready. The Zoom link for the event will be sent in late May.



Last but not least, the annual Tri-State conference is May 22-24, 2024 at the Holiday Inn by the Bay in Portland. Check out the program brochure [here](#) and then hop on over to the Tri State [website](#) to register.

MeASBO offers a scholarship program for Tri-State registration:

- Two scholarships for \$500 each will be awarded to MeASBO members who have never attended Tri-State and whose membership dues are paid for the 2023-2024 year.
- The scholarships will be paid by MeASBO as a reimbursement after the conference. Receipts must be presented/verified by MeASBO to receive reimbursement. Interested and qualified members should send a letter of interest to maineasbo@gmail.com by March 29. Winners will be selected via a random process and notified by April 5.

Legislative Update

Public hearings and work sessions have wrapped up and now, all of the bills that were voted out of their respective committees will hit the floor for voting of the full legislature. Often, bills may be amended on the floor so what is approved by a committee may not be what is enacted. Many bills that pass the House and Senate are currently, or will be, stalled on the Appropriations Table as they have a fiscal impact to the state.

MeASBO's Legislative Committee will be providing an in-depth report at our April 26 meeting regarding legislation enacted this session; if you have questions in the meantime regarding the status of a particular bill, please reach out to [Joanne](#).

2024-2025 Membership Reminder

2024-2025 membership dues will remain at current levels: \$250 for an individual membership and \$500 for a district membership. Remember that purchasing a district membership allows all members of your team to receive the membership benefits of:

- ✓ ability to attend quarterly meetings featuring professional development opportunities and networking opportunities
- ✓ receipt of a monthly newsletter
- ✓ participation in Lunch N' Learn
- ✓ participation in MeASBO's voluntary certification program
- ✓ access to the "Member Center" of the MeASBO website which provides legislative updates, links to school finance information, and professional development/training links
- ✓ participation in the MeASBO list serve

Vendor organization membership dues will remain at \$600 annually. Vendor members wishing to receive a refresher on their benefits of membership should reach out to [Joanne](#) for a list or to schedule a call or Zoom meeting.

If you wish to make changes to your membership profile, please notify [Joanne](#) by May 17, 2024 so that changes can be entered into the system in time for the start of the new fiscal year billing cycle.

News and Upcoming Events from Our Partners



Maine Department of Education

EPS High-Cost Out-of-District Report (EF-S-214) Open for Reporting; Deadline is April 15th

The EF-S-214, also known as the EPS High-Cost Out-of-District Report was opened for data entry to Maine public schools on March 8th in the Maine Department of Education's NEO Portal. School units should sign into the report as early as possible to allow time for data entry as well as the two-step submission process. *The Department must approve the report by April 15th to allow time to make possible EPS adjustments.*

Adjustments to the Special Education High-Cost Out-of-District allocation will be based on costs exceeding:

- \$19,697 for placements in Regional Special Education Programs
- \$29,545 for placements in other public school administrative units
- \$39,394 for placements in private schools

Below are a few important things to note about the EF-S-214 report:

- School units will need to project the tuition cost for the full fiscal year.
- This report is required for all publicly funded school districts, including units that do not meet the High-Cost Out-of-District tuition threshold, these units must login and submit "no students to report."

The report can be located by logging into NEO
at: <https://neo.maine.gov/DOE/NEO/Accounts/Account/Login>

Questions about the report should be directed to Alyssa.kenney@maine.gov.

Federal Fiscal Programs Office Hours

The federal fiscal team looks forward to their monthly office hours on Thursday, March 28 at 10 am. In addition to the regular monthly updates, the team will also focus on

- Reimbursement vs. Disbursement
- Salary Accruals
 - Key considerations, how to bill.
- Performance Reports
 - What is coming due and additional guidance related to ESSER performance reports.
- Indirect Cost Rate update

You can [register here](#) to attend.

School Construction Program Office Hours

Support for those school units completing a major capital construction project

<https://mainedoenews.net/2024/01/24/major-capital-school-construction-funding-opportunity/>

Mar 01, 2024 1:00 PM

Apr 01, 2024 1:00 PM

May 01, 2024 1:00 PM

Maine Department of Labor

The list of classes at the link below shows availability in some Wage and Hour Compliance workshops at various locations across the state:

https://www.safetyworksmaine.gov/training/scheduled_classes/register.shtml

Remember, our June 4 Lunch N' Learn will feature the PFML team; please save the date and look for event's Zoom link in late May.

International ASBO

State of the Union, FY 25 Budget and FY 24 Funding Update Overview:

What education issues did the President highlight in his State of the Union address?

- Increasing access to preschool/early education for 3- and 4-year-olds.
- Expanding high-quality tutoring and summer learning to ensure children can read by the third grade.
- Connecting businesses and high schools to help students get hands-on experience and ensure they are college and career-ready.
- Making college more affordable, investing in more diverse minority-serving institutions, and reducing the burden of student debt.
- Supporting pay raises for public school teachers.
- Passing legislation to protect children online and “harness the promise” of artificial intelligence (AI).
- Other education-adjacent issues impacting children, including removing lead from drinking water to minimize adverse health effects on youth, providing affordable broadband access for families, and enacting stricter gun safety laws to prevent acts of violence in communities.

