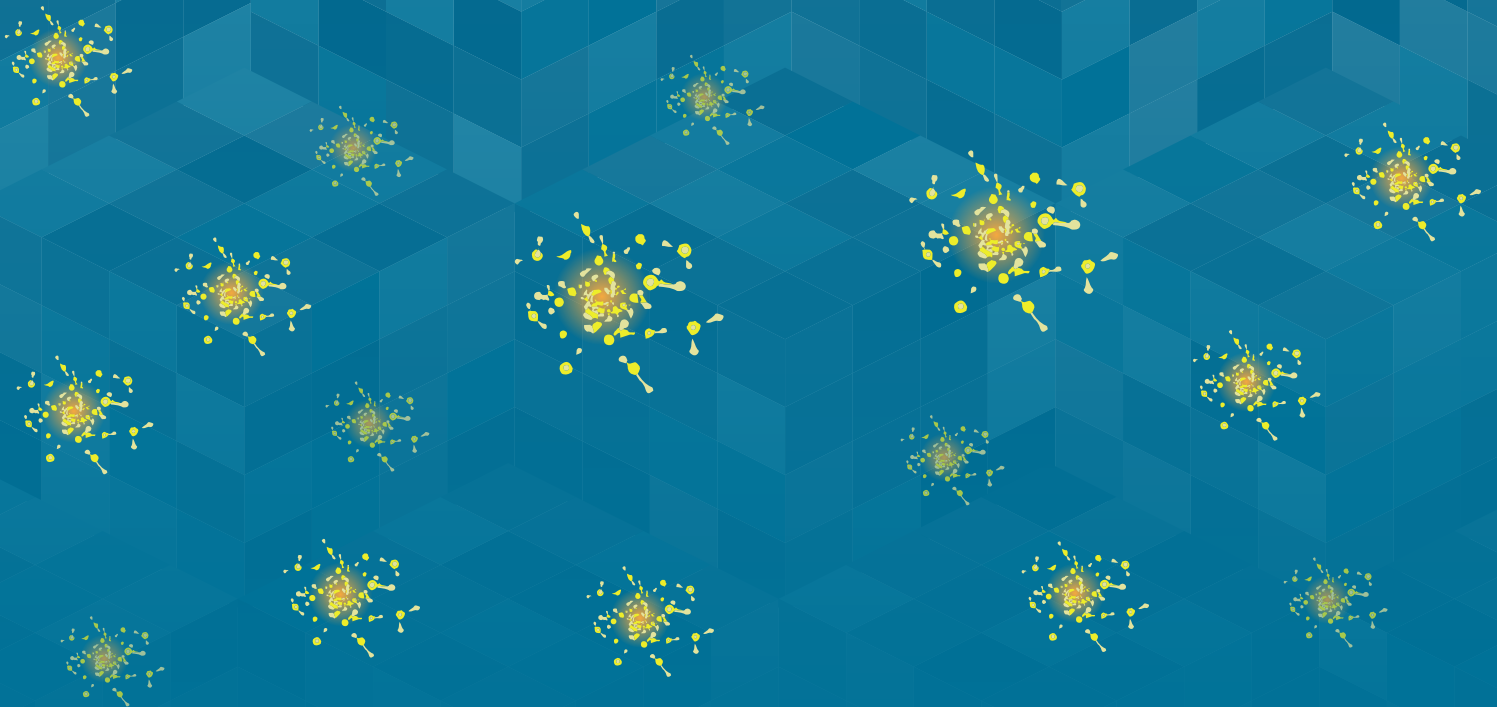




New Hampshire
Vision 2.0

New Hampshire Goes First

A Blueprint to Scale Competency-based Education across a PreK-20 System



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“Knowledge is only a rumour until it lives in the muscle.”
– *New Guinean Proverb*

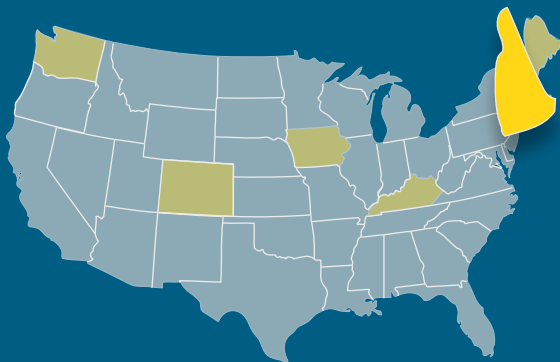
1. Introduction

We all recognize how quickly the world is changing and the implications this has for students across New Hampshire—and, indeed, across the country. We are proud of the hard-won gains we’ve made in our state over the past five years, but the reality is that it’s simply not good enough. As leaders of the major education and learning systems across the state—spanning early childhood, K-12, higher education and workforce development—we want for New Hampshire’s kids the same things every parent wants: to maximize the chances of a happy, healthy and successful future. We’re not there yet.

With this goal in mind, we have spent the past six months asking and attempting to answer a simple question: What would need to be true for New Hampshire to truly prepare all students for the complex future that awaits them? The answers we found are daunting, which makes us confident that we’re on the right track. We envision a seamless statewide learning system that provides all learners—from early childhood through K-12 to college and beyond—with more personalized and integrated learning experiences, where they move forward in competency-based progressions that enable them to get what they need, when and where they need it. They would learn ever more about themselves along the way—their strengths, growth areas, preferences and motivations—and learn to apply this self-awareness in ways that maximize their success. While we have many key elements of such a strategy in place, we don’t think we’re going to get where we need to go if we keep moving at the same pace. To help our students catch the future, we must move more intentionally.

Building on our current momentum and many existing assets, we’re explicitly embracing a more aggressive approach. One that leverages the best of what we’re already doing, doubles down on our future-oriented direction and builds a rational plan to grow into our full vision over time. The balance of this document is dedicated to laying the logic of our thinking and proposed approach. This is intended to function as an actionable blueprint to guide our efforts over the next several years.

“NH Goes First” in a Nutshell



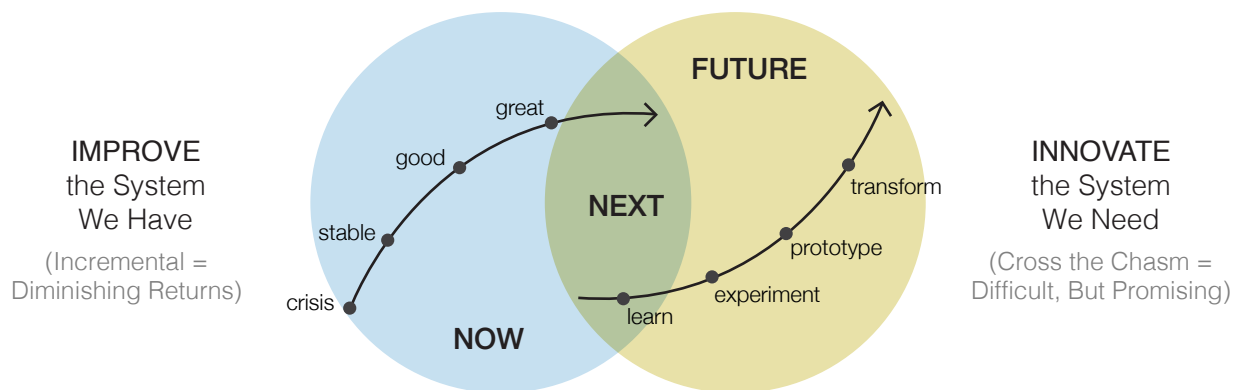
- Incremental improvement will not deliver what our students and families need and deserve; we must **embrace transformation** toward the future
- NH has emerged as a **national leader** in next generation learning with key assets in terms of leadership, policy environment and readiness
- This alone is insufficient; we’ve **mapped our gaps** to understand what might prevent our ability to be successful at scale
- This document represents a **multi-year blueprint** to enable us to manage toward that vision
- Our success—as well as those who intend to follow a similar path—depends on **learning quickly** from our efforts to-date and as we scale more intentionally
- We invite you to rally around NH as a national case study—we believe we have the right conditions, we’re ready to scale and we **pledge to share everything** we learn along the way to support others who are or want to learn from our efforts

2. From There to Here

As a state, we have reached another key moment of inflection in our work to transform education for every learner in New Hampshire. We now have the opportunity to be the first state in the country to deliberately scale our work toward a fully integrated, competency-based PreK-20 system that works for students, families and educators.

For the past few years, we have been working in the context of the framework illustrated below in Figure 1. This image resonates with our education sector leaders because it gives us all a way to understand the important transitions that are now underway—not just here in New Hampshire, but across the country. We must simultaneously focus on improving the current education system(s) we have today, while working to design the future system our students and families need. Large-scale change like this would be difficult under any circumstances, but it is especially challenging in a resource-constrained and politically charged environment. Nonetheless, this is the task we face: navigating the transition toward the future.

