



NEW HAMPSHIRE:

# OUR STORY OF TRANSFORMATION



2014





Photo courtesy of UNH Manchester STEM Discovery Lab

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION	6
THE IMPETUS FOR CHANGE	8
OUR VISION FOR EDUCATION IN THE GRANITE STATE	14
PROGRESS ON THE GROUND	20
REFLECTIONS ON WHERE WE ARE AND WHERE WE NEED TO GO	26
LOOK AHEAD	30
THANK YOU	32
ENDNOTES	34

### Accessing the Multimedia in this Publication!

To launch the links and videos  
in this publication, **scroll over**  
the **"Click here" language** and  
then click on the link icon.



WE ALL KNOW THE  
GROUND IS SHIFTING  
BENEATH OUR FEET  
— THE WORLD IS  
CHANGING AND OUR  
SCHOOLS NEED TO  
AS WELL. IN NEW  
HAMPSHIRE, WE HAVE

RECOGNIZED THE  
DISCONNECT, AND  
WE ARE FOCUSING  
ON TRANSFORMING  
INSTRUCTION  
BY EMPOWERING  
STUDENTS AND  
EDUCATORS.

# INTRODUCTION

We see education as a critical driver for both the economic development of our state and the underpinnings of our democracy. Neither is truly possible unless we invest in a 21st century system of education—from birth through adulthood. We are clear that the rapidly evolving economy will not wait for our students if they are not prepared with the right mix of knowledge, skills and work study practices.

Our local communities matter deeply here, so we have come to see the role of the New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE) as one of support for improving and innovating within districts efforts rather than as an arbiter of those efforts. This publication represents our state’s collective story—one of the successes and struggles to transform an entire education system from the bottom up rather than the top down—to promote ownership and nurture real and lasting change.

The fabric of our education system is woven with many hands:

- Our students, who are at the center of this effort, and whose energy, creativity and immense potential drives all of our work;
- Strong leaders, teachers and families on the frontlines that demand the best for our young people in creating safe, healthy and visionary schools;
- Elected officials who understand and help drive the development of policy to support transformation;

- Our business community, which recognizes that success is inextricably linked to investing in our schools and the strong correlation between innovative schools and a thriving economy;
- Higher education institutions that work tirelessly to prepare our learners for success in the workplace; and
- The education partnerships, both locally and nationally, that help us design and support our vision.

Successful transformation of our system is not feasible without the aligned contribution of all of these groups, but as you can imagine this effort is complex.

This publication is a space to share and synthesize the complexity—to reflect on our hard fought accomplishments and lessons learned as we hold steady to the belief that only through clarity of purpose and aligned vision will we continue to dramatically improve outcomes for all of our students.



*Watch Commissioner Virginia Barry, Ph.D., and an elementary school class in Derry, New Hampshire as they set the stage for New Hampshire’s story of transformation.*

We chose to tell this story in a way that models the transformation we seek—multiple modalities rich with opportunities to not only read, watch and listen, but also apply the material, data and artifacts to your own work. We recognize that we all absorb content differently, and therefore this publication is

designed to let you consume information on different levels, based on interest. Additionally, as a state moving toward competency-based learning system-wide, this publication offers a series of “evidences” of success throughout New Hampshire to demonstrate our progress and lessons learned.



[Click to play](#)

*Governor Maggie Hassan shares why learning is fundamental to the future of our young people.*

## OUR STATE AT A GLANCE

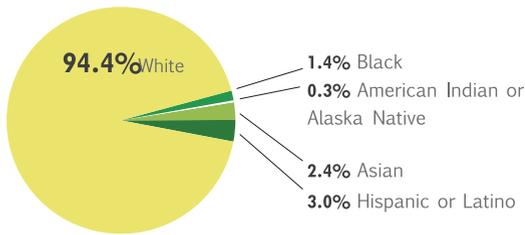
### New Hampshire



Population (2013):  
**1,323,459<sup>1</sup>**

Percentage under  
18-years-old: **20.8%<sup>2</sup>**

#### Ethnic Groups<sup>5</sup>



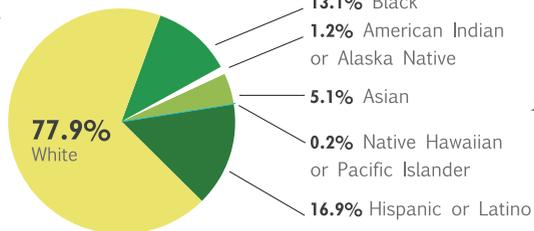
### United States



Population (2013):  
**316,128,839<sup>3</sup>**

Percentage under  
18-years-old: **23.5%<sup>4</sup>**

#### Ethnic Groups<sup>6</sup>



# THE IMPETUS FOR CHANGE

While New Hampshire has historically been a top performer in the country, as evidenced by comparatively high graduation rates from high school and standardized tests, along with other indicators, we have not been content to rest on these laurels. On the contrary, our educators, business leaders and community have collectively felt a continued sense of urgency to build for our future.