What is the President requesting for FY25 education funding in the [FY25 Budget](#)?

- [Department of Education Budget Request Summary](#): Requests \$82 billion in discretionary funding for USED (+\$3.1 billion, or 3.9% from FY23).
 - o [New Academic Acceleration and Achievement Grants](#) (requests an additional \$8 billion in mandatory funding to close opportunity and achievement gaps, address absenteeism, provide tutoring, and speed up learning recovery)

- o New Universal PreK program; would be a federal/state partnership and jointly administered by USED and HHS (\$200 billion over 10 years)
- o Title I grants to LEAs = \$18.6 billion (+\$200 million from FY23, or 1.1%)
- o IDEA/Special Education
 - § Grants to States = \$14.4 billion (+\$200 million from FY23, or 1.4%)
 - § Preschool Grants = \$425 million (+\$5 million from FY23, or 1.2%)
 - § Personnel Preparation Grants = \$125 million (+\$10 million from FY23, or 8.7%)
- o Impact Aid = \$1.6 billion (flat-funded from FY23)
- o School Improvement Programs
 - § New Preschool Incentive Demonstration Program (\$25 million plus additional mandatory spending under HHS)
 - § Requested flat funding for Title II (professional development for educators), Title IV-A (SSAE), and Title V-B (REAP) programs compared to FY23
 - § Requested cuts for supplemental education grants and comprehensive centers
- o Innovation and Improvement Programs
 - § New Fostering Diverse Schools demonstration program for innovative ideas and plans to foster integrated learning spaces (\$10 million)
 - § Requested flat funding for: teacher and school leader incentive grants, history/civics academies and national activities, supporting effective educator development [SEED] grants, magnet schools, ready-to-learn programming, arts in education, and gifted and talented education.
 - § Requested cuts for: education innovation and research grants (-\$269 million or -5.3%), charter school grants (-\$400 million or -9.1%), and congressional earmarks (-\$200 million or -100%)
 - School leader recruitment and support grants would still be zeroed out as in FY23.
- o Career and Technical Education (CTE)
 - § State grants = \$1.47 billion (+\$40 million, or 2.8%)
 - § National programs = \$65 million (+\$32 million, or 100%)

What about Republican FY25 spending proposals?

The House Budget Committee recently released its [FY25 Budget Resolution](#), which has very different priorities from the administration but is also dead on arrival in the current Congress. This proposal aims to balance the federal budget within a decade, reduce the deficit by \$14 trillion, lower interest payments on the federal debt, and grow the economy by 3%. [Democrats are criticizing](#) the proposal because achieving those goals would require cutting major federal investments in Medicare, Medicaid, SNAP and TANF, higher education (Pell Grants/loan relief), infrastructure, and other federal programs.

Note that final FY25 federal spending will affect federal funding in schools during the 2025-2026 school year. All budget discussions around FY25 are just proposals so far, they are not law.

Final FY24 spending will affect federal funding in schools during the 2024-2025 school year, so school business officials should be paying closer attention to FY24 than FY25 in the short term.

What about FY24 Spending? Shouldn't Congress Be Doing This First?

It's certainly unusual for lawmakers to be discussing FY25 spending when Congress has yet to finalize FY24 appropriations. However, Congress did pass a partial FY24 spending package on March 8 and has until March 22 to complete the rest. Overall federal spending for FY24 and FY25 are limited by spending caps enacted under the debt ceiling law passed last year, the 2023 Fiscal Responsibility Act. That means, flat funding or small increases in federal education funding for the next two fiscal years should be considered a win as appropriators navigate an incredibly tight fiscal environment. As Congress wraps up FY24 and shifts more focus onto FY25, it is likely they will not finish FY25 appropriations work on time this year either (especially during an election year). There is a high possibility they will pass a continuing resolution (CR) until after Election Day (if not later).

Podcasts and news clippings of interest

[Weekly Conversations for School Business Professionals](#) drops a new podcast every Tuesday. Topics include budget communication, avoiding burnout, making AI work for you. Episodes can be heard easily on Spotify.

[Independent Contractor Rule Takes Effect](#)

Reminders.....



MeASBO Website

Want more professional development opportunities? The website calendar includes listings from other state agencies and organizations that are hosting future opportunities. Can't find your newsletter? Want to refresh your memory on a topic presented at one of our meetings? Do you need school finance information and/or legislative updates? It's all available on our website!

MeASBO List Serve and Forums

The MeASBO List Serve has been reactivated and a test message sent to all members last month. If you did not receive the message, please check your "spam" folder and if it's not there and you wish to participate in the list serve, please reach out to [Joanne](#) as the list serve is being actively utilized to communicate information to members. The address to submit correspondence to the list serve is: measbolistserv@measbo.memberclicks.net

If you are a vendor member, remember that there is a forum board specifically for you. This allows you to support our members through providing educational information, and continue to build positive, supportive relationships with our members. The forum is moderated by MeASBO leadership to maintain the goals and objectives of the forum board.