Figure 1: Now-Next-Future Framework



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And we've been busy. Over most of the past decade we have been pioneering progressive policies and experimenting with new approaches. At roughly this time last year, we released *The New Hampshire Story of Transformation*, which detailed New Hampshire's story—the priorities set and choices made that brought us to that point, as well as the key tenets of our forward-looking strategy. In it we asserted four core values which remain critical to our work:



This forms the basis for our current priorities—including those focused on innovation. This process has enabled us to learn from **Past, Now** (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Past, Now to Next, Future



With these insights and current strategy as a baseline, we are now aggressively looking forward to **Next, Future**. As a result, this document represents an **actionable blueprint** to map out the work necessary to execute against this bold vision. In the process of developing this blueprint, we began with the question of **what would need to be true to scale our current efforts** across the entire state along a full PK-20 continuum? In order to develop answers to this question, we have engaged deeply with leaders and partners in early childhood, K12, higher education and workforce development, to better understand both our assets and our gaps. What is preventing this work from scaling? Where is it working? And what is holding it back where it has not yet taken hold?

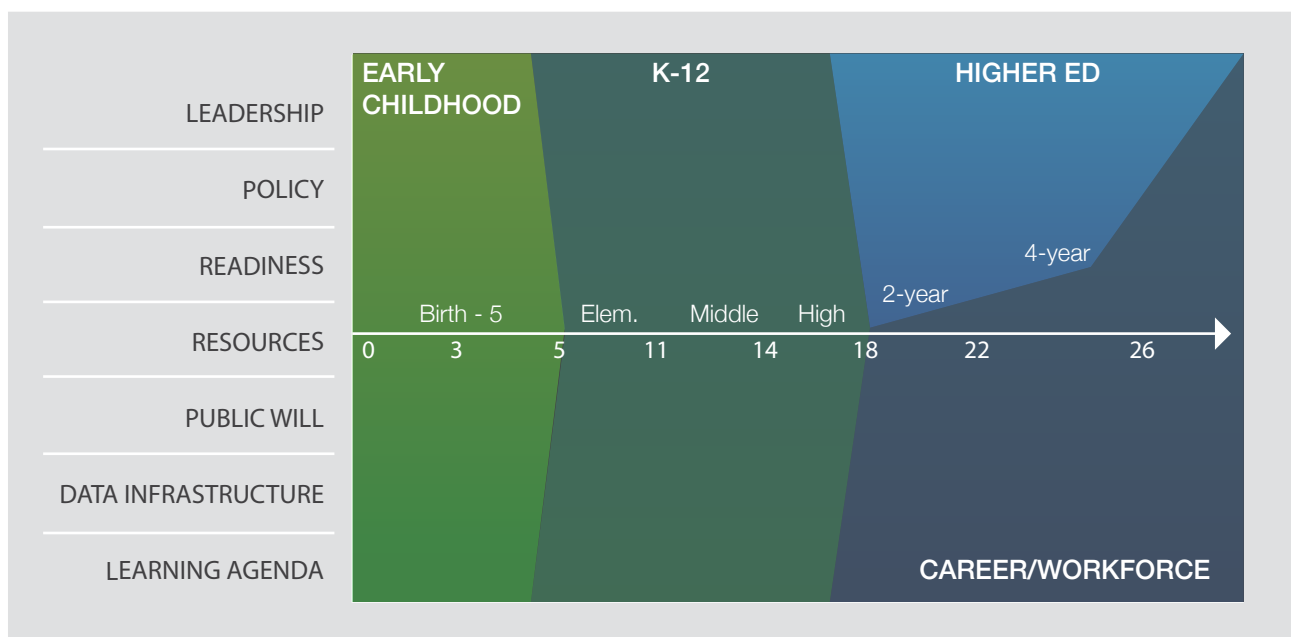
"What's past is prologue."

- William Shakespeare

We have arrived at a series of key priorities that we're confident will enable us to take the work to scale and provide essential learning for other states and districts as they seek to emulate and/or learn from our efforts. As we continue our journey, we're excited to propel our work forward and to provide relevant tools, artifacts and lessons learned to shorten the cycle for our colleagues across the country.

3. Framework for a New Future

To successfully take our work to scale, we need to think differently about it. First, we have established a new way to visualize the current work and consider obstacles that are preventing our existing efforts from scaling. The graphic below provides a helpful way to think about the whole system and a set of **core conditions that either enable or inhibit** our efforts. It also allows us to see and better understand the relationships and interdependencies between and among existing efforts and actors in the systems that comprise education in our state.



Defining Key Systems-level Conditions

The following seven conditions either **enable** or **inhibit** efforts to transform a state or district. In New Hampshire, these conditions have served as an important diagnostic to better understand strengths and gaps. Brief definitions of the conditions are as follows:

- **Leadership:** Vision and support that create a culture of innovation to help catalyze and support experimentation and high-quality implementation
- **Readiness:** The sense of awareness, risk profile, urgency and momentum needed to undertake significant shifts in practice
- **Public Will:** Level and extent of the public’s awareness, understanding of, and support for new approaches to teaching and learning
- **Public Policy:** The set of state and local laws and regulations that define what is permissible
- **Resources:** The availability of financial, human and political resources necessary to execute significant work
- **Data Infrastructure:** The robust technology and data systems needed to support Future of Learning models and systems
- **Learning Agenda:** An intentional system of tracking and managing the testable hypotheses of all core initiatives to learn from and inform continuous improvement toward success at scale

We begin by envisioning the ideal system we seek for our students and families. What will it look like in 2020? The following perspectives from key stakeholders provide a glimpse of that future:

Stakeholder Perspectives: 2020



Student: My personal learning plan helps me understand what I need to focus on, and what learning resources are available to help me—in my school, online and around town. I have regular opportunities to apply what I'm learning. I used to spend three weeks each year on various tests (i.e., NECAPs, Smarter Balanced and other assessments for our district), but now the tests are linked directly to the projects I'm working on. Sometimes they are difficult, but at least my teachers and I know how I'm doing and what I need to be working on.



Educator: For a long time, I was exhausted by the constant changes in our school and I struggled to understand the shifts that I read and heard about at statewide conferences. Some referred to New Hampshire as "a national leader," but I felt like most things in my district were pretty much the same as they had always been, just with a growing set of responsibilities. However, as we've started to implement some of the ideas as a PACE district, it's all making more sense. Not only are kids getting a more personalized learning experience based on their individual competencies, but I am too. I am now seeing students in a whole person context. Both competent and confident to show what they know and in turn feel a sense of self about their learning experience. Based on my needs and interests, my district helped me develop a unique learning plan for my own growth. As a result, my colleagues and I feel more supported to understand and make a change to this new way of teaching. I'm happy to say our district has made significant progress over the past few years, and I'm more excited about what's possible than I have been in a long time.



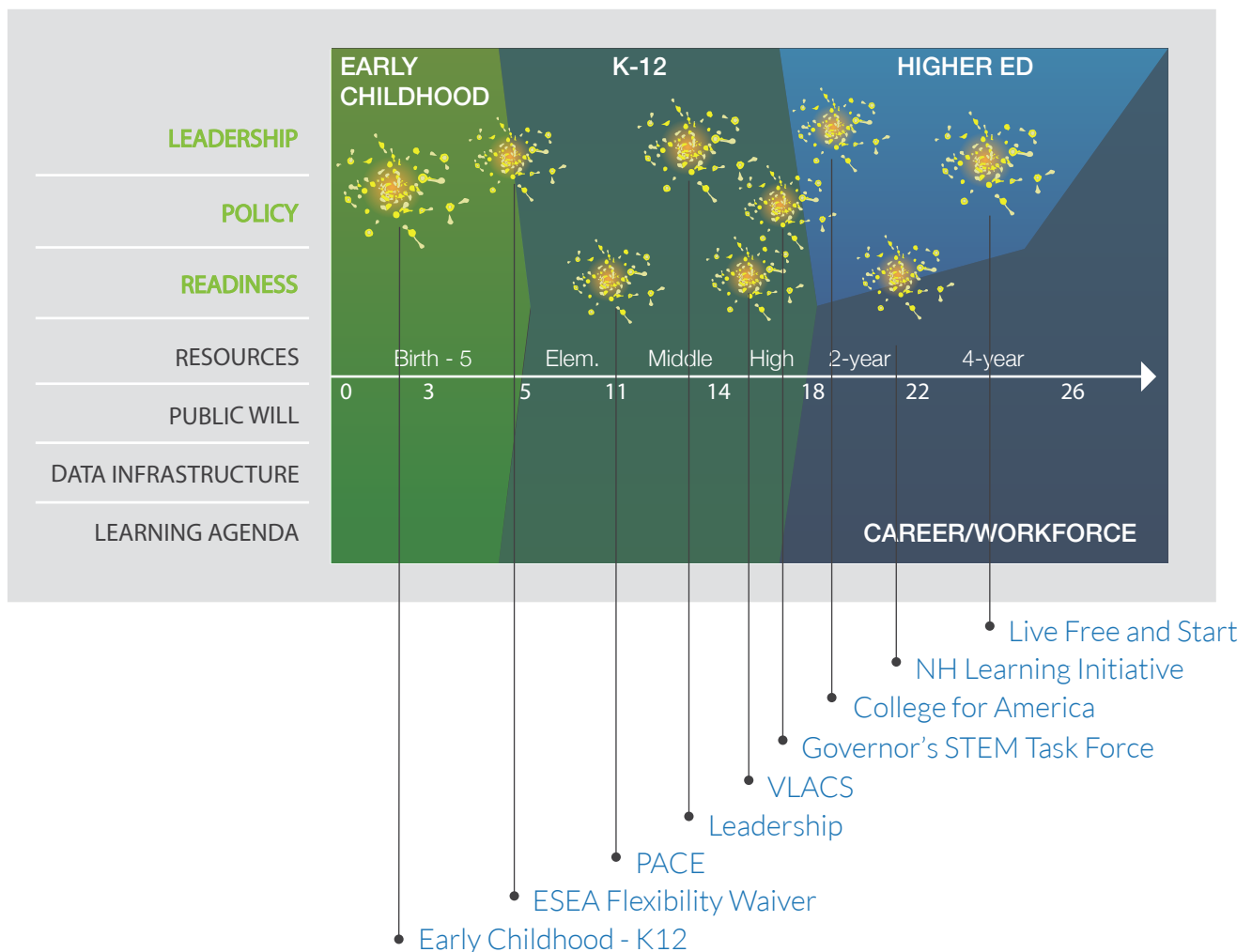
Parent: When I learned about this move toward competency-based learning some years back, my first thought was "Oh great, a trophy for every kid?!" But now I see that this is about giving my kids choices. Not all children learn the same way or at the same pace. Even my two kids are very different. This new system helps teachers be more responsive to their needs, so they get what they need—not just whatever is being taught that day. I feel like my kids are more engaged in school than they used to be. And the fact that this new approach is connected to the other parts of the system, I feel more confident that my kids are getting what they will need to be successful later in college and when it comes time for them to get a job.