*Dr. Mark Joyce (above), Executive Director of New Hampshire's School Administrators Association, shares his thoughts on why New Hampshire's education system needs to continue to adapt to meet our students' needs. Former New Hampshire Education Commissioner and President of the Nellie Mae Foundation, Nicholas Donohue (right), provides context for why New Hampshire made certain choices to shift the learning experience for students.*



Innovation at its core means designing and doing things differently, and this by its very nature is challenging. It has the potential to destabilize our existing system, which, of course, creates a tension, especially when we've been successful in our old system. But, for a number of reasons, as a state we have prioritized steps to ensure New Hampshire's students are prepared to be successful in a rapidly changing society. After all, like print publishers in a digital world—or buggy whip manufacturers faced with the introduction of the Ford Model T—the first challenge of leadership is to be willing to make difficult decisions while they still have the potential to shape future outcomes. Here are some of the top reasons we're pursuing innovation:

## Outdated Model

- Our traditional learning model values time spent in the classroom rather than mastery of learning. We care that our students have learned through a variety of personalized methods—not bound by classroom walls, and that we can show evidence of student learning through authentic assessments, progression through content and allowing students to move on when ready.

## Shifting Workforce Needs

- By 2018, 64% of our state's jobs will require post-secondary education and we will have a net job gain of 11%.<sup>1</sup>
- Healthcare will be one of our fastest growing job markets. An estimated 1 out of every 9 workers will be in the healthcare field.<sup>2</sup>

## State of Student Aptitude & Retention

- New Hampshire's K-12 math achievement is not strong enough for young people to excel in the growing science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) field—with math proficiency plummeting from 66% to 37% between grades 8 and 11.<sup>3</sup> Reading and writing diminish as well according to assessment data with reading proficiency decreasing between grades 8 and 11 from 81% to 75% and writing from 67% to 40%.<sup>4</sup>
- For every 100 bachelor's degrees produced annually in New Hampshire, 86 degree holders ages 22-64 enter the state and 78 people ages 22-64 with bachelor's degrees leave making a net gain of 8 degrees per 100.<sup>5</sup>

# WHY “GOOD ENOUGH”

Compared to other states, **New Hampshire** has a very effective and successful system of learning – but that doesn’t mean we’re prepared to rest on our laurels.



**1.26%**<sup>3</sup>

In 2012, New Hampshire’s *dropout rate was*



**7%**<sup>4</sup>

compared to the *national rate of*

## High School Graduation Rate in 2010



New Hampshire average is **86.3%**<sup>1</sup>



National average is **78.2%**<sup>2</sup>

**Why?** In 2008, New Hampshire changed the *compulsory age of schooling* from **16** to **18**,<sup>5</sup> making a significant impact on the dropout rate statewide. One year after legislation, dropout rates decreased from **2.5%**<sup>6</sup> to **1.7%**.<sup>7</sup>

**A Look at Standardized Tests.** For New Hampshire students graduating in 2013, they scored on average **1567** on the combined SATs.<sup>8</sup> The national average for 2013 was **1498**.<sup>9</sup>

### 8th Grade NAEP Reading Scores (2013)<sup>10</sup>

New Hampshire:



National Average:



### 8th Grade NAEP Math Scores (2013)<sup>11</sup>

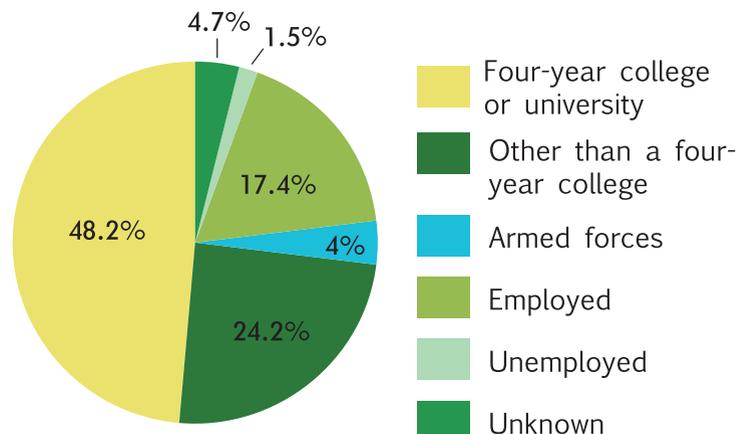
New Hampshire:



National Average:



Here’s a snapshot of where New Hampshire’s public school 12th graders were headed post-graduation in 2011-12.<sup>12</sup>



# IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH

## Four-Year College Graduation Rate<sup>13</sup>



**62%**  
New  
Hampshire



**39%**  
National  
Average

## Average Income Estimates<sup>14</sup>



High School  
Graduate

**\$33,390**  
\$29,423



Associate's  
Degree

**\$42,768**  
\$38,607



Bachelor's  
Degree

**\$51,322**  
\$50,360



Graduate or  
Professional Degree

**\$66,039**  
\$68,064

## Top Industries in New Hampshire & Mean Annual Wage According to the U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics<sup>15</sup>



**The Future of Jobs** From 2010 to 2020, total employment in New Hampshire is expected to **grow by 10.4%**, an estimated increase of **662,146 to 730,710 jobs**. Projected growth for the U.S. is **14.3%**.<sup>16</sup>

Construction jobs are expected to grow 25%, with over **5,300 jobs added**.<sup>17</sup>

Healthcare will be one of our fastest growing job markets. An estimated **1 out of every 9** workers will be in the healthcare field.<sup>18</sup>

