What an exciting year for MaineAEYC! We organized and supported events and conferences around the state that engaged early educators, families with young children, and community members. We were deeply involved in early childhood education policy and advocacy with partners from across the state and around the country. We moved into our first office and developed a three-year strategic plan that is focused on improving conditions for those most in need, measuring the results of our work, and positively impacting the lives of children, families, and educators in Maine. We look forward to working with you in 2020.

Tara Williams
Executive Director, MaineAEYC
Policy and Advocacy Work

This past year we connected with our federal congressional delegation and informed members about how federal policy impacts early care and education in Maine. We brought a Maine state team of seventeen early childhood educators, leaders, and parents to the 2019 NAEYC Policy Forum. We visited all four of our Maine Senators and Representatives offices while in DC. After returning home, we coordinated with the Maine Children’s Alliance and other partners to send a letter to our federal congressional delegation asking them to prioritize increasing CCDBG funding by an additional $5 billion in the FY 2020 appropriations bill.

Right From the Start Coalition

Executive Director Tara Williams continued to represent MaineAEYC as part of the leadership team of the Right From The Start Coalition. MaineAEYC supported the coalition with early childhood content expertise, policy and best practice resources, and “voices” from the ECE field. Tara delivered information about the coalition and ways to be involved to MaineAEYC members and friends. This included information through email, social media, and our website about proposed bills, op-eds and LTEs, research, policy information and alerts. MaineAEYC invested in grassroots efforts to involve educators and parents in the advocacy landscape.

Maine’s children need to be a priority—right from the start. If we want Maine’s future to be in good hands, we need to develop a strong bench: a generation of young people who can lead our communities and grow our economy.

Today, 73% of children under six have all their available parents and caregivers in the workforce. We simply must ensure our public policy responds to the reality of life for Maine families and reflects what decades of developmental science has shown children need for healthy development: stable, consistent experiences and relationships early in life—because this is what shapes the architecture of the developing brain.

Early care and education investment has been shown to prevent the achievement gap, improve health outcomes, boost earnings and provide a high rate of economic return. Mainers believe that early education counts, that it should be made more available and elected officials should support it. Three out of four Mainers believe helping parents with the cost of child care and preschool is a good idea.

www.rightfromthestartmaine.org
Today we know more than ever before about the importance of children’s earliest years in shaping their learning and development. Yet never before have the needs of young children and their families been more pressing. The Week of the Young Child™ was a call to action because families depend on the high-quality early care and education that helps young children get a promising start and brings lasting benefits to Maine. This year MaineAEYC organized a major push for public awareness that included festivals in four communities, events at libraries and museums, public support from the Governor, several mayors and legislators, and coverage in local press and social media.

State Policy and Advocacy Work

MaineAEYC continued a strong partnership with the Family Child Care Association of Maine (FCCAM). We led legislator program visits and shared key policy information in our networks. We organized the field around many policy initiatives proposed in 18 bills, including the development of ECE career pathways with scholarships and salary supplements, contracts between DHHS and child care programs with quality bumps in our subsidy reimbursement system, increased funding for Head Start and home visiting, training of early childhood mental health consultants to support educators and families with the social and emotional development of young children, expansion of public Pre-K by offering full day in partnership with ECE programs, increased developmental screening and improved special education services, and better organized state systems.

Week of the Young Child

This year several mayors in Maine read new WOYC Proclamations with strong language about investment in young children, families, and educators. Governor Mills wrote a letter to MaineAEYC in honor of the Week of the Young Child, and the Maine Legislature passed a Joint Resolution for WOYC. MaineAEYC helped plan and sponsor free community festivals in Kennebunk, Portland, Waterville, and Bangor in April 2019.

We coordinated these events in partnership with the York County Early Childhood Coalition and Kennebunk Free Library, the Portland Director’s Group and East End Community School, Educare Central Maine, Food and Medicine and the Maine Discovery Museum, as well as several other organizations in each community. Every family festival included engaging activities for children, live music and entertainment, snacks and information about early childhood policy and advocacy. Maine State Representatives and State Senators visited all the festivals and even helped lead a parade in Portland. Families received bags with materials to extend learning at home.

Community Film Screenings

In 2019 MaineAEYC continued to organize and support film screenings of No Small Matter, a feature-length documentary film and national engagement campaign to bring attention to our nation’s failing to educate
No Small Matter is a documentary film and national engagement campaign that shares powerful stories and stunning truths about the human capacity for early intelligence and the potential for quality early education to transform America's social and economic future. This project reveals why making the most of early years is so crucial, and what we can do to change the perception of when learning begins.