Employer: Years ago, when we were growing our business here in the state, we wanted to stay, but struggled to hire enough skilled workers. Given the number of new jobs we needed to fill, we worked closely with the State and Manchester Community College to set up a great training program customized to our needs. That was good, but I'm happy to say that things have gotten even better. An array of more cost-effective, on-demand options have emerged over the past few years that take a lot of the meetings out of the mix. Our employees can take "micro" offerings and they only move on when they can demonstrate that they can apply their learning. Technology has streamlined things in ways that are quicker, easier to use and cheaper—all of which are good for our bottom line. And it makes it easier to keep growing our business right here in New Hampshire.

4. Leveraging Strengths

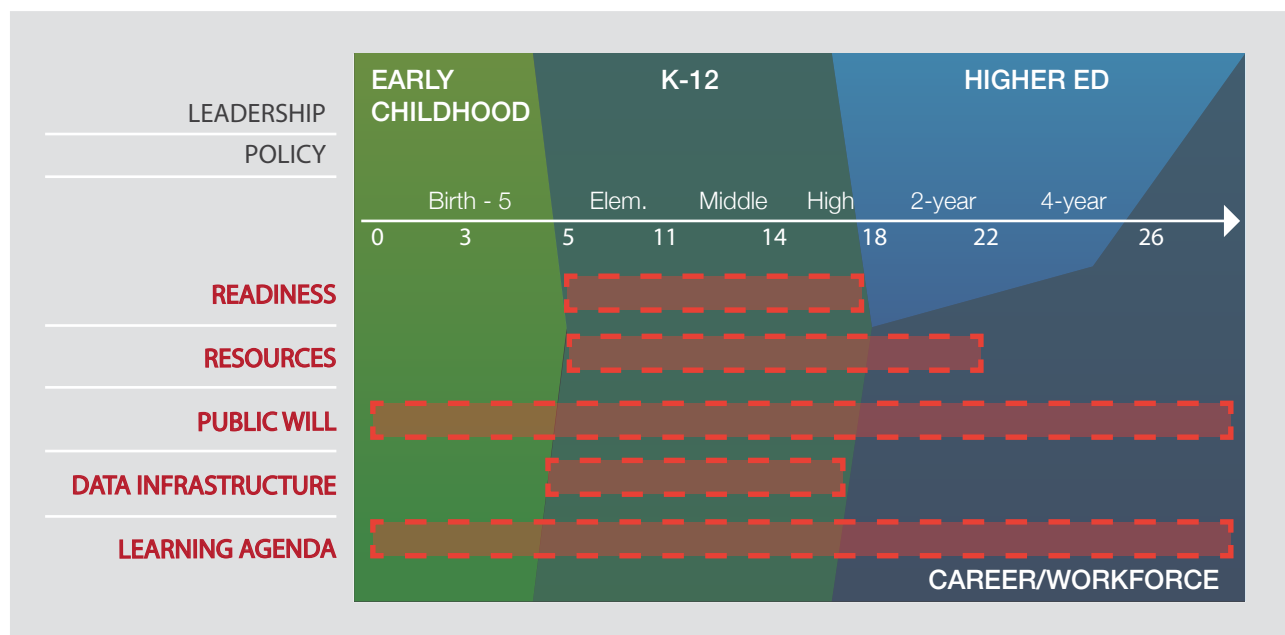
Over the past six months, we have prioritized conversations with leaders across our birth-to-adult learning systems, focusing on a few key questions: What is working? Why is it working? What are, or could be, the relationships between and among the most effective elements of your work? All of this dialogue has been in the spirit of how we might build a more seamless system, focused on greater success for students. Through our analysis, some clear patterns emerged. Not surprisingly, leadership is essential. Many of the best, most innovative efforts were made possible through collaboration among leaders across our system, rather than in isolation. The policy environment was another major factor in enabling innovation and progress. Our policies have shifted from permissive to enabling—that is, from a focus on what is “allowed” toward encouraging and supporting innovative practices. That has enabled educators to take more chances and pursue transformation. Another important insight is the importance and awareness of “readiness” to undertake bold transformation at the school and/or system levels. This pushes us to want to better understand how to build leadership and readiness across the broader system and learn to establish, maintain and evolve an enabling policy framework.



Jump to page 21 to read more about each collaboration, the nature of the work, why it's worked and why it's relevant for scale.

5. Pursuing the Right Priorities

Despite these powerful existing assets, it is critical to understand what holds us back. In order to enable our efforts to scale, we have analyzed our work and arrived at a clearer understanding of some of the obstacles we face as a state. It is these gaps that are limiting the scaling of our assets and the readiness of the rest of the field. Through this analysis, a set of key priorities emerge where we must invest strategically and intentionally.



PRIORITY: Readiness (System-wide Capacity Building)

DESCRIPTION

Supporting leaders and teachers by building the skills, knowledge and dispositions to move toward a student-centered, competency-based system. This will build from current work in PACE, but deepen the work and broaden the reach to all interested, ready districts statewide, while also more formally incorporating higher education and in-state and national technical assistance partners.

RATIONALE

Change is hard. One of the biggest barriers to progress is moving beyond the rhetoric to real knowledge-building and deeper staff development. Given a large retirement bubble, we strongly believe that investing intentionally in both pre-service and in-service training will have significant impact. As we move toward greater scale, this link between readiness and capacity can be used to effectively incentivize growth based on readiness.

[Key Activities & Measurable Outcomes on Page 12](#)

PRIORITY: Resources

DESCRIPTION

While funding is by no means the sole driver of our efforts, the reality is that we need to ensure adequate financial resources for the transformation we seek.

RATIONALE

We must pursue the innovations outlined in this blueprint at the same time as we work simultaneously to maintain and improve the systems we have in place. Over time, this ratio will shift as our successes not only enable, but accelerate the transition. The investments New Hampshire needs are to enable transformation itself, while the actual costs of doing business wouldn't change much from current levels with normal inflation.

[Key Activities & Measurable Outcomes on Page 16](#)

PRIORITY: Public Will

DESCRIPTION

The level and extent of public awareness and understanding of, and support for, a student-centered, competency-based system.

RATIONALE

Currently, a lack of public will represents an acute gap that may hinder efforts at the level of school, district and state. There is the need for a broad-based engagement strategy targeting families, communities and educators. The objective for this work will be to create greater demand for the type of system we are building.

[Key Activities & Measurable Outcomes on Page 15](#)

PRIORITY: Data Infrastructure

DESCRIPTION

Working to address the problem of technology systems to support competency-based learning through cost effective and feasible means.

RATIONALE

One of the largest barriers facing our work are limitations in the technology infrastructure necessary to support teachers and leaders in making the transition to a more student-centered, competency-based environment. While this problem is not unique to New Hampshire, the activities outlined on page 17 offer a cost-effective way to make tangible progress in the right direction, while still enabling New Hampshire to benefit from continuing developments in the broader education technology market.

[Key Activities & Measurable Outcomes on Page 17](#)

PRIORITY: Learning Agenda

DESCRIPTION

Ongoing management of the effort and the learning agenda necessary to support in-state scale and inform efforts out-of-state.

RATIONALE

It's not enough to have a clever, thoughtful strategy. Or even to execute against that strategy. These are necessary, but not sufficient. Given how quickly things continue to change, an essential facet of our approach is to develop and maintain a growth mindset. We do not want to become enamored with the ideas within the current version of our strategy. Just as we are trying to design learning systems that help students develop the skills of flexibility and adaptation, we believe this will be essential to our statewide transformation strategy.