By 2018, **64%** of New Hampshire's jobs will require post-secondary education.<sup>19</sup>

## Our Children's Health



Children and teens overweight or obese<sup>20</sup>

**26%**  
31%



Low birth weight rate<sup>21</sup>

**7.1%**  
8.1%



2008 teen birth rate per 1,000 births<sup>22</sup>

**14**  
31

# KEY EVENTS DRIVE A SHIFT

Interest in credentialing learning, particularly within the business sector.<sup>1</sup>

1995

1998-  
2004

New Hampshire launches a competency-based education pilot in 27 high schools.<sup>2</sup>

Changed the Minimum Standards for School Approval stating that competencies must be implemented by 2008.<sup>3</sup>

2005

2006

Awarded the National Governors Association's (NGA) Supporting Student Success (S3) grant,<sup>4</sup> which allocated \$50K for integrating expanded learning opportunities (ELO) into state education reform agendas.<sup>5</sup>

Four ELO pilot sites were given substantial financial support and technical assistance by the Nellie Mae Education Foundation's Extended Learning Pilot to develop comprehensive ELO programs.<sup>6</sup>

2007-  
2010

2008

New Hampshire changed the compulsory age in which students must stay in school from 16 to 18,<sup>7</sup> which made a significant impact on the dropout rate statewide—in the 2011-12 school-year dropout rates were 1.26%<sup>8</sup> compared to the national average of 7%.<sup>9</sup>

Explore some of the critical events in our state's history that have shaped where our education system is now.

In 2010, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont passed joint resolutions of support for the New England Secondary School Consortium (NESSC), a partnership working to develop innovations in the design and implementation of secondary education.<sup>8</sup>

2010

2011

NHDOE convened a task force to design a clear vision for a "fair and equitable" teacher evaluation system, and produced the Phase I Report.<sup>11</sup>

The Education Commission of the States honored the NESSC as the recipient of the prestigious Frank Newman Award for State Innovation. [Read more here.](#)

The Education Commission of the States unanimously selected and awarded New Hampshire with the Frank Newman Award for State Innovation.

2012

2013

The New Hampshire Coalition for Business and Education formed as a business-driven, collaborative entity to act as a sounding board for good ideas and programs to improve education in New Hampshire.

The NHDOE Task Force on Effective Teaching released its Phase II Report. The Phase II task force was convened to implement the Phase I Report by designing a practical approach to educator support and evaluation.<sup>12</sup>

New Hampshire took advantage of the U.S. Department of Education's invitation to request flexibility pertaining to specific requirements of 2001's No Child Left Behind Act. NHDOE requested an Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waiver,<sup>13</sup> and was approved to develop and implement comprehensive initiatives designed to improve education within the state.<sup>14</sup>

Governor Maggie Hassan created the Governor's Task Force on STEM education, which will bring together education and business community partners to modernize STEM education in New Hampshire's schools.<sup>15</sup>

2014

# OUR VISION FOR EDUCATION IN THE GRANITE STATE

One of the most important things we have done as a state is to anchor the change we seek to our values. Through this ongoing exercise, a set of values has emerged as foundational to our efforts, underpinning the work and providing us with a critical screen through which we monitor the existing efforts and evaluate new opportunities to create the system of learning New Hampshire wants and needs.



## VALUE ONE: Moving to a Competency-based System

All children deserve and are capable of a rigorous learning environment where they demonstrate proficiency and confidence to move on when ready.

More than a decade ago, we came together as a state under the leadership of former Governor John Lynch, former Education Commissioner Lyonel B. Tracy and the State Board of Education and decided to look closely at how we were designing our schools and why. Like many educators across the country, we had become frustrated with the inflexibility and often illogical conditions we had created that seemed

*Deputy Commissioner Paul Leather provides a look into the history of competency-based learning in New Hampshire and what the plans for the future hold.*

to inhibit rather than enable student learning. We asked ourselves some challenging questions, including:

- **What role does time play in the school day and year?**
- **How do we define a learning experience?**
- **How can we better connect learning in the classroom to the real-world experience students yearn for?**
- **How can we design a system truly centered on student rather than adult needs?**

After constructive debate and conversations, we moved to revise the Minimum Standards for School Approval to better reflect the schools New Hampshire wanted. These standards included many shifts that fundamentally changed the structures of school, including:

- **Moving from a traditional Carnegie Unit credit system to a competency-based system.** The revised standards required that all of our high schools transition from a Carnegie-based system that awards student credit for learning based on time spent in a course of study to true mastery of learning, as evidenced by the ability of a student to demonstrate what they know and can do.
- **Framing standards as competencies.** We currently have model state competencies in English Language Arts and Math, soon in Science and Work Study Practices, and in 2015 we will be designing Arts and Social Studies competencies. Districts have the option to adopt the model state competencies or develop their own.
- **Expanding where learning happens.** Through ELOs students are able to show mastery of learning through outside-the-classroom experiences. In practice, this means a student engaging in an internship at a local tech company in which she has to propose and design mock-ups for an app to solve a problem for her community would be able to use that learning experience to count toward her graduation credit. ([Watch this video](#) to learn more about ELOs in New Hampshire.)
- **Deeper learning through performance assessments.** Curriculum, assessment and instruction should support the knowledge,