Early Childhood Education Day At the State House

We organized an ECE Day at the State House during on June 5, 2019 with the YMCA Alliance of Maine, the Family Child Care Association of Maine Children’s Alliance, and Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network (MRTQ PDN). We set up early learning centers around the Hall of Flags to show elected officials what high quality ECE looks like and give them a chance to participate and ask questions. We also had policy and advocacy stations where educators and families could write a post card to their elected officials, make a sign and post on social media, and use our template and instructions to help them speak with their legislator that day. In addition to our members and friends, dozens of State Senators and Representatives stopped by for snacks and beverages, talked with us about early childhood education, explored the stations, and enjoyed the free MaineAEYC tote bags and t-shirts. We awarded our annual Children’s Champion Award to the senator and representative who worked passionately for children during 2019.

MaineAEYC Policy Leadership Program

This year we piloted a brand new program, inviting a cohort of fifteen early childhood professionals to join a policy leadership program. After a kick-off conference call in February, we got to work, holding an advocacy and policy training day in March. Throughout the winter and spring our ECE Reps joined monthly webinars with guest speakers, shared their learning and experience with each other, and tried their new skills at public hearings with oral and written testimony, drafting LTEs and op-eds, meeting with the Commissioners of Education and Health and Human Services, and talking about ECE policy with parents, educators, and legislators at WOYC events and our ECE State House day. This fall several of our ECE Reps helped lead policy and advocacy trainings at the 2019 Statewide ECE Conference.

On June 5, 2019, MaineAEYC and several partner organizations sponsored a morning of education and advocacy at the State House, offering children's activities, snacks, ECE information, the announcement of awards and opportunities for educators and parents to connect with legislators and tour the State House. Children’s Champion Award went to Senator Rebecca Millett and Representative Sawin Millett for outstanding work on behalf of young children across the state.
ECE Collaborations

Statewide Participation

- MaineSpark Coalition, Strong Foundations Track
- Maine Children’s Growth Council, Professional Development Alignment Team
- Child Care Advisory Council
- Opioid Prevention Task Force
- MRTQ PDN Advisory Council

2019 Statewide ECE Conference

Connecting ECE: Birth Through 8 Across the State, October 4th and 5th in Bangor

The conference, planned and hosted by six Maine organizations, brought over 350 early childhood professionals to a two-day, multifaceted event that included workshops and keynote presentations focused on high quality practice, working with and supporting families, professionalism, leadership, and public policy outreach. Friday Keynote Speaker Holly Elissa Bruno, MA, JD, is a best selling author on emotional intelligence and managing legal risks in early childhood education. Saturday Keynote Speaker, Dr. Ross Greene, is the founding Director of Lives in the Balance and originator of the Collaborative & Proactive Solutions model. Another highlight was the ECE Celebration & Awards Dinner when guests enjoyed a rousing welcome, delicious food, laughter, music, and presentation of MRTQ PDN’s annual awards.

Regional Conference Support

Shaping Tomorrow’s Future Today
Cumberland County, November 2019

Building Bridges Through Story and Song
Washington County, October 2019

Nurturing Through Nature
York County, October 2019

Making Sense of Preschoolers
Workshop Series, May-June 2019

MaineAEYC sponsored this training from the Neufeld Institute. Participants learned that making sense of these wondrous and confusing beings lays a foundation for intuitive and fruitful interaction with them and helps us provide the conditions that are conducive to their transformation.

The 2019 Early Childhood Education Conference Organizers
Association Advancement

John T Gorman Fellowship

MaineAEYC Executive Director, Tara Williams, completed a rigorous one year fellowship program with the John T Gorman Foundation, learning to apply results-based leadership strategies in her work. The Fellowship equipped Tara to make a measurable difference in the lives of Maine children and families by leveraging data, building cross-sector partnerships, developing individual strengths and organizational authority to initiate and execute a results action plan that is data-driven, collaborative, and reflective of best practices. She is eager to incorporate her new knowledge and skills in the coming year.

Strategic Planning

MaineAEYC Staff and the Governing Board spent 2019 in a strategic planning process drafting a plan to positively impact young children, families, and early educators with a focus on diversity and equity and organizational strength and sustainability. The Board approved the 3-year plan in December 2019 and has begun to implement targeted work that is both aspirational and achievable.

Donors & Partners

In 2019, MaineAEYC was funded through foundation grants, membership dues, donations, and conference revenue. Our foundation partners include the Bingham Program, Betterment Fund, and Maine Community Foundation (capacity building and strategic planning), Early Childhood Funders Group (RFTS Coalition), Educare (Parent Ambassador Program), and NAEYC (ECE Policy Leadership Program).