Key Activities & Measurable Outcomes on Page 18

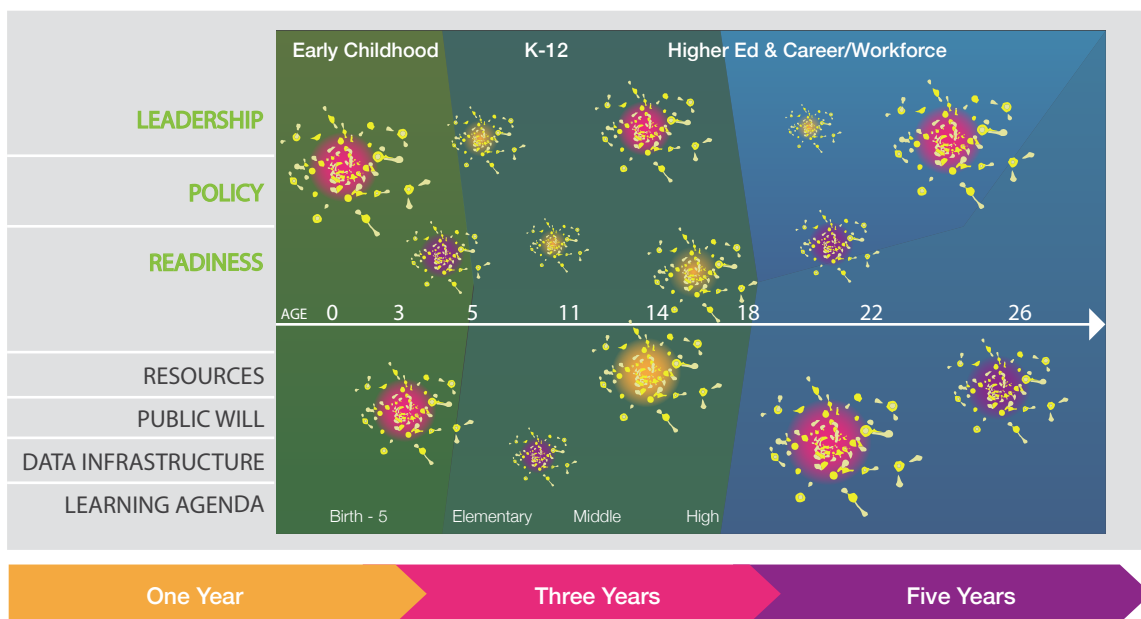
6. Managing a Connected Ecosystem

In order to reach our goal of developing an integrated system that enables success for every student, we must not only leverage our strengths and address our gaps; we must also develop a cogent strategy for how it all works together—and can be effectively managed over time. Most important, we need to engage others in the work so that we are all connected to the strategy for transforming an integrated learning system for New Hampshire.

- **Proposed Management Structure:** To execute against this bold agenda, we propose a structure that is at once rigorous and feasible, building from many existing assets and structures. This structure will leverage our successful New Hampshire Network and provide full transparency against the core metrics that we've identified.
 - **Executive Committee:** A steering committee will be led by key leadership within the New Hampshire Learning Initiative (NHLI) to oversee this effort, meeting monthly to ensure alignment and make key initiative-wide decisions, set quarterly agendas and serve as a decision-making body to liaise with investment partners.
 - **NH Vision 2.0 Advisory Committee:** As part of the design efforts to arrive at this document, we have engaged ~35 key state leaders over the past five months. They have been instrumental in arriving at this integrative approach. We propose a quarterly meeting of same representative group that play leadership roles across early childhood, K-12, higher education and workforce development in our state. This standing meeting provides an ongoing opportunity to deepen relevant links, move toward a shared narrative of the work and learn from what's working and not working. The structure for these ~90 minute quarterly sessions will be updates, reflections and design-inspired innovation to address felt needs as identified by the group. It also provides a stable forum within which to propose mid-course corrections based on a transparent and well communicated learning agenda.
 - **NH Vision 2.0 Annual Reports:** These will be published in the New Hampshire Network sharing progress to date against all of the core initiatives with qualitative and quantitative data around three core metrics—penetration (# of individuals, schools, districts, institutions, organizations, agencies touched), quality of the experience from the perspective of participants (where relevant) and impact at the level of learning models and learning systems (school, district, network and state).
 - **Dedicated Virtual Collaboration:** Within the New Hampshire Network, there will be a dedicated, private space for all leaders throughout the state to check in on progress, communicate through the discussion thread and share relevant materials to ensure that this is an ongoing dialogue rather than an episodic conversation, all of which is aimed at deepening connectivity and promoting collaboration. The conversation and sharing will be facilitated on a rotating basis quarterly with a shared expectation of what is entailed.

- Ongoing Expert Support:** This effort will continue to seek ongoing support and collaboration from [2Revolutions](#), a national education design lab focused on developing and scaling Future of Learning models and systems. 2Revolutions has been a key design partner in the state’s efforts to transform.
- Role of New Hampshire Network:** Over the past few years, the New Hampshire Network is emerging as a “main street” for how we do our professional learning work as a state in K-12. We are excited for this opportunity to expand use as an invaluable tool to connect, collaborate and pursue blended professional learning beyond K-12 to early childhood, higher education and workforce development. We see this as an essential ingredient to move our state to even greater alignment, scale and efficiency. Perhaps most important it reinforces our strong commitment to transparent engagement with educators across the state, in which they must increasingly become “owners” of the strategy to transform teaching and learning in New Hampshire.
- Learning Agenda:** Per our thoughts above, having a clear way of tracking and managing the learning will be a critical part of the overall management effort, both in terms of quality assurance and scaling what works.

We recognize that what we describe here is sustained, large-scale transformation. This cannot all happen at once. Therefore, we’ve tried to map out an approach in which we focus on and build readiness across the system over time. Our aim is to build out the work in tiers, based on assessments of readiness. Over a five-year time horizon, we’re confident that we can dramatically increase the percentage of more high quality, student-centered learning across our state, PK-20 which will have significant impact on our learning systems and our economy. For instance, there are currently four PACE districts; in 2020, there will be successful implementation of PACE-like systemic efforts in ~50% of our districts through deeper collaboration between early childhood education, higher education, workforce development and the K-12 system.



7. Putting it All Together

With the inputs of our strengths, gaps and a solid management plan, we arrive at a clearer picture of what we need and how to proceed. In this section, we provide deeper context on a set of activities and measurable outcomes that are essential to putting all of the pieces together into a coherent, scalable approach.

PRIORITY: Readiness (System-wide Capacity Building)






[< Back to Priorities](#)

DESCRIPTION

Supporting leaders and teachers by building the skills, knowledge and dispositions to move toward a student-centered, competency-based system building from current work in PACE but deepening the work and broadening the reach to all interested, ready districts statewide, while also more formally incorporating higher education and in-state and national technical assistance partners.

KEY ACTIVITIES & MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

Activity	Description	Desired Outcome(s)	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Rethink Teacher/Leader Pre-Service Training: Next Gen Competencies	Work with NH Higher Education Network to align pre-service training for teachers/leaders with Next Generation Competencies. Work re-examines content, skills and dispositions taught in teacher preparation and principal certification programs.	Begin working with a small number of higher education institutions in Y1 and expand over time to multiple NH institutions.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Improve teacher/leader readiness to implement student-centered and competency-based learning as evidenced by improved student outcomes across all subgroups.			✓	✓	✓
Build a micro-credential system	Develop a system of micro-credentials with higher ed partners to promote personalized, on-demand professional learning across the state using the New Hampshire Network as the distribution vehicle.	10% growth a year in attainment of micro-credentials, with a focus on identified content areas (e.g., STEM, elementary math, performance assessment).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Satisfaction of leaders and educators increases year over year in attitudinal surveys based on belief that micro-credentials are “more effective and efficient.”		✓	✓	✓	✓

Activity	Description	Desired Outcome(s)	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
	<p>Implement a Tiered System of Supports for In-service Training: A comprehensive competency-based education professional development support system that provides supports based on tiers of readiness from building awareness/literacy to whole district transformation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tier 3 districts have reported no or few local active competency-based learning environments, do not implement the competencies at the classroom level with students, and have no background experience with performance assessment of competencies. Access provided to school-level coaching from state-contracted experts on the topics of developing and implementing competencies and working with the state model competencies. In addition, they will be assisted in planning activities with other Tier 3 districts to prepare for greater involvement in performance assessment district-wide. Districts entering in Tier 3 will anticipate a minimum of two years of planning prior to implementation of PACE accountability. • Tier 2 districts have reported course level and school-wide competencies and have at least some experience implementing competencies in classroom settings. These districts will enter a cohort for intense Quality Performance Assessment (QPA) training in preparation for becoming PACE implementing districts in the following school year, based on readiness. Tier 2 districts accepted will access a coherent system of professional development from state and national experts on performance assessment, beginning levels of performance task development, Depth of Knowledge, looking at student work, reliable scoring and local structures, such as professional learning communities (PLCs), to support the work. • Tier 1 districts are selected based on their ability to enter the PACE work and both gain and share expertise in competency-based learning and performance assessment. Districts selected will have reported implementation of local competencies in school-wide and classroom settings, and some experience with performance assessment in a competency-based learning environment. This cohort will have the opportunity to meet frequently on the local level to develop the processes needed to implement a new accountability system in the district schools. The district Superintendent and PACE team leader will have the opportunity to meet monthly with PACE state-level leadership for policy and project management discussions. In addition, the district team leader will have monthly support in the form of a meeting with all other PACE team leaders for guidance, Q&A and solution-building. Workshop days throughout the year will be facilitated by experts, consultants and coaches allowing cross-school learning of performance assessments within specific content areas and across grade-spans, and will support curriculum-embedded competency-based task design for the purposes of both formative and summative assessment, scoring and calibration. Tier 1 districts will have the opportunity to participate, with coaching, in the development and implementation of common performance assessment tasks for accountability purposes. 		 8	 16	 24	 32	 40