## What Competency-based Learning Means to Us:

Competency-based learning fundamentally shifts the learning experience. From a policy standpoint, it means that schools no longer are bound by the Carnegie Unit as the means to measure student learning. What does that look like? In a traditional, Carnegie-based environment, a student might receive a D in middle school language arts—that D could mean many things: perhaps the student missed a lot of class because of family trouble and therefore didn't hand in classwork or homework and that lowered her grade significantly; or maybe she really struggled with an element of literacy and writing. That student might have mastered some components of the class, but the traditional grade doesn't leave much room for understanding her proficiencies and barriers. Plus, the student would still transition to the next level of learning, increasing the chances she would never master the learning from the earlier content and potentially fall farther behind. With all of this in mind, we've flipped the traditional model so mastery was the goal and time was the variable. Our learners' questions change from, "Am I passing?" to "How do I show mastery?" This also opened up the opportunity to disaggregate learning to a set of component parts, rather than all or nothing learning.



[Click here](#) to watch Fred Bramante, former New Hampshire School Board of Education Chair, share the history of a competency-based system in our state.

skills and work study practices students will need to succeed in 21st century college, careers and citizenship—including the abilities to solve problems and apply knowledge, inquire and learn independently, build relationships, use feedback and persevere in the face of obstacles. Capturing and supporting meaningful learning will require richer assessments that more authentically evaluate these 21st century skills. These should be used to inform teaching and to expand, rather than limit, educational opportunities for students. [Click here](#) to read more about New Hampshire’s work with performance assessments.

## VALUE TWO: Supporting Our Educators

**Our educators deserve and need high quality, ongoing support.**

Educators are the hearts of our schools and it is essential they are supported throughout their career to grow and refine their craft. We have and are continuing to pursue two main avenues to ensure we have built the systems necessary to do this well.

First, our state model of educator support and evaluation was designed by a task force of more than 60 talented educators, experts and partners from across New Hampshire over a three year period and led by the State Coalition for Educator Effectiveness (SCEE) team. The state model, illustrated in New Hampshire’s Task Force on Effective Teaching: Phase II, and builds on the important work of the Phase I report, bases its recommendations “on research that decisively confirms the critical and powerful relationships between teacher quality and student achievement.” Its primary purpose is to maximize student learning and the model is composed of five main tenets: learner and learning; content knowledge; learning facilitation; professional responsibility; and student learning. In keeping with New Hampshire traditions, the model is intended to be used as a guide, considered to inform districts’ designs or to be applied directly as they build or revise their own educator support systems.

The second strategy in supporting educators is our work to build a comprehensive system of supports through a network strategy. In 2012, the NHDOE and our partners fundamentally redesigned how the state supports New Hampshire educators. Rather than offer a one-size fits all approach to professional development, the state

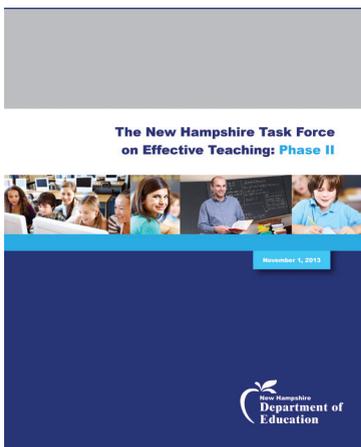
shifted to the logic of demand-driven professional learning networks, to help support both improvement and innovation.

These professional learning networks were developed and have grown in direct response to the needs of our schools. Within the networks, led by talented, expert facilitators in their area of focus (either NHDOE staff or local, regional or national partners), participants are connected to each other, to meaningful content and to learning experiences. All of our networks not only exist within face-to-face workshops, meetings and sessions, but also on our online platform, The New Hampshire Network—making this a state-wide move to blending and individualizing our professional learning supports.



[Click here](#) to read more about Network theory.

The New Hampshire Network Platform, which is housed in our myNHDOE Single Sign On system, is the virtual space to connect all of our educators and schools. We currently have more than 6,000 users actively engaged in the platform through online discussions, designing and taking online courses (learning paths), sharing resources, utilizing the calendar and building their own personal connections and favorite libraries. This approach is increasing communication and collaboration across our state, which is a core tenet of the transformation we seek. The network strategy, and the platform it sits on top of, continues to evolve and iterate to meet the needs of our educators. During the summer of 2014, we will be opening a public version of the platform



[Click here](#) to view the public version of *The New Hampshire Network* platform.



Photo courtesy of UNH Manchester STEM Discovery Lab

 [Click to play](#)

*The Manchester School District, the New Hampshire business community and the university and college system of New Hampshire are teaming up to create a collaborative learning experiences called STEAM Ahead.*

to enable an array of stakeholders, including our legislators, business community and families to engage in the dialogue necessary to continue the systemic change process.

## VALUE THREE: Local Innovation Is Our Driver of Change

**Our communities and stakeholders must help lead the transformation we seek.**

“Live Free or Die”—our well-known state motto, dating from General John Stark’s words in 1809—continues to mean something important to all of us here in New Hampshire, as evidenced by our long tradition of local control with strong community-based governance of our public schools. In this context, there is the need for real, genuine and continuous engagement to ensure that all stakeholders are participants in

driving transformation efforts.