Communications

MaineAEYC now has three contracted positions: accounting, administrative services and a communication consultant brought on in July. With that addition to our staffing, we improved overall outreach with our weekly e-news and daily social media posts on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. The consultant also provides editing and graphic design for event logos, conference program, annual report and other miscellaneous needs. Member schools helped immensely by providing photographs and contributing to social media posts, a collaboration we plan to continue on 2020.
Membership Outreach

Annual Memberships

In 2019 MaineAEYC had about 350 members. While we were very successful at retaining and engaging members, we did not see growth in our membership this year. This was at the core of our discussion during our June Strategic Planning meeting. We reflected about how MaineAEYC spent 2018-2019 raising up the voice of early childhood in Maine by increasing every aspect of our advocacy, state-wide outreach, professional training, and organizational collaborations. As such, we continue to be deeply committed to growing our influence to amplify the voices of early childhood care and education in the coming years.

Presence at Conferences and Events

Our Membership and Outreach Committee coordinates MaineAEYC presence at local conferences, workshops and events on colleges and university campuses and museums. At these events we set up a table with NAEYC and MaineAEYC information and free gifts.

Member Participation and Feedback

During 2019, we boosted our efforts to solicit feedback from participants and members through surveys, event evaluations, and a vote in the organization’s governance.

- Evaluations after Statewide ECE Conference
- Membership survey to provide feedback to OCFS on proposed unified child care licensing rules
- Stakeholder surveys to shape the strategic plan
- Members invited to vote on Board members

We plan to increase and diversify our membership in 2020 with frequent and targeted communications that engage a more racially, ethnically and socioeconomically diverse population. We will send monthly emails welcoming new members as well as reminders to those up for renewal; record and post meeting minutes on our website; host an annual meeting welcoming members; distribute the annual report to all members, affiliate organizations, partners and engaged stakeholders.
MaineAEYC Members