Activity	Description	Desired Outcome(s)	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Develop innovation-focused capacity building for higher ed regulators	This series of workshops promote international and US innovations in higher ed as a way to broaden the perspective and build innovation literacy for higher education regulators.	Higher ed regulators have a broader perspective as evidenced by openness to new higher ed models and approaches.			✓	✓	✓
Build greater alignment within higher ed	Promote greater alignment among three key higher ed bodies (Professional Standards Board, Council of Higher Ed and IHE Network) to move toward greater alignment, innovation and the right efficient supports for K12. This involves visioning, quarterly meetings and facilitated collaboration in the NH Network.	Higher education is working more seamlessly as evidenced by common agenda and professional standards aligned with Next Generation competencies.	✓	✓			
Support the implementation of meta-cognitive competencies	Rethink meta-cognitive competencies by formally testing relevant tools & frameworks (i.e., My Ways & CIE framework) in a dedicated network to inform how the state moves toward integrating meta-cognitive competencies into its broader accountability agenda.	NH Districts will formally test and assess the use of meta-cognitive competency tools, including MyWays and CIE Framework to determine feasibility for use in grading, reporting and graduation requirements.	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Support “65/25” – 65% of NH students graduating 2-4 year colleges by 2015, while doubling number of STEM graduates	Implement personalized, competency-based, student-centered learning K-12, with personal learning plans leading to college and/or career goals and plans; emphasize STEM curriculum and student engagement, K-12.	65% of NH students will graduate college and career ready through rigorous application of competency education K-12 by 2025: Double NH STEM graduates completing NH colleges/universities by 2020.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

PRIORITY: Public Will

[< Back to Priorities](#)

DESCRIPTION

The level and extent of public awareness and understanding of, and support for, a student-centered, competency-based system.

KEY ACTIVITIES & MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

Activity	Description	Desired Outcome(s)	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Develop and Implement a Strategic Communications Campaign	Develop and implement a formal print, TV, radio and social media campaign with the intent of informing the public understanding of and building demand for a student-centered, competency-based system.	This campaign will begin to broaden perspectives and help refine expectations for schools and the system as one that should focus on the needs of individual learners and move students when ready. This work will also serve to build and deepen coalitions of business, industry and other key association groups. Regular polling of subgroups will show growing support of the state's innovative agenda.					
Implement a Community Listening Tour	Listening sessions in communities around the state to better understand interests, needs and share the NH 2.0 agenda.						
Develop and Implement a K-12 Staff Engagement Strategy	A critical place to build buy-in and raise awareness is among K12 district staff. This funding will support a facilitated listening tour in every school throughout the state to build awareness, buy-in and help each school establish their own future-facing vision.						
Manage Ongoing Engagement Process	Engagement activities as identified each year to effectively realize the agenda and support ongoing dialogue with all stakeholders.						

PRIORITY: Resources

[< Back to Priorities](#)

DESCRIPTION

While funding is by no means the sole driver of our efforts, the reality is that we need to ensure adequate financial resources to the transformation we seek.

KEY ACTIVITIES & MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

Activity	Description	Desired Outcome(s)	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Attract one-time risk capital	As part of our multi-year statewide effort, we have recently launched the New Hampshire Learning Initiative—a new vehicle to help attract, aggregate and align new funding from both inside and outside the state.	Attract a broad base of funding support for our vision.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Leverage new and existing State resources	As an example, NHDOE is already working to align and repurpose existing sources of funding with the vision outlined in this plan.	Maximize the efficiency and impact of existing State resources.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Move toward self-sustainability	By leveraging and repurposing existing statewide funding streams, we intend to diminish, the need for ongoing risk capital over time.	Enable continued transformation and management of the transformed New Hampshire education.				✓	✓

PRIORITY: Rethinking Data Infrastructure

[< Back to Priorities](#)

DESCRIPTION

Working to address the problem of technology systems to support competency-based learning through cost effective and feasible means.

KEY ACTIVITIES & MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

Activity	Description	Desired Outcome(s)	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Develop clear tech specs to support scale	State will establish clear technology specifications to support PACE and PACE-like efforts, along with pre-qualified vendors, which will allow the state to secure preferential pricing by aggregating demand and showcasing certain tools.	New Hampshire technology specifications are driving work in PACE and serve as a helpful guide post for other districts statewide.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Provide high quality tech-focused TA for all interested districts	State will offer interested districts technical assistance including a technology audit function that allows districts to self assess where they are on the continuum from a technology standpoint, including the tech they have for C&I, Assessment, Data Management and Back Office functions, and get customized feedback on where they are as it relates to hardware, software and infrastructure necessary to move along this continuum (this would be executed through a standardized process with custom interpretation and recommendations for each participating district).	<p>An increasing number of New Hampshire districts will get a better understanding of what they have and what they need to move toward a system of personalized, student-centered and competency-based learning.</p> <p>This work will also be a key driver to help PACE districts support accountability requirements.</p> <p>Survey data will substantiate that this is an increasingly high value service.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

PRIORITY: Learning Agenda

[< Back to Priorities](#)

DESCRIPTION

Ongoing management of the effort and the learning agenda necessary to support in-state scale and seed efforts out-of-state

KEY ACTIVITIES & MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

Activity	Description	Desired Outcome(s)	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Develop and manage an ongoing learning agenda	Ensure that all initiatives have a clear hypothesis, measurable outcomes and a means of collecting that data.	Develop and maintain a long-term strategic planning group to drive the implementation of the effort, based on a system of data-driven metrics through the establishment of the New Hampshire Learning Initiative.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Manage the bi-annual collection of that data.						
	Ensure that the learning agenda is a key part of the executive committee and advisory board agendas.	Learn from what works so it can be scaled. Learn from what is not working so it can be shifted or stopped.					
Disseminate	Publish annual document for the broader public sharing outcomes, lessons learned and highlighting the work.	Develop a culture of transparent data sharing to inform practitioners as well as keep all stakeholders up to date on progress and learning.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

8. Conclusion

New Hampshire, like all states, is in flux. We are all living through a tumultuous time of transition, in which the education landscape is experiencing upheaval. We recognize that the systems we have in place do not work as well for all students as they must. But we have not yet invested in the new systems that we need. In New Hampshire, we are committed to building on our existing strengths and momentum to lean into the future for which our students must be prepared. We are confident that we're headed in the right direction, but we cannot do it alone. We seek partnership—first and foremost from our educators and families across the state, who will ultimately need to drive and support the continued transformation we seek. We also seek partnership from outside New Hampshire, both to offer expertise and resources we will need to be more successful and take our work to scale. In return, we pledge authentic partnership and a willingness to share openly all that we are learning. We are all in this together. Going first comes with a badge of honor but also the responsibility to help those who follow.



Acknowledgements

Thanks to those who have participated in our conversations over the past months as we examined strengths and gaps in our current system, and who helped inform this blueprint for New Hampshire's future.

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Judy Burrows, NH Charitable Foundation
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Art Ellison, NH Department of Employment Security
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Mariane Gfroerer, NHDOE
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Mark Joyce, Executive Director, NH School Administrators Association
Steve Kossakowski, CEO Virtual Learning Academy
Todd Leach, Chancellor, University System of NH
Deputy Commissioner Paul Leather, NHDOE
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Mike Schwartz, NHDOE
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Thanks to our design partner, 2Revolutions.

And a special thanks to our thought partners and investors at Next Generation Learning Challenges, Nellie Mae Education Foundation and the Hewlett Foundation who believe deeply in the state as an effective unit of change and the broader ecosystem to help support success and scalability.

These profiles illustrate the range of organizations, opportunities and initiatives across our state's birth-to-adult learning systems, which we consider strengths. Dive in to read about the nature of the work, why it has been successful and why it is relevant for scale.

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Leadership Collaboration

Description

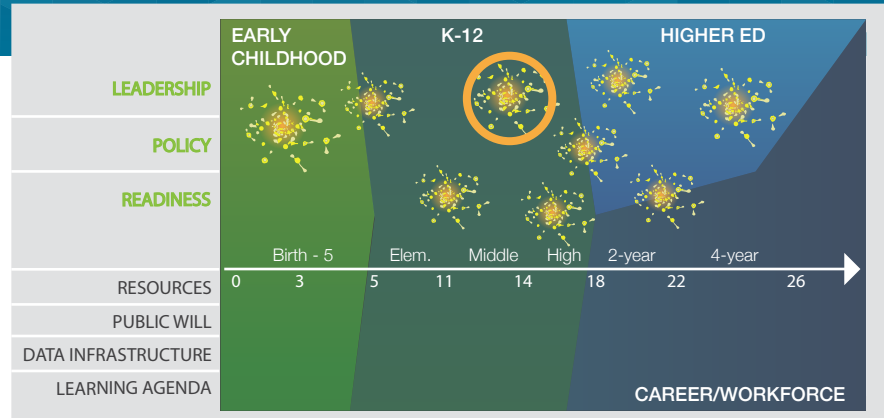
In New Hampshire, there has been strong, consistent leadership across state agencies and in partnership with the business community, higher education, K-12 and the policy arena. Leadership has proven to be an essential driver of systemic change based on a recognition of the limitations of the current system coupled with risk tolerance and a sense of urgency. This valuable asset has fostered innovation and collaboration within and across the educational system.