Four particular efforts illustrate the power of engaging with our local communities to inform our work:

- **Our state model of Educator Support and Evaluation, as mentioned earlier,** was developed through a deep participatory process. Districts use the state’s guiding plan and have the ability to interpret it in their own context. [Click here](#) to see how two districts have redesigned their educator support and evaluation systems.
- **STEAM Ahead New Hampshire is a collaboration between the Manchester School District,** local businesses and the state’s university and college system to create better pathways for students interested in science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics (STEAM) careers.

Part of the partnership will be to provide students an opportunity to earn one year of college credits at no cost while they are pursuing their high school diploma. [Watch this video](#) to learn more about STEAM Ahead.

- **The preparation of our Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waiver** was a deeply collaborative, year-long process that involved superintendents, principals and teachers across the state. Like many efforts in our state, it passed through a consensus process with superintendents before the NHDOE pursued in earnest. [Click here](#) to read a white paper outlining the contours of New Hampshire’s ESEA Flexibility Waiver.

- **New Hampshire has developed state model competencies in English language arts and mathematics.** Although a local-control state, New Hampshire educators are excited to be included in the development process and the competencies themselves reflect authentic local concerns regarding both rigor and applicability. As districts, schools and educators move to implement competency education across our K-12 schools over the coming years, these New Hampshire-developed statements will support the process and ensure comparability from community to community.

## VALUE FOUR: An Integrated Learning System

We need to create a seamless system of aligned collaboration across Early Childhood, K-12, Post-secondary and Workforce Development

In New Hampshire, we know our K-12 educational system cannot (and doesn't!) exist in a vacuum. Students travel across our learning systems horizontally—from early childhood, to our K-12 schools then to post-secondary institutions or into the workforce—and we have historically lost students and families at many of these crucial transition points. We need to design a more seamless

approach across all of these points in a learner's journey. With this in mind, we're working hard. With this in mind, we're working hard with our colleagues in state government, the business community, early childhood organizations, our K-12 spaces, higher education institutions and our rich non-profit sector to build greater alignment and collaboration.

- **Connecting early childhood and K-12.** The NHDOE is launching an Early Childhood Network, which will be housed on the New Hampshire Network platform, and will offer anytime, anywhere learning paths on early literacy and numeracy. There are also a range of organizations working to further early childhood education and its connection to our other learning systems, including the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education, the Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes and the Council of Chief State School Officers' Early Childhood Education Assessment Consortium.
- **Strong links between our schools, districts and higher education institutions.** Our K-12 schools are built on the foundation of ensuring our young people are safe, healthy, able and ready to succeed in their lives and thrive in our communities. After 13 years in our schools and districts, many

of our children move on to our higher education institutions to build and grow their knowledge and experiences. To make our system truly a system—not a set of disparate parts—it's imperative that we design strong, cohesive bridges with our colleges and universities, both in a shared expectation around what students should know and be able to do ahead of moving into their higher education paths; programs that support mentorship and partnership; and, preparation of the educators and leaders who will be facilitating the learning in our schools.

- **Establishing stronger connections between K-12 and our business community** and moving toward a more seamless P20 system contributing to New Hampshire's economy and workforce development. An essential part of education is preparing our students to be successful members of our democracy, and our workforce and industry is a critical part of that. We are working hard with our business partners to create opportunities for our students to explore and find careers they love and to have open, honest conversations about what knowledge and skills our businesses value and need and how this relates to our K-12 learning experiences.



*Watch Dr. Todd J. Leach (top left), Chancellor of the University System of New Hampshire, and Dr. Ross Gittell (top right), Chancellor of the Community College System of New Hampshire, talk through the collaborations happening across the higher education ecosystem in partnership with our K-12 schools and districts.*

*Watch Tom Raffio (lower left), President & CEO of Northeast Delta Dental and Fred Kocher (lower right), President of the New Hampshire High Technology Council and Founder and President of Kocher & Company, Inc., along with other business, policy leaders and educators, discuss the role of the business community in our learning system and share examples of these partnerships.*







Take a peek into one elementary math classroom in New Hampshire to watch how the New Hampshire College and Career Ready standards have shifted instruction.

After working through a number of different homemade and “store-bought” frameworks, Harvard professor and education scholar, Richard Elmore’s Instructional Core struck us for its clarity, logic and simplicity. The Instructional Core, as Elmore designed, is made up of four components: meaningful content and skills, student engagement, instructional quality and rich tasks. Elmore’s theory of change is that true transformation of student learning and performance is only possible if you are impacting those four levers. Put differently, what is being taught (the curriculum) and how you’re assessing it, students’ experiences with learning, the excellence of the teachers and the relationships between educator and student are the most critical elements in improving student achievement and building the systems necessary to sustain and scale those efforts.

We have begun to apply Elmore’s Instructional Core framework as the lens for how we make system-wide decisions, analyze their relevancy and assess their success. The beauty of this framework, though, is its flexibility and inclusive nature—it helps us be more intentional in our support and celebration of the models that are embodying New Hampshire’s transformation.

Continue through this section to read and watch how our schools and School Administrative Units (SAUs) have shifted learning through the lens of the Instructional Core.