Anne Adams
Debby Adkins
Hillary Albert
Melissa Albert
Lisa Anderson
Angela Andrade
Jodi Andrews
Deborah Arcaro
Mariaelana Armstrong
Jodelle Austin
Patti Bailie
Jamie Baker
Susan Baker
Bridget Barden
Dru Barkalow
Ann Barnes
Laura Barrows
Renai Beach
Laurie Beane
Claire Beaulieu
Terri Bellas
Jane Benesch
Philip Berezney
Stephanie Bernier
Denise Bestwick
Heidi Bickford
Lauren Bickmore
Ripley Biggs
Bonnie Blagojevic
Catherine Bohls
Amy Boucher
Jayne Boulos
Jaime Bourque Cobblah
Margaret Bouthot
Collette Boynton-Archer
Erica Bracy
Marnie Bragdon-Morneault
Alison Britton
Kate Brockett
Martha Bronson
Susan Brooks
Kristen Brousseau
Margo Brown
Karen Bruder
Darlene Bruns
Katherine Burns
Tami Campbell
Abigail Carter
Julia Chace
Cassie Chapman
Deb Chase
Katherine Chasse
Joan Chatterton
Suzanne Chevalier
Mellissa Clawson
Sarah Cobb
Annie Colaluca
Priscilla Congdon
Jennifer Conley
Laurie Conrad
Margaret Copeland
Marie Cot
Martha Crockett
Michelle Cyr
Christen Davis
Pamela Dawson
Laura Day
Alyson Dean
Terry Deane
Virginia Dearani
Sarah DeLong
Connie DiBiase
Mary Dionne
Nicoletta Dorazio-Moore
Cheryl Doughty
Jill Downs
Katey Druan
Lynn Dube
Laurie Dubois
Tammy Dwyer
Sherryl Eastman
Martha Eshoo
Katharine Eugley
Julie Farmer
Karen Fasulo
Leigh Ann Fish
Rosalyn Fisher
Theresa Fisk
Gina Forbes
Lori Fowler
Janica Frazier
Margaret Frigard
Beth Gachowski
Beth Gagnon
Sue Gallant
Pam Galik
Katherine Gilley
Alexis Girouard
Beth Glidden
Laura Glover
Janice Grant
Laurie Grant
Cassandra Grantham
Gretchen Greenberg
Kayla Grier
Victoria Grotton
Melanie Guiod
Christie Hallowell
Diane Hancock
Jaimee Hanscom
Andrea Hart
Jenny Hart
Vinnie Hatcher
Emogene Hill
Tina Hobbs
Adrienne Hofmann
Robin Holman
Melissa Holt
Kristen Holzinger
Nance Hooper
Karen Hopkins
Susan Hougaz-McCormick
Jennifer Howard
Kim Howe
Kimberley Hoyt
Kirsti Huotari
Marga Hutchinson
Sarah Irish
Kellie Irving
Nancy Isaacs
Danica Jackman
Rita Jackson
Barbara Kelble
Evelyn Jellison
Tina Jennings
Brendle Johnson
Heather Jones
Laurie Jones
Resa Jones
Shirley Jordan
Denise Joy
Malinda Julson
Barbara Kaiser
Rhonda Kaiser
Donna Kane
Aimee Kardulas
Donna Kano
Nicole Kaszubinski
Anna Keeley
Isabel Keene
Jaime Kiesow
Debby Kimberlin
Jennifer Kirchoff
Meg Kirschner
Shelby Knights
Melissa Kraus
Robert Krickus
Diane LaPierre
Linda Labas
Maryia LaBree
Debbie LaFrance
Jamie Lahue
Mattie Lajoie
Alexis Lane
Julie Larkford
Laura Larson
Julie Laszczak
Sarah Lavallee
Grace Leavitt
Lori Lee
Hannah Leighton
Sara Lennon
Linda Levesque
Rebecca Libby
Betsy Libby
Mary Lilly
Karen Lin
Lee Lingelbach
Robin Linscott
Margaret Littlefield
Mary Logue
Ruth Lucarelli
Janet Luther
Joan Naigle
Reta Nappi
Erika Neal
Jackie Nelson
Naomi Neptune
William Newburn
Tiffany Nowicki
Emily Nutt
KERRY O'BRIEN
Kendra O'Connell
crystal oconnor
Mary-Lou Ogden
Gail Page
Hannah Page
Gretchen Parlin
Pam Pavuk
Jennifer Peavey
Adrienne Pelkey
Sara Perrigo
Kobi Perry
Tammy-Lyn Perry
Karen Peters
Kimberly Pierson
Kira Pilger
Valerie Pinkham
Brenda Plante
Mary Fletcher
Meghan Pomelowe
Gabrielle Potvin
Jessica Powell
Sue Powers
Daphne Pratt
Pam Prevost
Terri Provencher
Jennifer Quehl
Elise Rau
Monica Redlevske
Susan Reed
Nicole Reinholt
Haleigh Rice
Elizabeth Richards
Michelle Riddle
Casey Ridlon
Melissa Robie
Emily Robinson
Morgan Robinson
Sherry Robinson
Juana Rodriguez-Vazquez
Lisa Rogers
Elizabeth Rollins
Megan Rollins
Lee Rowe
Stacy Ryan
Cathleen Saenz
Cristina Salois
Michael Sandberg
Carla Santisteban
Nancy Sayre
Julie Schaffinger
Kayla Scheckel
Brenda Sevigny-Killen
Julie Shores
Sasha Shunk
Meg Sigovich
Kim Slocomb
Renee Smaha
Lori Smith
Sarah Snow
Anne Soto
Kathryn Soucy
sara spear
Marlene Spearman
April Spencer
Jamie Spencer
Joni Sprague
Amy St Louis
Beth Stacy
Eileen Steck
Amy Storey
Gertrude Sweetland
Elaine Szendrei
Jessica Temm
Penni Theriault
Karen Thibault
Kathie Thompson
Kini-Ana Tinkham
Morgan Tolin
Susan Tothaker
Patricia Tripp
Trudy Turbide
April Turner
Eileen Twiddy
Cheryl Uhuaad
Justine Vaillancourt
Katie Wales
Selina Warren
Cadey Welch
Marcie Welsch
Brenda White
Jennifer White
Karen White
Alexandra Wilbur
Jenn Wiles
Lisa Williams
Patricia Williams
Tara Williams
Kate Williams-Hewitt
Kasey Woodman
Katherine Wright
Bethany Yovino
Kelly Zhang
Tia Zukowski
Looking ahead to 2020 and beyond, MaineAEYC is eager to begin implementation of its comprehensive strategic plan. Woven throughout this plan, MaineAEYC has made a commitment to advance equity in the field of early childhood education by becoming more focused on programming that benefits all children, families, and the ECE workforce. Our Board of Directors is focused on the organization’s stability as we incorporate an organizational advancement committee and our first appointed treasurer position in 2020. We value the support of our partners and members and are eager to continue working on behalf of all those impacted by Maine’s systems of early care and education.

Heather Marden,
Board President, Maine AEYC