Impact

Leadership at every level of the system that has demanded, lobbied and strongly supported the transformative work across the state. Whether the forward thinking leadership of policy makers with the NHDOE to give rise to some of the most progressive education policies for K-12 nationally or collaborations between business, government and higher education to meet the quickly evolving needs of industry around job training, these individuals and the relationships they have fostered have been a driver for substantive change at the level of both learning models and systems. In 2012, New Hampshire received the Frank Newman Award for State Innovation from the Education Commission of the States as one of numerous accolades acknowledging the innovation of the work.

Relevance for Scale

It is our leaders, across the system, who have propelled the work forward with a shared vision for student-centered learning and a belief in high expectations for every student. Continuity of visionary leaders has been one of the key drivers of this work and we believe ultimately will in large part drive scale. Therefore, building from this strength, understanding the core competencies of these leaders and training a next generation of leadership around these skills and dispositions will help drive the scale of this work.



Links

Watch the following videos to see some perspectives from a range of leaders across the state:

- ▶ [Governor Maggie Hassan discusses how a strong education system is essential toward building independent citizens and strong civic leadership.](#)
- ▶ [Deputy Commissioner Paul Leather discusses the expansion of New Hampshire's Competency-based system in order to advance the state's mission of personalizing learning for all students.](#)
- ▶ [Dr. Mark Joyce, Executive Director and Treasurer of the New Hampshire School Administrators Association, discusses the shifting role of the NHDOE in supporting districts in spurring innovation.](#)
- ▶ [Representative Mary Stuart Gile discusses how a gap between jobs available and the skills of the workforce has led to a greater emphasis in STEM education.](#)
- ▶ [Dr. Todd Leach, Chancellor of the University System of New Hampshire, discusses creating better connections between K-12 and higher education.](#)
- ▶ [Tom Raffio, CEO of Northeast Delta Dental, and State Senator Molly Kelly discuss a partnership amongst state business leaders, policy makers and educators to create a better link between K-12 education and the workforce.](#)
- ▶ [Commissioner Tom Burack of the NH Dept. of Environmental Services discusses collaboration across government sectors.](#)

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Performance Assessment for Competency Education (PACE)

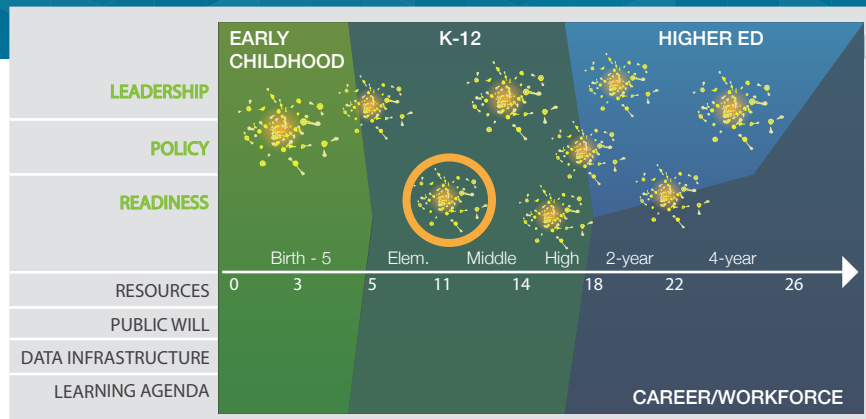
Description

PACE is a first-in-the-nation accountability strategy in which locally-developed performance assessments reduce the amount of standardized testing. The PACE accountability option provides districts with an alternative route of demonstrating measurable progress in student outcomes in New Hampshire, and it enables districts to emphasize meaningful content, high-quality instruction and deep student engagement.

Impact

While it is still very early in this effort, we offer perspectives from Sanborn School District about early impacts on the district.

- Teachers have found the in-district and intra-district collaboration to be invigorating and powerful.
- Creating the PACE assessments have helped reshape instruction; the quality of instruction has improved in ways where it is more meaningful and relevant, and includes a greater depth of knowledge. These changes have also increased the level of differentiation across the board because of what we're learning through higher quality assessments.
- Our teachers' assessment literacy has increased significantly throughout the process, including a clearer understanding and improved confidence in building assessments with high levels of Depth of Knowledge.
- The ability to (almost) instantly have information available to influence instruction. The PACE assessments, embedded in units of study have proven to be solid sources for meaningful information about students and the instruction in the classroom.
- The work around calibrating assessment and scoring has encouraged rich conversations, deepened collaborations and improved instruction.



- The PACE work has caused a significant shift in how our teachers, students and parents look at competency education in the district. PACE has helped us understand the far reaching magnitude of this effort, not only in own district, but also for the state and the nation. Our teachers and administrators understand the significance of this and the result has been a remarkable focus and attention to excellence in the development of quality performance assessments.

Relevance for Scale

It replaces high-stakes testing with locally-developed performance assessments, which are better at assessing student learning. It promotes local ownership of assessment.

Currently, the four initial PACE districts will be joined by an additional four districts in SY15-16 and the state has devised a tiered approach for schools and districts to join PACE or develop PACE-like initiatives based on interest and readiness in upcoming years.



Watch this video to see how schools and districts across New Hampshire are implementing new approaches in assessing student learning.

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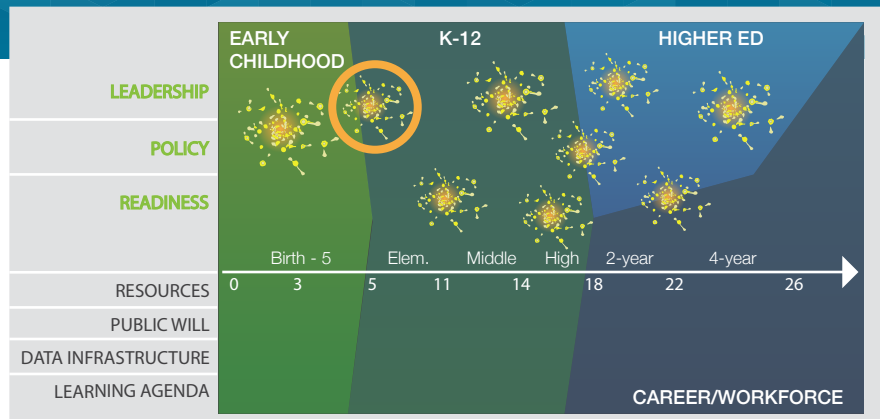
ESEA Flexibility Waiver With Regards to the PACE Accountability Option

Description

On November 21, 2014, the NHDOE requested a two-year waiver from U.S. Department of Education so that four districts could pilot the PACE accountability program. Under this waiver, the four districts will administer the PACE assessments in every grade (K-12), while reducing administration of the NHDOE statewide assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics to once each in elementary, middle and high school. NHDOE may increase the number of pilot districts to eight in the second year. In exchange, NHDOE must meet a number of conditions concerning communication with various stakeholders, meeting milestones, as well as collecting, analyzing and reporting data from the pilot.

Impact

The initiative has created a groundswell of demand among districts with the incentive of developing local assessments. The PACE accountability option gives districts an opportunity to own the assessment development process while moving away from federal mandates and high-stakes testing. PACE is the first accountability strategy of its kind in the United States, and districts across New Hampshire are lining up to participate. In addition, it offers an important model nationally and several states are currently trying to emulate it (to date, we have been contacted by and/or learned about efforts underway in CA, CO, KS, KY, OR, SC, TX, VA, VT).



Relevance for Scale

It is a first-of-its-kind waiver nationally. New Hampshire has been given license to develop and scale their own performance assessment system, and increase state and local autonomy while reducing the amount of standardized testing. We're confident that this represents a significant incentive to scale transformation based on readiness throughout the state. In a local control state, an initiative like this has catalyzed tremendous effort and energy for systemic reform at the district level.

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Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (VLACS)

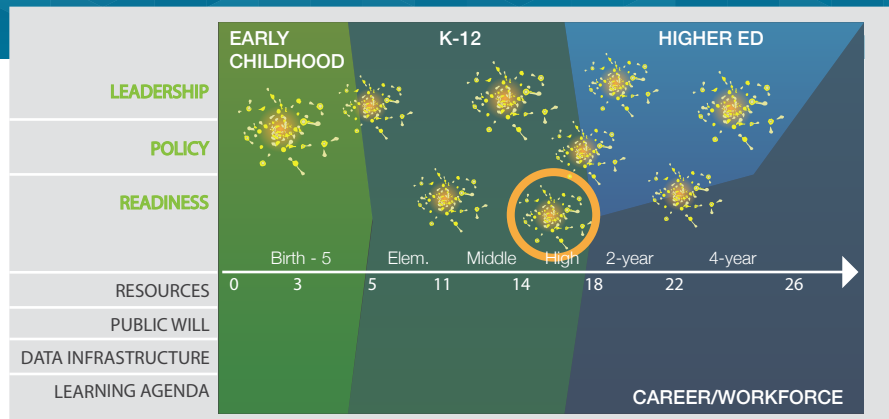
Description

VLACS is a statewide online charter school with current course enrollments approaching 20,000. It is projected to have a 70% enrollment growth rate over the next five years. VLACS is not funded based on its student enrollment; instead revenue is earned only when students complete coursework and demonstrate learning. VLACS is developing and implementing a 100% self-paced, competency-based learning model providing students with anytime, anywhere access to a rigorous, personalized education with a diversity of course material at all levels that may not be available where they live. In addition, new service-learning opportunities allow students to work collaboratively on authentic learning projects.