“BECAUSE AT THE END OF THE DAY EDUCATORS ARE DOING THE MOST IMPORTANT, CHALLENGING AND ESSENTIAL WORK IN A DEMOCRACY.”  
 – GOVERNOR MAGGIE HASSAN



*Harvard Professor and Education Scholar Richard Elmore’s Instructional Core emphasizes that true transformation of student learning and performance is only possible if you’re impacting all of the four factors above.*

## Meaningful Content

Meaningful content embodies what is taught, why it's emphasized and to what depth it is explored. New Hampshire schools are emphasizing a rigorous curriculum and many have adopted the New Hampshire College and Career Ready Standards, which shifts curriculum from a broad focus to a deep one. STEM is particularly critical to New Hampshire's future since many of the state's 21st century jobs are in this sector. This emphasis on STEM is being reflected in districts throughout the state. Additionally, being able to think critically, collaborate and read and write well and thoughtfully are key to this rigorous curriculum.



[Click here](#) to watch how Manchester School of Technology transformed its learning for students.

## Instructional Quality

Instructional quality is paramount to the success of our education system. By rethinking how we support all educators in new and better ways, we are pulling an important change lever.



[Tune into this Colebrook School District audio story](#) to explore a different kind of adult learning that overcame barriers of geography, weather and "the way we've always done it."

## Student Engagement

Student engagement—the extent to which students feel connected, interested, motivated and empowered to dig deeper, learn more and push themselves to the next level of learning—is a key driver to improved student outcomes. There isn't one path to cultivating high levels of student engagement, but what many SAUs featured here have in common is an unwavering effort to ensure learning is relevant and that the young people in front of them are experiencing and creating knowledge each day.



[Tune into this Milan Village Elementary School audio story](#) to hear how one elementary school in the North Country of New Hampshire approaches student engagement.



*Watch how these districts in New Hampshire use performance assessments and more to steer the learning experience.*

## Rich Tasks

"The task predicts performance," Elmore has been known to say. Considering Bloom's taxonomy, if you design assessments focused on low-level recall you will receive low-level learning. As a state, we've amplified our effort to support all educators in designing rich tasks through our journey toward competency-based learning. As part of that journey, we have focused statewide on building out a network on designing and implementing performance assessments. View the video above to hear how some of our districts and schools are implementing high quality assessments and tasks.

# A LOOK INSIDE OUR SCHOOLS<sup>1</sup>



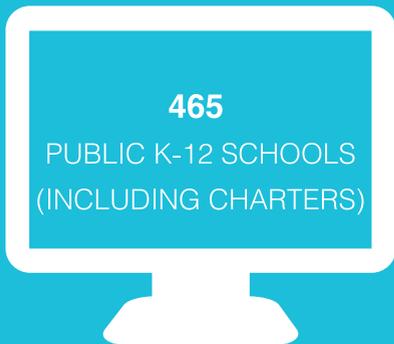
**14,867** TOTAL TEACHERS



**209,495** TOTAL STUDENTS



**12.2:1** STUDENT/TEACHER RATIO



**88.1%** PUBLIC



**2.1%** ACADEMIES/JMA  
**0.8%** CHARTERS  
**9.0%** NON-PUBLIC



**\$54,314**

AVERAGE TEACHER SALARY



**~\$2.741.1B**

TOTAL EXPENDITURES



**\$15,589**

PER PUPIL



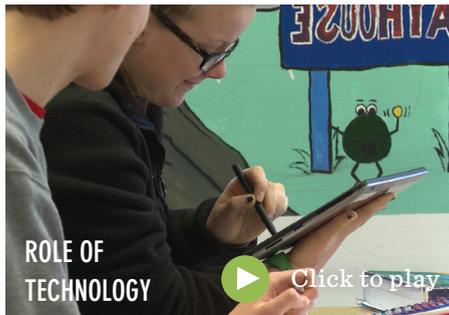
STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

[Click to play](#)



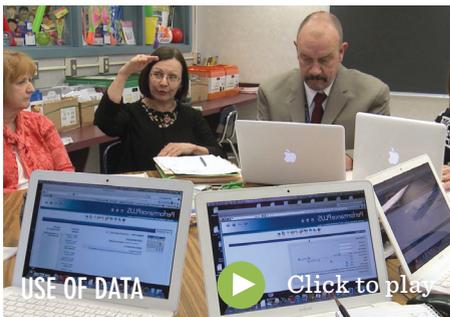
INSTRUCTIONAL QUALITY

[Click to play](#)



ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY

[Click to play](#)



USE OF DATA

[Click to play](#)

*Hear from Governor Hassan and a range of districts from across our state that have empowered and supported their educators to facilitate rich learning experiences in their classrooms (middle left).*

*Use of data has the potential to be a significant driver of personalizing student learning. Watch one district's story (bottom).*

*Technology is not the silver bullet for all of our educational challenges, but it's certainly critical in expanding opportunities of our educators and learners. Watch how some SAUs have applied technology as a disruptive innovation in their environments (middle right).*

*Watch how these districts cultivate an environment where students are fully engaged and excited about learning (top right).*

**“IN THIS CLASS I AM  
THE TEACHER. I AM  
MY OWN TEACHER.”**

**– MADI, ELEVENTH GRADE STUDENT AT LEBANON HIGH SCHOOL,  
TALKING ABOUT HER EXPERIENCE WITH LEARNING  
STUDIOS, A YEAR-LONG COURSE THAT HAS STUDENTS  
PICK A PROBLEM THEY WANT TO SOLVE AND DESIGN  
THEIR LEARNING EXPERIENCE AROUND IT.**

# REFLECTIONS ON WHERE WE ARE AND WHERE WE NEED TO GO



Click to play

*Scott McGilvray (top left), President of New Hampshire's National Educator Association (NEA), talks about why supporting educators throughout their careers is instrumental to the success of any innovation in our learning system.*

*New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Commissioner Tom Burack (middle right) gives insight into the connection that's being built across many government agencies in New Hampshire.*

*New Hampshire Senator Nancy Stiles shares her insight on the future of learning in New Hampshire (middle left).*

*New Hampshire Representative Mary Stuart Gile provides insight into the connection between our K-12 districts and our business community (bottom right).*

*Brenda Willis, Executive Director of the New Hampshire PTA and Derry School District Board Member, shares the role of parents and families in an educational system's success (bottom left).*



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[Click here](#) to see what Executive Director of New Hampshire's School Administrators Association, Dr. Mark Joyce, has to say about support and change management throughout the process of innovation.

From our efforts to date, we are learning a great deal which is informing our work ahead. Some of our key lessons include:

- **While policy is essential, it is insufficient by itself.** The policy change paves the way for the possible, which is only attainable through the hard work of supporting practitioners. We are trying to provide the right differentiated supports for our educators to truly support the shifts our policies seek.
- **Local is not only a core value but a necessary lens here.** The only way change can be successful is through real, ongoing engagement with our local education and community leaders. There are no shortcuts when it comes to engagement.
- **Talented partners are a driving force. Capacity and resources are limited.** We have chosen to make targeted investments in an array of local and national partner organizations. This has been a significant boost to our efforts and these groups have provided much needed expertise and energy.
- **Doing more with less.** In New Hampshire, as a relatively small and seemingly homogenous state, we have not received significant outside investment to support our transformation. Therefore, we must be strategic with where we choose to invest time and limited resources, which always prompts a series of trade-offs.
- **Maintaining balance in a complex environment.** At any moment, we are torn between a range of high priority issues and crises and remaining laser-focused on our core values. While not easy, our values have become an important compass to guide our efforts.
- **The field needs greater coherence.** Despite our best efforts, we are not yet at a place where we are as consistent or focused in our message. Our work around using the framework of the Instructional Core has begun to address this in part, but it will require time and consistency of use for its desired impact.
- **Bureaucracy is a challenge.** From procurement to messaging to customer service, we are challenged by being an organism that is not built to be as nimble and promote or reward the risk taking that accompanies innovation.

**“WE NEED TO ASSIST EVERY COMMUNITY IN SUSTAINING CHANGE OVER TIME—BY BEING SUPPORTIVE AND NOT PUNITIVE.”**

**— DR. MARK JOYCE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NEW HAMPSHIRE’S SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION**

## Moving Forward

Building on our good work to date and our hard fought lessons learned, we are optimistic and clearer on the path ahead. Some key next steps to continue and deepen our transformation are outlined below:

- **Navigating a Shifting Accountability System.** We are working closely with the U.S. Department of Education to support all students reaching competencies at their own pace. In the process of this shift, we are moving away from a punitive system to a system of recognition and support. One of the biggest challenges facing us as a state, though, is that the system we are building is often in opposition to the common approach to accountability—which is still ingrained in measuring student learning as a cohort annually, and often punitively, instead of measuring an individual student’s learning and performance each day. As we work to build an approach that is moving away from the designation of a fifth grader altogether, yet reporting requirements see otherwise, we have the tension of a disconnected approach.

As we continue on this path of transformation, much of our work over the last two years has been to build the system that will support the student-centered, competency-based learning we strive for, including a robust performance assessment task bank; widespread professional development in task development, implementation and scoring; and designing a system where our schools and districts who are ready to be held accountable within this new model can be. As we develop our next accountability system, we will be requesting the ability to pilot with a small cohort of districts a system in which the performance assessment of competency education can complement and ultimately supplant the current high stakes testing options. We see this system as a harbinger of the future, here in New Hampshire, and even across the country.

- **Teacher and Leader Pipeline.** At a time when teachers’ roles are changing quickly, we need to be intentional about how we are developing and supporting future-oriented educators and leaders. Our higher education partners are hard at work on rethinking pre-service and in-service training in ways that account for student-driven learning, technology-enabled learning environments and formative assessment that allow for real-time and ongoing personalization.
- **Building Buy-in and Ownership.** Transformation is incredibly challenging, particularly when it comes to engendering ownership for this kind of bold change at a systems level within districts and at the level of state policy. While we strongly believe that better coherence, communication and collaboration are key components to transformation, we continue to work hard with our partners at each level of the system to bring about lasting change.

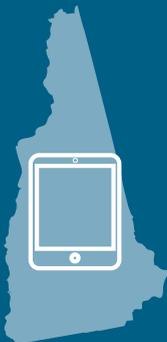
We have worked to reorient our policies, from externally motivated to internally driven, because as research on how we learn and organizational change has proven—real change must be intrinsically motivated.