VLACS recently launched, in partnership with Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU), Learning Through College (LTCollege), the first completely online early college partnership in the nation. The LTCollege program is designed to be a competency-based program that allows learners to earn an Associate's degree while attending high school.

VLACS is also rolling out some new initiatives in order to take a more student-centered approach and utilize a number of learning modalities beyond traditional virtual learning. To that end, there are now over 100 three-to-four week learning projects with goals of developing a more substantial library of project-related offerings. Additionally, VLACS is developing a system in which students can design and participate in unique learning experiences such as internships, community service and independent study while under the direction of a certified instructor extending the learning experience beyond the limitations of school walls and schedule.

[Read more about VLACS' efforts to personalize learning in the CompetencyWorks blog.](#)



Impact

AVG AP scores:

- 5: VLACS – 22% (SY 2013-14), National AVG – 14.1% (SY2011-12)
- 4: VLACS – 33% (SY 2013-14), National AVG – 20.1% (SY2011-12)
- 3: VLACS – 17% (SY 2013-14), National AVG – 25% (SY2011-12)

AVG SAT Scores:

- Critical Reading: VLACS – 618, National – 496, NH – 524
- Math: VLACS – 542, National – 514, NH – 528
- Writing: VLACS – 572, National – 488, NH – 515

Relevance for Scale

As New Hampshire continues to move toward more student-centered, competency-based learning, VLACS offers an important proof point of what is possible and a valuable resource to support K-12 districts on that progression. The LTCollege program will continue New Hampshire's efforts to blur the lines between secondary and postsecondary attainment, opening up significant learning opportunities for students and strongly reinforcing the "move on when ready" belief.

Link

<https://vimeo.com/69332292>

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College for America

Description

Created by Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU), College for America (CfA) is “dedicated to radically expanding access and quality of higher education by offering college degrees that are competency-based, low-cost, and uniquely applicable in the workplace.” CfA does this by partnering with companies nationwide to offer fully accredited Associate’s and Bachelor’s Degree programs to their employees for roughly \$2,500 a year. In order to complete the program, students must show mastery of 120 competencies through a project-based curriculum. Because the programs are fully online, students have greater flexibility toward where and when they complete the work.

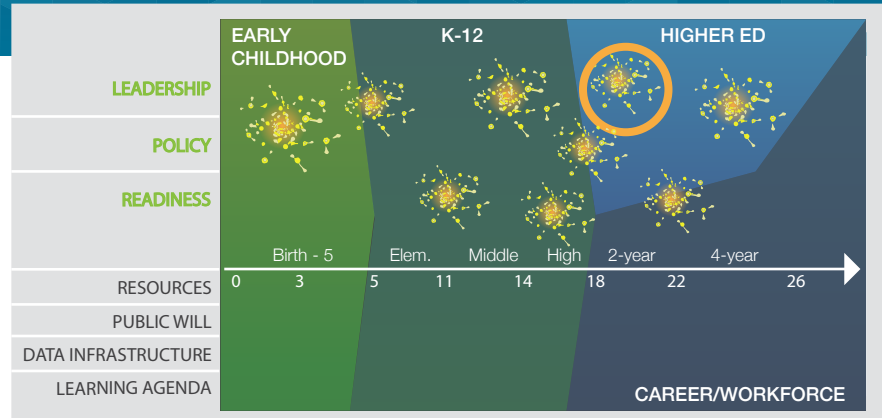
CfA currently offers the following degrees to the employees of over 100 companies nationwide:

- Bachelor of Arts in Communications with a concentration in Business
- Bachelor of Arts in Communications with a concentration in Healthcare
- Bachelor of Arts in Healthcare Management with a concentration in Communications
- Bachelor of Arts in Healthcare Management with a concentration in Global Perspectives
- Associate of the Arts in General Studies with a concentration in Business
- Associate of the Arts in General Studies for Nonclinical Healthcare

Impact

While the work is still early in its evolution, there is early evidence of promising impact, both from the perspectives of students and corporations. A survey conducted by Georgia Tech and WestEd for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation found:

- 99% of students would recommend CfA to friends, family and/or coworkers.
- 100% believe the CfA program is a good value.
- 97% rate the quality of interaction with their CfA coach as very good or good.



- 85% say CfA projects have increased skills related to their current job(s).
- 99% report that skills they learned in their program will help with future employment goals.

Relevance for Scale

This initiative fundamentally reimagines the cost of higher education and does so within the context of a high support, competency-based model. It offers an opportunity to rethink the delivery of higher education in a way that meets needs of employers and provides more flexible and affordable access to higher education for students. By disrupting the higher education cost model and pursuing skills and dispositions gained versus seat time, it provides an important proof point with relevance for students of all ages for a first degree or an industry-relevant retraining opportunity.

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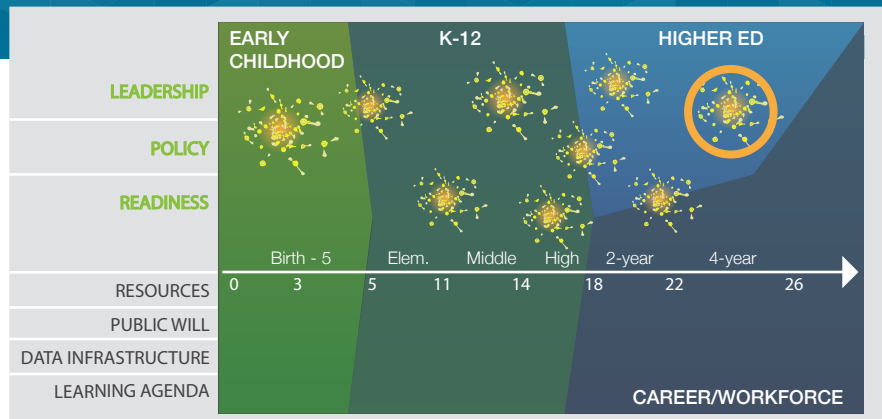
Live Free and Start

Description

Live Free and Start (LFS) is a new joint initiative between the Governor's Office, NH Business Finance Authority and Department of Resources and Economic Development aimed at creating jobs and making it easier for technology companies to start, grow and succeed in New Hampshire. The initiative focuses on sharing resources and expertise, hosting start-up competitions and events, transforming policy and becoming a hub of opportunity for those who want to launch, finance, invest and grow innovative, high tech businesses in the Granite State.

With an advisory board of high-tech entrepreneurs and business leaders from across New Hampshire, the initiative began with a grass-roots approach, hosting a series of business roundtables, focus groups and meetings with business leaders and ecosystem partners to unpack the greatest challenges that face both startups and established companies.

Since then, LFS has rolled out a range of support for the entrepreneurial community: its legislative agenda; marketing and knowledge-sharing campaigns, including its website, LiveFreeandStart.com, which provides valuable resources, one being a virtual concierge service allowing start-ups and businesses to connect directly with the NH Business Finance Authority for advice and connections. LFS also hosted its first start-up competition, called Ultimate NH Connection, letting innovators compete for a chance to have an hour-long meeting with the Governor, members of the LFS advisory council, and tech and industry leaders to discuss their business and growth strategies. Check out the 2015 competition winner: <http://livefreeandstart.com/announces-winner/>. For more on LFS visit [@livefreestart](#) on Twitter, www.linkedin.com/company/live-free-and-start and www.facebook.com/livefreeandstart.



Impact

Through LFS's support, legislators have recently passed two bills, SB266 focused on securities modernization and SB 223, simplifying business name availability and standards, both of which help make New Hampshire a more start-up friendly place to start and grow a business. The initiative also supported the Governor's proposal to provide state funding to support education and acceleration programs at New Hampshire's business incubators. As LFS further develops, there is a desire to look at impact on attraction and retention of entrepreneurs, job creation and greater alignment with growth industries.

Relevance for Scale

According to the state, New Hampshire's high-tech sector employs nearly 44,000 people and contributes nearly \$3 billion to the state's gross domestic product in salaries.¹ Creating an ecosystem to support and grow sectors of the economy can help attract entrepreneurs and skilled workers, while keeping those looking for tech industry jobs from leaving the state to pursue opportunities.

For more information, visit:

<http://livefreeandstart.com>

¹ Brooks, David. "New Hampshire Launches Tech Startup Competition, Boosts 'Live Free and Start'" Bloomberg.com. Bloomberg, 27 Apr. 2015. Web.