- **Prioritizing Innovation.** One priority is to support our schools and districts to think differently about existing challenges. We are doing this by incenting short-cycle innovative practices in schools across the state with scaffolded support provided in the areas of blended learning, creative uses of educational technology, rich instructional methodologies and advancing the use of evidence-based learning trajectories in key content areas. We are looking to continue and deepen these efforts by creating structures that provide the permission and supports to scale innovative practice statewide.

# MEASURING SUCCESS

As a system, in service of this broad vision and these foundational values, we have designed a set of milestones because we are certain that our system is not currently tracking and managing all of the right things. And, a paraphrased version of the old business leadership adage, “What gets measured gets attention,” definitely applies to our state. Therefore, it’s critical that we begin tracking a small number of new measures over the coming years in the spirit of transparent learning to fuel the dynamic evolution of our system. This is a huge undertaking and it will take time. Therefore, we need a way to keep score, track our activities and have some way of knowing whether or not each element and the overall effort is working. That will enable us to scale up efforts that are proving successful, and to scrap, tweak and invent new efforts in other places. Here are some of the main factors we will look to measure:

Student outcomes data, including both academic measurements, as well as other non-cognitive measures of students’ growth. [Click here](#) to read our new theory of action related to student outcomes.



Number of fully competency-based schools and districts.

College persistence rates, including clarity around key attributes that contribute to college persistence.



Post-secondary training completion rates and how that translates to employment data.

Explicit alignment and collaboration among early childhood education, K-12 and between K-12 and our post-secondary institutions and work force, including accountability to same/similar metrics on either side of these critical student transitions.



# LOOK AHEAD

New Hampshire is a great place to live. In order to maintain the strength of our democracy and the vitality of our economy, we are doubling down on building a future-oriented system of learning.



*Watch a handful of leaders from across New Hampshire, including Senator Molly Kelly, share what they think about when they consider the future of learning in our state.*

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO THIS  
CONTINUED WORK IN PARTNERSHIP  
WITH OUR STUDENTS, FAMILIES,  
EDUCATORS, SCHOOL AND DISTRICT  
LEADERSHIP, COMMUNITY MEMBERS,  
HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS,  
BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND LOCAL  
AND NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS THAT  
CONTINUE TO SUPPORT AND WORK  
TOWARD OUR COLLECTIVE VISION.**

# THANK YOU

To those who shared their stories and insights in this publication and whose wisdom, leadership and energy pushes our state's education system to the next level of success.

## Schools and Districts

Amherst Middle School  
Ashland Elementary School  
Bow High School  
Colebrook School District  
ConVal Regional High School  
Derry Cooperative School District  
Derry Village School  
Ellis School  
Gilford Elementary School  
Gilford School District  
Iber Holmes Gove Middle School  
Kearsarge Regional School District  
Laconia School District  
Lebanon High School  
Manchester School District  
Manchester School of Technology  
Milan Village Elementary School  
Mount Washington Valley Career and Technical Center  
Mont Vernon Village School  
Nashua School District  
Newfound Regional High School  
Pelham High School  
Pittsfield School District  
Sanborn Regional School District  
SAU 39  
Somersworth School District  
Souhegan High School  
Surry Village Charter School  
Windham High School

## Leaders

Brenda Willis, Executive Director of the New Hampshire PTA and Derry School District Board Member  
Fred Bramante, Former Chairman and Member of the New Hampshire Board of Education  
Fred Kocher, Founder and President of Kocher & Company, Inc. and President of the New Hampshire High Technology Council  
Maggie Hassan, Governor of New Hampshire  
Dr. Mark Joyce, Executive Director of the New Hampshire School Administrators Association  
Mary Stuart Gile, New Hampshire Representative  
Molly Kelly, New Hampshire Senator  
Nancy Stiles, New Hampshire Senator  
Nicholas C. Donohue, President and CEO of the Nellie Mae Education Foundation  
Dr. Ross Gittell, Chancellor of the Community College System of New Hampshire  
Scott McGilvray, President of the NEA New Hampshire  
Dr. Todd Leach, Chancellor of the University System of New Hampshire  
Tom Burack, Commissioner of the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services  
Tom Raffio, President and CEO of Northeast Delta Dental

## Partner Organizations

2Revolutions  
Center for Assessment (NCIEA)  
Center for Collaborative Education (CCE)  
Community College System of New Hampshire  
Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)  
NEA of New Hampshire  
Nellie Mae Foundation  
New Hampshire Accountability Task Force  
New Hampshire Association of School Principals (NHASP)  
New Hampshire Parent Teacher Association  
New Hampshire School Administrators Association (NHSAA)  
New Hampshire's Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development (NH ASCD)  
New Hampshire Task Force for Effective Teaching and the New Hampshire State Consortium of Educator Effectiveness (SCEE) Team  
Northeast Comprehensive Center RMC Research Corporation  
Quality Performance Assessment (QPA)  
SERESC Educational and Conference Center Services  
STEAM Ahead  
Steering Committee and Technical Advisors for the Common Core State Implementation Team  
University System of New Hampshire

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THIS PUBLICATION, INCLUDING VIDEOS AND  
ARTIFACTS.

# ENDNOTES

## Our State at a Glance (Page 7)

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Photo courtesy of UNH Manchester STEM Discovery Lab