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New Hampshire's Comprehensive Strategic Plan for Early Childhood

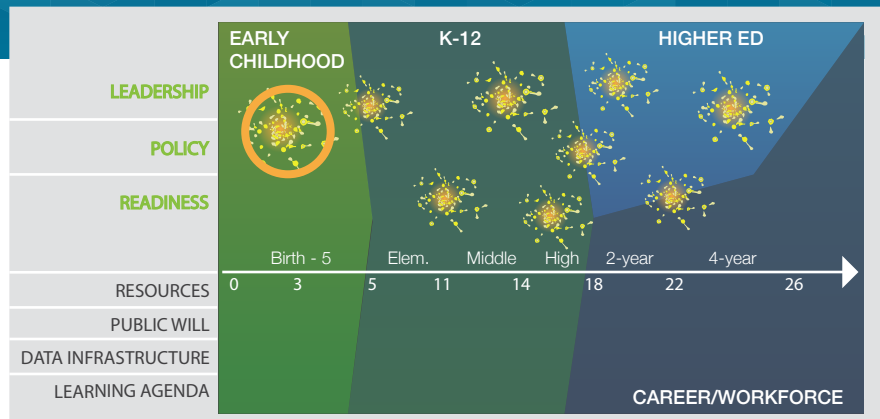
Description

A deep and meaningful collaboration has worked to ensure a seamless transition from early childhood to K-12 education. Spark NH is a governor-appointed early childhood advisory council created to promote a comprehensive system of early childhood programs and services in New Hampshire. Comprised of both public and private sector representatives from health, early learning and family support, the Council seeks to improve the lives of expectant families and families of young children from birth through third grade. Since Governor John Lynch established the Council by Executive Order in 2011, it has made great strides toward becoming New Hampshire's "go to" body for early childhood and in unifying the field to speak with a single voice on behalf of the state's young children and families. For example, in 2013 the Council released the state's first governor-endorsed comprehensive strategic plan for early childhood, which includes cross-sector priorities for the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Human Services and other public and private organizations across the state.

Impact

The transformative work of the Council to date has laid the foundation for a comprehensive early childhood system in New Hampshire. Spark NH has:

- Created research-based communications and public awareness materials and presentations on the importance of early childhood. Spark NH uses these to garner support for early childhood among public policymakers, the business community and leaders in the areas of health, early learning and family support.
- Produced a blueprint for cross-sector early childhood data integration in New Hampshire.
- Created a set of competencies that are common across sectors involved in working with young children birth through age 8 and their families.



A plan is in development for sharing the competencies, as well as recommendations for their use.

- Developed recommendations for a comprehensive, cross-sector, early childhood professional development system, following the framework in the NAEYC Professional Development Blueprint. The framework includes: Professional Standards, Career Pathways, Articulation, Advisory Structure, Data and Financing.
- Created a community of practice for all of the regional and local early childhood initiatives in the state to link their work and develop and elevate best practices.

Relevance for Scale

Spark NH is seeking a well-integrated, high quality, system of programs and services for children and their families from birth through grade 3. Participation in the work of Spark NH will ensure that children are prepared to succeed in school and beyond and that their families are engaged in supporting that success. It also provides an important model of cross-agency and sector collaboration.

Links

[Research-based communications and public awareness materials: Children: The Bedrock of the Granite State](#)

[NH Early Childhood Data System Blueprint and Recommendations \(2013, August\)](#)

[NH Early Childhood Professional Development System Blueprint Project Final Report \(2015, February\)](#)

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New Hampshire Learning Initiative

Description

The Coalition for Business and Education, the State Board of Education and the Department of Education have incubated the New Hampshire Learning Initiative to serve as the R&D arm, a consistent source of the next generation of improvements, for the New Hampshire public education. The Initiative's mission is to:

“Accelerate innovation in K-12 education to move schools forward in helping our students become competent and confident adults, able to pursue the futures they seek in college, career and beyond.”

The Initiative's initial strategy plan will carry forward key STEM, competency-based and early childhood strategies that are critical to New Hampshire public education at this juncture. In future years, NHLI will continue pushing New Hampshire education policy forward, convening educators to get consensus and commitment, raising local and national resources to support them, and enhancing local capacity to deepen students' learning.

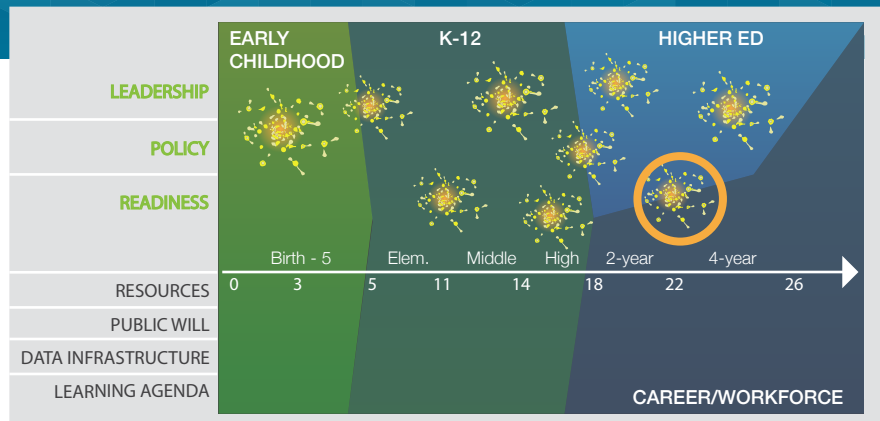
Why Now?

We are in a moment of high energy in New Hampshire public education. Student achievement is among the top in the country. We are the national leader in personalizing learning through competency-based education. With the support of the Governor, the State Board of Education and the Department of Education, innovative district leadership feels empowered and the districts are pushing ahead and taking risks. But challenges to public education ebb and flow with each election cycle. The Learning Initiative will be the institutional capacity that transcends political changes to capitalize on the willingness of national funders and policy makers to make long term investments in New Hampshire.

Impact

In 5 years:

- NHLI will expect to see the State's new College and Career Ready science standards as fully embedded



in classrooms across New Hampshire as the new English and math standards are today. In leadership districts in every region of the State, improved policies and classroom teaching practices should be in place supporting not only the new science standards, but next generation learning and improved math and science instruction in the early grades.

- In all of these districts and many others, we should see the report cards conveying a depth of understanding about what a student knows and can do. We should see elementary school teachers with specialist STEM endorsements. And by that time, math and science scores should have begun to improve.
- We will also see political debate in the media, school boards and the Legislature about the changes parents are seeing in the classroom, including strong and fully articulated support from parents and policymakers who understand the benefit of the changes.

In 10 years:

- The Initiative will organize its strategies to achieve greater student engagement and, an increase in our graduation rate. There should be an increase in successful matriculation in college, particularly in STEM fields, and reduced reliance among high school graduates on remedial coursework. And math and science scores should have begun to improve widely across the State.

Relevance for Scale

At its core, the Learning Initiative represents an innovative vehicle to enable sustained long-term investment in New Hampshire's PreK-20 vision - with an explicitly deliberate mix of public and private resources from in- and out-of-state partners who are all rallying around New Hampshire's important work.

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Governor's Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Task Force

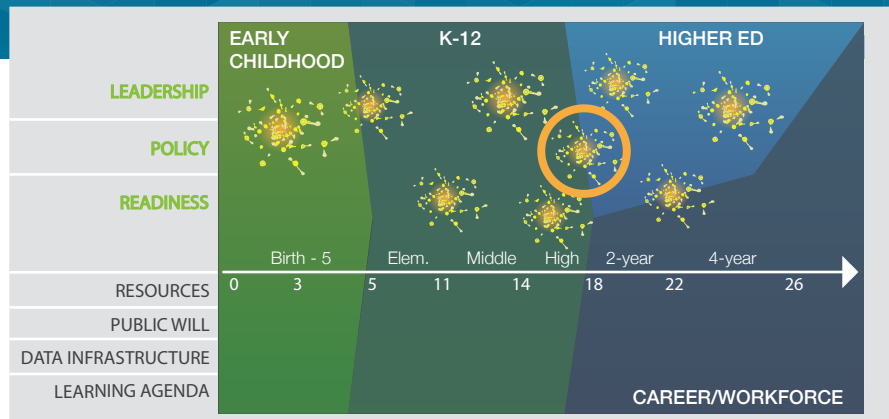
Description

Recognizing the need to build the long-term pipeline to help produce a STEM-educated workforce in New Hampshire and the benefits of a population that is STEM literate, Governor Hassan in April 2014 issued an executive order creating the STEM K-12 Task Force. In creating the Task Force the Governor highlighted that to “help young people develop the skills and innovative thinking needed for jobs that growing businesses are creating here in New Hampshire, we need to come together as a state to ask tough questions about how we can best educate our young people, especially in the STEM fields of science, technology, engineering and math.”

In January 2015, the Task Force completed [a report](#) that discusses a wide range of activities in K-12 education that will require a more student-centered, personalized approach, where students master rigorous content knowledge and demonstrate their skill and learning through real-world experiences in STEM. The Task Force continues to meet as it works on implementing the report.

Impact

A primary purpose for implementing a competency-based education K-20 system is to provide greater access and mastery for all students to rigorous instruction. The more students who attain mastery as they travel through content trajectories of learning, the more they will be able to access and succeed in college and careers, particularly in those areas, such as STEM, where rigorous learning is a pre-requisite to entry. It is hoped and expected that 65% of New Hampshire students will graduate college and career ready through rigorous application of competency-based education K-12 by 2025, and able to enter college and graduate from two or four year degree programs.



Relevance for Scale

The STEM Task Force is really a test of how well the state of New Hampshire is able to implement a truly student-centered competency-based education system, where dramatically more students are able to demonstrate mastery and articulate that learning in college and New Hampshire business settings.

[Click here for more information.](#)



New Hampshire
Vision 2.0

FALL 2015